

Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at risk in the Church

revised 2023

SHNFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

(Referred to as "the church" in the Policy Statement)

The Vision of the church is to be a family church serving the community.

In fulfilling the vision the church

- Has a programme of activities with children and young people and vulnerable adults
- Welcomes children and young people and adults at risk into the life of our community

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 (regardless of sex, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, safe from harm (HM Government 1994) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2010).

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people and adults at risk associated with the church.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and adults at risk and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and adults at risk and to report any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people and adults at risk whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

Respecting children and young people

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young People and adults at risk so that children, young people and adults at risk are shown respect that is due to them.

Safe working practices

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and adults at risk and will adopt ways of working with children and young people and adults at risk that promote their safety and well being.

A safe community

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

Responsible people

The church has appointed:

Fiona Monger as the Designated Person for Safeguarding to:

- Advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and young people and adults at risk
- Take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

Angela Baker as Safeguarding Trustee

Pat Cole as the Safeguarding Administrator

The church pastor is also an important part of the Church Safeguarding Team. Where possible, the Church Safeguarding Team will work together if and when issues arise. However, each person has a responsibility to report allegations of abuse as soon as they are raised.

Overall responsibility remains with the Elders and Pastors

Policy and Procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the notice board in the church.

Each worker with children and young people and adults at risk whether paid or voluntary will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be required to follow them.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person and adults at risk from the church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually.

The policy statement will be read annually at the church meeting following the AGM together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

Key Guidelines for those Working with Children and Young People at Shinfield Baptist Church

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

Emotional Abuse

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 or inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.

Sexual Abuse

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 no-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.

Neglect

Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development. 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 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
- 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.

Procedures for Responding to Concerns of Suspected Abuse

What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed?

Everyone has his or her part to play in ensuring the safeguarding of children within the church.

If the behaviour of a child gives any cause for concern –

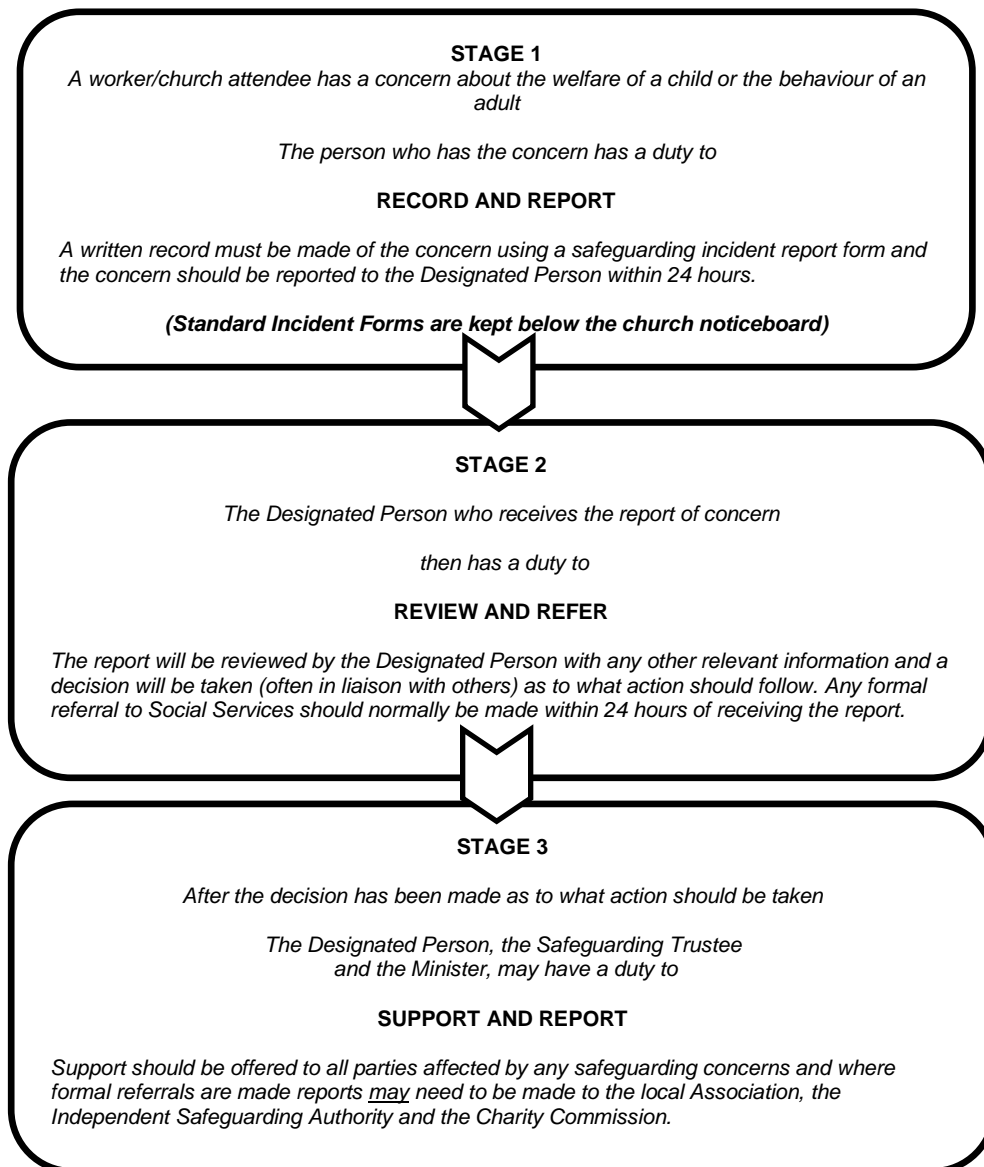
If an allegation is made in any context about a child being harmed –

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children causes you concern:

- **Do not** dismiss your concerns
- **Do not** normally confront the adult about whose behaviour you have concerns
- **Do not** take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is actually taking place
- **Do not** investigate allegations
- **Do not** act alone
- **Do not** take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have

Do follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns

Procedures for Responding to Concerns



If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not available, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services

STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to RECORD their concerns in writing and to REPORT their concerns to the Designated Person. If he/she is not contactable reports should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee.

The report to the Designated Person should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised.

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)
- include the child'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 bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed
- include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words
- 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
- be kept secure and confidential and made available only to:
 - the Safeguarding Team
 - the pastor as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved
 - representatives of the professional agencies

If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to one of the Safeguarding Team, one of them should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's group, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group leader. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Designated Person.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and report their concerns to the Designated Person.

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 report the concern to the Designated Person.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that has been reported and to REFER the concern on to the appropriate people.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Safeguarding Team:

- should take account of their own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children
- must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- may speak with others in the church (including the pastor) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be made
- should ensure such conversations do 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 REFER

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred on to. They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation;
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children in question asking for continued observation;
- refer to the adult about whom the concern has been raised;
- This may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children’s workers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Designated Person should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the police or Social Services. To do so may place the child at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child may be intimidated.
- Make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department.

All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

Responsibilities in stage 3 of the process are shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

The duty to REPORT

Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services the Designated Person should

- report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- report the referral to the Pastor
- report the referral to the Regional Minister of the local Association

In certain circumstances the Safeguarding Trustee acting on behalf of the trustees may also need to make further reports for example to the Charity Commission

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). 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 a worker has an allegation made against them they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated.

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 and young people there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

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

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy.

When concerns are expressed about the Pastor

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Pastor should always be reported immediately to the Regional Minister of your local Baptist Association in addition to following the church's normal procedures.

When concerns are expressed about the Designated Person

Any safeguarding concerns involving the Designated Person for Safeguarding should be raised with the Safeguarding Trustee or the Pastor.

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 such as the Child, Other Family Members, Church Worker/Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Ministers/ Leadership Team

Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or volunteers. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers

All leaders and helpers should have a calling to work with children, which should, in turn, be recognised by the Church Leadership Team and have the agreement of existing children's leaders and helpers.

For volunteer posts for children's leaders and helpers the Church should ensure that the following procedures have been followed:

- A written role description for each post is made and a copy given to the prospective volunteer;
- All volunteers (both current and new) should complete an application form;
- Prospective volunteers to be interviewed by the team leader to ensure the volunteer fully appreciates the nature of the role and the need to adhere to the church's safeguarding policy and procedure;
- Two references will be taken up (at least one should be from outside of the church)
- DBS will be applied for
- The worker will be appointed for a probationary period of 2 months after which a second interview will take place;
- The volunteer should sign an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures
- Induction into the relevant procedures and ways of working will be undertaken (to include safeguarding training)

Oversight of this process will be the responsibility of the Designated Person, but the Safeguarding Administrator will process references and DBS checks and associated administration.

Young leaders under 18 years of age

In law young leaders under the age of 18 are children. They cannot be treated as adult members of a team.

Therefore the following guidelines need to be followed in relation to young leaders:

1. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that the young leader is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience;
2. A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children;
3. When considering ratios of staff to children the young leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader;
4. The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person;
5. The permission of parents or carers needs to be sought for the young leader just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age;
6. If the young leader accompanies a group on a residential activity ideally they should have separate sleeping accommodation from both the adult leadership team and the children they are working with;
7. Young Leaders should not be given leadership responsibility for a group immediately below their own age, to leave a gap of at least two years;

Measures to ensure the well being of leaders

- The first priority of leaders and helpers should be their own spiritual welfare, and, therefore, they should receive teaching and be part of a worship service or life group regularly.
- All leaders and helpers should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.
- Meetings for leaders and helpers will be held approximately once per term, for support and planning. However, anyone may raise any concerns or suggestions regarding the ministry amongst children with any of the Safeguarding Team or Leadership Team at any time.

Respecting children and young people

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them.

Respecting children

The following are guidelines for a code of behaviour.

Leaders and Helpers should:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of body language and the effect you are having on the individual child e.g. invading a person's personal space.
- Do not engage in any of the following:
 - invade the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering;
 - rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child;
 - sexually provocative games;
 - making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in 'fun';
 - scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child.
- Listen well to children. Be careful not to assume you know what a child is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said.
- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed. If possible, the child's own parent or carer should be called in to carry out such a task.
- Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Workers should not normally plan to be alone with children. On church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.
- On occasions when one to one work with a child is required this should take place with appropriate supervision and accountability structures in place.
- Only invite young people to your home, or on trips, in groups, and always make sure another adult is present. The Designated Person should be notified of any trips for children which take place in the name of The Baptist Church. Parental permission must always be sought for such an event.
- Do not give lifts to young people on their own, other than for short journeys (and avoid doing this except in emergencies). Ensure that, if transporting children, you have the correct insurance cover for passengers and parental permission.
- Not share sleeping accommodation with children if you take a group away.

Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

Children should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling. Discipline is about creating a safe environment for children where they can flourish and grow as they develop healthy relationships with one another and adults.

Minor incidents/offences should be dealt with immediately on the spot. This prevents escalation and enables major offences to be seen as major.

Ways of dealing with discipline:

- criticise the behaviour not the person
- facilitate the movement of the offender to a less volatile situation and/or change the group activity;
- help the offender move to a calm location for a short while, staying with them (though ensure you are in visual contact with other leaders)

If the above mentioned procedures fail to bring about the desired result, refer the issue to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

Bullying can be defined as behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally

Allegations and incidents of bullying should be reported to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

Ratios

When working with young people the following recommended minimum ratios should be used as a guide for supervision. There will be occasions where the ratio needs to account for special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratio. Ratios may also take into account mixed age groups and the ability of adults to call on the help of other competent adults though alterations in the ratios should be the exception rather than the rule, and the safeguarding co-ordinator should always be consulted with a justification for any accommodation in the ratios given. The priority is always the safety and well being of the children/young people.

In calculating the ratios of workers to children, young leaders who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the leaders/helpers.

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
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Abuse of Trust

Relationships between children and their leaders/helpers can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The leader is someone in whom the child has placed a degree of trust, which may be because the leader has an educational role, is a provider of leisure activities, or even is a significant adult friend.

It is also not acceptable for a leader/helper to form a romantic relationship with a child with whom they have a relationship of trust.

While by no means restricted to young leaders, 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.

Electronic Communication

Electronic communication has become enormously important and popular over the past ten years. It is an easy way to communicate with young people in particular. However, there are dangers associated with electronic communication that call for vigilance:

- electronic communication is often an extremely informal mode of communication which can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood;
- because of the informal style of electronic communication workers can easily cross appropriate boundaries in their relationships with young people;
- some adults who are intent on harming children and young people choose to use electronic communication as a way to meet and 'groom' children.

The following guidelines are written to try to maintain healthy and safe relationships between adults and children.

- Electronic communication must never become a substitute for face to face contact with young people;
- parents or carers and children and young people themselves have the right to decide if a worker is to have email addresses or mobile phone numbers etc;
- workers should only use electronic means of communication with those children and young people from whom appropriate consent has been given;
- direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided;
- only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of the church or one of the church's organisations;
- contact with children and young people by electronic communication should generally be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter;
- workers should not share any personal information with children and young people, and should not request or respond to any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role;

- workers should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives. Clear, unambiguous language should be used, and the use of unnecessary abbreviations should be avoided;
- electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 am and 10.00 pm;
- Any photos or video taken on personal mobile phones should not be uploaded to social networking sites without parental permission;
- workers should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phone.

Email

- Leaders in church ministry activities, (including group leaders, elders, deacons, pastors) should have individual email addresses for correspondence relating to church activities. For reasons of confidentiality and reporting, leaders should not use shared email addresses e.g. husband or wife shared address. Confidential information must not be sent to a partner email address or proxy address of which the leader is not the sole owner;
- Ideally, official church emails to young people should be sent out with a church header and footer indicating to the young people that this is an official communication; emails should also be copied to the church email address. The parent of the child or young person should also be copied in to such an email and it can be good practice for another leader from the relevant children's or young people's team to be copied in to any such emails, and ideally this leader should be of the opposite sex to the one writing the email.

Instant Messaging Services (IMS)

For children (below school year 7):

- The use of instant messenger services should be avoided and used only when a child is on a point of need

For young people (school year 7 and above)

- The use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum. If they are used another leader from the relevant children's or young people's team should be copied in to any such message, and ideally this leader should be of the opposite sex to the one writing the message. It is also good practice to notify the young person's parent when such a message has been sent;

For instant messages to children and young people

- significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and
- a log kept of with whom and when they communicated.

Social Networking sites

- If adults are intending to add a young people to their social networking sites they must first have the permission of the parents of the young person;
- Adults should not normally make 'friend requests' of young people;
- It should not become expected behaviour that adults say yes to young person when a friend request is received;
- It is the adult's responsibility to ensure that all of the content on their site is appropriate for young people to see (including contents of photos uploaded);
- All communication with young people should be kept within public domains;
- All communications with young people should be transparent and open to scrutiny;

Remember – never alone and unseen is the basic rule of thumb in Safeguarding young people. What does this mean for your activity with electronic communication?

Good Practice Guidelines with Colleagues

If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to one of the Safeguarding Team about your concerns. Leaders and helpers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

Recording Incidents

- Leaders should be aware of any physical contact they may have with young people and record it when necessary. For instance, if they need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to a child who is distressed, remove a child from danger, or protect themselves or others from attack.
- Keep a church incident book. If any significant incidents take place a record should be kept in the Church Incident Book. Enter the names of both children and adults present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, incidences where a child is asked to leave. All workers who witnessed, heard or responded in any way should record details, and sign and date the entry.
- If you consider an incident is of suspected abuse then follow the guidelines in the section 'Reporting Concerns of Suspected Abuse;'

WORKING WITH ADULTS AT RISK

Premises

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

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.

Worship

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

- 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 to see their mouth as they speak
- Describing what is being presented on a screen for those who cannot see it clearly
- Using inclusive language
- 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
- The possibility of 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.

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.

Financial integrity

Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transactions and gifts, as outlined below:

- 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.
- 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.

Photographs

Workers should make sure that they have the appropriate permission to take a picture of a vulnerable adult, and that the subject is happy with the intended use of the pictures.

Computers

Where vulnerable adults may have access to church computers, these computers should have suitable parental controls and blocks put on. Although this is not failsafe, it will make using the computers for inappropriate behaviour more difficult, whilst also protecting any vulnerable users.

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.

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 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 within a pastoral relationship.

- 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.

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 take into account 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 should be included in the planning of trips and events where appropriate
- 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 if that is the normal pattern of support in their care giving role.

Personal Care

It is not appropriate for church workers to perform personal care for adults at risk unless this is their usual task (ie 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 with regard to 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.

A safe community

Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety

The following checklist identifies guidelines to ensure the safety of all, especially children and young people. All leaders and helpers are responsible for being observant for any health and safety issues which may affect their group, for example:

- Access to the building should be safe and well lit.
- There should be adequate heating and lighting in the venue.
- There should be enough space and appropriate activities for all children.
- A First Aid kit and phone should be available.
- The premises should be checked for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc) and equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- No smoking should be permitted.
- Fire drills should be carried out at least annually.
- Any food should be prepared carefully and hygienically.

Safe Premises

The church takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the premises are safe for all who use them.

- All doorways and passages to be kept clear at all times
- Emergency Exits to be clearly shown at all times
- The kitchen is out of bounds to children and young people unless supervised by a parent or carer
- A First Aid Kit will be kept in the kitchen with a Report Book for all usage.
- Special care with safety will be taken when the baptistery is open
- Any hazards noticed should be notified to the trustees for action to be taken

Risk Assessments

It is good practice for a generic written risk assessment to be carried out by the Designated Person for Safeguarding at the beginning of each academic year. This will cover the general week to week Sunday morning activities. A specific risk assessment can be taken by the group leader for any other one off youth activities which may take place throughout the year and approved by the designated person. Risk assessments will be made available to the Leadership Team as required.

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

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).
- All 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.

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.
- At least two workers should be present when transporting children as part of a church role.

When a known offender is present

The church should be a community that is welcoming and open to all. It is a place for people who have failed and for people in need. Those who have abused children in the past are to be included in this welcome. However, the Christian imperative to welcome the sinner needs to be set alongside the Christian imperative that this cannot be at the expense of the protection of children in the church community.

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its commitment to the protection of all children will consider measures to ensure the safety and well being of children in its care.

This will involve:

- meeting with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep.
- drawing up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused. This should
 - identify the meetings the person will attend
 - specify that they will always sit apart from children
 - may ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises
 - require the person not to attend small group meetings where children are present
 - require that the person declines hospitality where there are children (including in people's homes – even the homes of friends within the church);
 - state that the person will never be alone with children while attending church functions;
 - require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children meet.
- Guidance will be sought on who within the church can and should be notified if an offender joins the congregation.

Depending on the nature of the convicted offence it may also include:

- For the safety of the children, barring the person from attending this particular branch of the church or a particular service; they may be directed to another church or another service where secure boundaries can be established e.g. an early morning communion service where no children are present. Such a move would need to be done in liaison with the leadership of the church or service concerned drawing attention to the previous background of the person concerned while respecting their legal rights;

Where necessary this will include working with other agencies such as Baptist Association, Baptist Union, Probation Service and so on.

Limitations of Policy and Guidelines

It is impossible that a safeguarding policy and guidelines can cover every scenario and 'what if'. Further guidance can be taken by the Safeguarding Team from Safe to Grow (BU guidelines on Safeguarding); this is available from the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee for anyone to read if they so desire. The Safeguarding Team will take further advice and guidance from the BU, and other agencies if and when necessary.

Appendix 1 - USEFUL CONTACTS

Wokingham Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

LADO@wokingham.gov.uk

Police

Contact 101, or 999 in an emergency

Adult Social Services - West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (Wokingham)

8.45am—5pm 0118 974 6371 **email:** Adultsafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk**Out of hours** 01344 786 543**Adult Social Care (Wokingham)**

0300 365 1234 – (Berkshire Integrated Hub)

Children's Social Services - WBC Referral and Assessment Team (Children's Safeguarding and Social Care Team)8.45am—5pm **0118 908 8002** or by email: triage@wokingham.gov.ukOut of hours **01344 786 543** *(insert number)***Local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact**

Email: SCBAsafeguarding@scba.org.uk

**Shinfield Baptist Church
Trips and visit Planning and Risk Assessment form**

Organisers name..... Position e.g. youth team leader.....

Proposed activity.		start and end dates.	
Venue/ location		Anticipated participant numbers.	

Organisers should consider the following	Comments
What is the purpose of the visit / activity?	
What are the competencies / qualifications required of the leaders?	
Do the proposed leaders have the required competencies?	
Other comments or considerations:	
Date risk assessment completed	
Name of the person completing the risk assessment	

Hazard / Risk Things at the venue, parts of the activity etc that could cause harm	Who is at risk?	Level of Risk Low, Medium, high	Controls to Reduce Risk	Level of Residual Risk after controls in place Low, medium, high

In calculating the level of risk, consider its potential frequency and severity:

Low risk = remote or unlikely to occur and will lead, to only minor injury

Medium risk = will occur in time if no action taken, will led to injury

High risk = likely to occur immediately or in the near future, will lead to serious injury or fatality

Planning and Risk Assessment form submitted by: Print Name.....Signature Date.....

AGREEMENT TO PROCEED WITH TRIP OR VISIT (this section to be completed by the church's trip and visit co-ordinator)

I permit / do not permit this trip or visit to go ahead.

Print Name.....Signed..... Date.....

Reasons for not permitting trip.....

A record of this form should be kept in the church trips and visits folder.