



Beulah Community Church

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy & Procedures

A set of agreed policies and procedures for ensuring a safe environment for children and young people within the care of our church.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE TERM 'CHILDREN' REFERS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

POLICY AGREED SEPTEMBER

REVIEWED MARCH 2017

REVIEWED MARCH 2018

REVIEWED SEPT 2018

REVIEWED MARCH 2020

REVIEWED JUNE 2021

REVIEWED NOV 2022

REVIEWED MARCH 2023

REVIEWED MARCH 2024

REVIEWED MARCH 2025

Contents

- 3. Church Policy Statement
- 4. Safeguarding Team

Procedures

- 6. Definitions of Abuse
- 8. Children who are particularly vulnerable; child on child abuse
- 9. Procedure for Responding to Concerns
- 15. Safe Recruitment of Staff

Good Practice Guidance

- 17. Respecting Children
- 18. Abuse of Trust
- 19. Electronic Communication
- 21. Discipline of Children; Working with Colleagues
- 22. Ratios; Health & Safety
- 23. Working with Offenders
- 24. Helpful Numbers

Beulah Community Church Policy Statement On Safeguarding Children & Young People

Our Mission Statement is:

“We believe that as a company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have been called to share God’s love with all.”

In fulfilling this statement the Church:

- Welcomes children and young people into the life of its community
- Has a programme of activities with children and young people
- Makes our premises available to organisations working with children.

Beulah Community Church (from herein called “the Church”) recognizes its responsibilities and moral duty for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 as set out in the Children Acts (1989 and 2004), the Education Act (2002), and in line with government publications: ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2023), ‘What to do if you are Worried a child is being abused’ (March 2015). The guidance also reflects, ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ (2024), ‘The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015’, ‘Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people and carers’ (March 2015) Working Together: Transitional Guidance 2018 and the Equality Act (2010)

The members of the Church recognize that if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action and they commit themselves to nurture, protect and safeguard all children and young people associated with the Church and to pray for them regularly. The Church recognises that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse. Accordingly, the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults. In pursuit of this, we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

The Leaders of Beulah Community Church (herein called the Leaders) are committed to ensuring that the Church:

- Provides a safe environment for children and young people
- Seeks to identify and report the abuse of children and young people
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe from harm

In pursuit of these aims, the Leaders will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people.
- Providing procedures for reporting concerns

- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
- Establishing procedure for the safe recruitment of staff

1. Responsible people

The church has appointed Alison Cheetham (Church Secretary) as the Safeguarding Verifier to oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and guidelines on behalf of the church's charity trustees and to act as the Designated Person for Safeguarding, to:

- advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and young people
- take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding will be answerable to the Leaders and to the Church Meeting. The Leaders will receive from her an annual report which reviews how the duties have been discharged.

Prevention and reporting of concerns

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 the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and to report any child 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, whether paid or voluntary. Staff and volunteers working with children will receive adequate training to familiarise them with child protection issues and responsibilities and the Church's procedures and policies, with refresher training on a regular basis. This may be conducted by a member of the Church, should there be a suitable qualified individual.

Respecting children

The Church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that all children and young people are shown the 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 will adopt ways of working with children and young people that promote their safety and well-being.

A safe community

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

Policy and Guidelines

A copy of this policy statement will be displayed on the Youth Centre notice board and in the Church foyer.

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

A full copy of the policy and guidelines will be made available on request to any member of the Church, the parents or carers of any child or young person attending the Church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and guidelines will be monitored and reviewed at least annually.

The policy statement will be reviewed annually at the Church meeting together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

Definitions of Abuse

Everyone should be aware of the indicators of abuse, exploitation and understand that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside their home, and online, and that they are rarely standalone events, covered by one label and that in most cases, issues will overlap.

Physical Abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/ carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance

abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn
- challenge authority
- become disinterested in their school work
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age
- mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- acquire gifts such as money or a mobile phone from new 'friends'.

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. For a full description of types of abuse / neglect see:

Keeping children safe in education: 2024

We recognise also that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.

Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur. To ensure that all children receive equal protection, we will take note of the Equality Act (2010) and take positive action to deal with any disadvantages these children face. We will give special consideration to children who are:

- living away from home or in temporary accommodation
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- living transient lifestyles
- affected by parental substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental health needs
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage or being drawn into extremism

Child on child abuse

Child on child abuse can take many forms, including:

- physical abuse such as biting, hitting, kicking or hair pulling
 - sexually harmful behaviour/sexual abuse such as inappropriate sexual language, touching, sexual assault or rape
 - sexting, including pressuring another person to send sexual imagery or video content
 - teenage relationship abuse - defined as a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, perpetrated against a current or former partner
 - initiation/hazing - used to induct newcomers into an organisation such as sports team or groups by subjecting them to a series of potentially humiliating, embarrassing or abusing trials which promote a bond between them.
 - prejudiced behaviour - a range of behaviours which causes someone to feel powerless, worthless or excluded and which relates to prejudices around belonging, identity and equality, in particular prejudices linked to disabilities, special educational needs, ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and sexual identity.
 - upskirting – this typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This is an offence.
- Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as ‘banter’ or ‘part of growing up’. Different gender issues can be prevalent when dealing with child on child abuse, for example girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence.

We will take the following steps to minimise or prevent the risk of child on child abuse.

- An open and honest environment where young people feel safe to share information about anything that is upsetting or worrying them.
- Junior Church sessions used to provide a Christian framework outlining acceptable behaviour and stressing the effects of bullying.
- Junior Church teachers will endeavour always to create surroundings where everyone feels confident and at ease.
- We will ensure that the Junior Church sessions are well supervised, especially in areas where children might be vulnerable.

All allegations of child on child abuse should be passed to the safeguarding team immediately. They will then be investigated and dealt with as follows.

- Information gathering – children, Leaders and witnesses will be spoken with as soon as possible to gather relevant information quickly to understand the situation and assess whether there was intent to cause harm.
- Decide on action – if it is believed that any young person is at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made to children's social care. The safeguarding team will then work with children's social care to decide on next steps, which may include contacting the police.
- Inform parents/carers - as with other concerns of abuse, we will normally seek to discuss concerns about a child with parents/ carers. Our focus is the safety and wellbeing of the child and so if we believe that notifying parents/carers could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, advice will first be sought from children's social care and/or the police before parents are contacted

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It can impact children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and /or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships.

Responding to Concerns

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

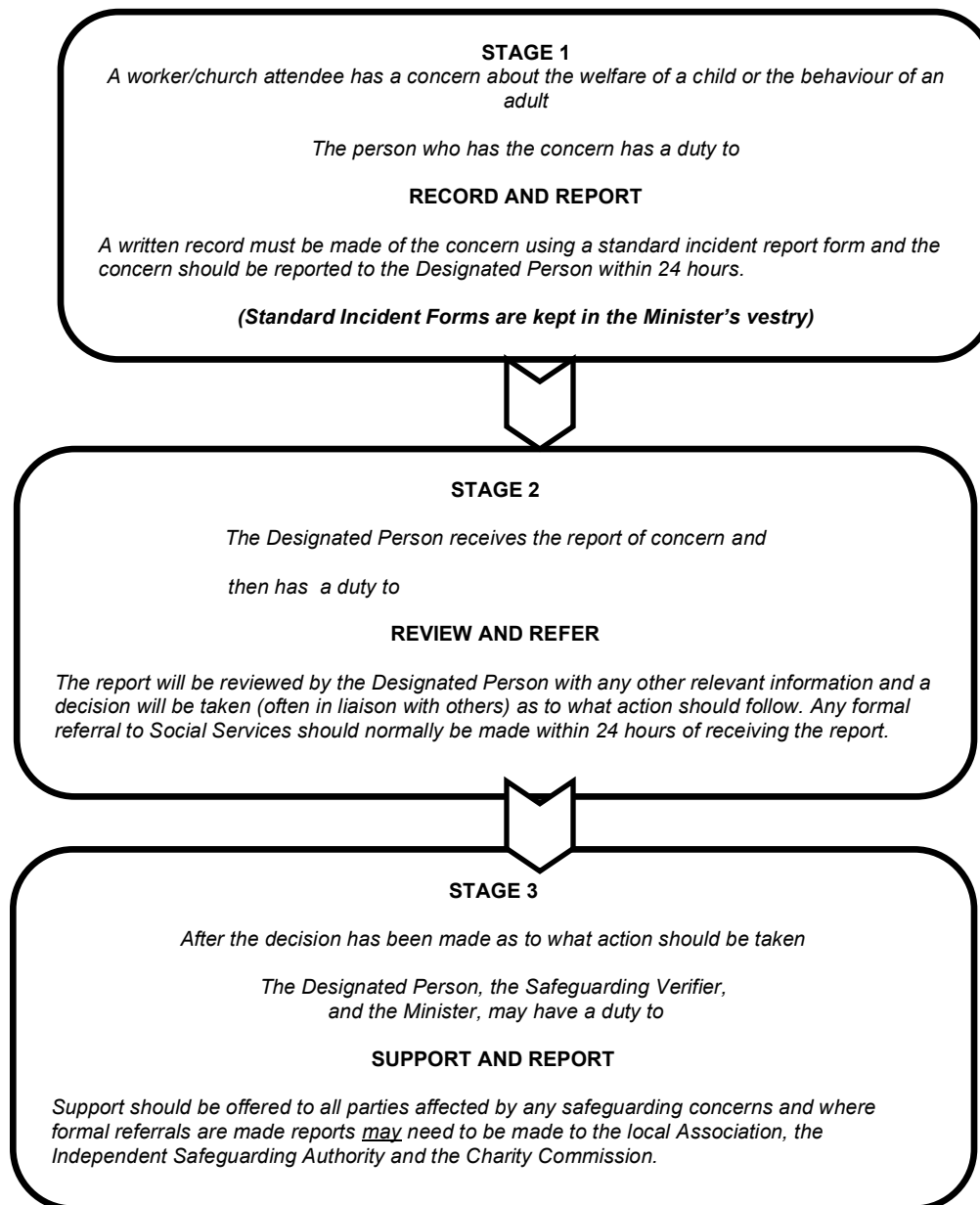
Do not act alone

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.

Do	Don't
Listen and Clarify	Minimise what is said
Give Support	Show shock, alarm or disapproval
Explain What happens next	Question or push for information
Take Action	Offer false reassurance

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, which comprises the Junior Church Teachers.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services (see page 23 for relevant numbers.)

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 Verifier.

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

The duty to RECORD & REPORT

As soon as possible after a child tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

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, which includes the church minister as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved, and representatives of the professional agencies.

However, if at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anyone can make a referral to Social Care. 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 (see page 22 for relevant numbers.)

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 Minister) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be 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 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 inform the parent/carer 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 Verifier
- report the referral to the Minister (if a Minister is in place)
- report the referral to the Regional Minister of the local Association

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

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children the allegation should be reported to the Designated Officer (formerly LADO). The Designated Officer 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.

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.

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 volunteer. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children and all volunteers will undergo checks commensurate with their contact with children and the supervision provided to them. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised.

Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers

The Church should ensure that the following selection procedures have been followed:

A written role description for each post

All new volunteers should complete an application form (C.V. on its own is not sufficient)

Prospective volunteers to be interviewed

Two references will be taken up (at least one should be from outside of the church) and online searches considered.

DBS will be applied for

The worker will be appointed for a probationary period of 6 months.

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)

Administration of this process will be overseen by the Designated Person, but may be carried out by others.

Until this procedure is completed, workers must be supervised.

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.

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.

Young leaders under 18 years of age

In law young leaders 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 the young leader is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience.

A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children.

When considering ratios of staff to children the young leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader.

The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.

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

If the young leader accompanies a group on a residential activity ideally they should have separate sleeping accommodation to both the adult leadership team and the children they are working with.

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.

When concerns are expressed about the Minister

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister 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 the concern should be raised with the Safeguarding Verifier & or the Minister

Respecting children and young people

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and 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 your own body language and invading a person's personal space.

Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual 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.

Do not engage in any of the following:

- invading 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.

When it is necessary to control and discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. (A situation may, however, arise where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.)

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.

Leaders and Helpers should:

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.

Not give lifts to young people on their own, other than for short journeys. Ensure that if transporting children that you have the correct insurance cover for passengers. When possible, ensure you have parental permission.

Not share sleeping accommodation with children if you take a group away.

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.

Not use physical punishment when controlling or disciplining children.

Keep a log 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, allegations made by young people, 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.

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, this 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.

These are 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
- official church e-mails to young people should be sent out with a church header and footer indicating to the young people that this is an official communication and this should also be copied to the church e-mail address.
- 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.

Instant Messaging Services (IMS)

The use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum. Where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a worker:

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

Social Networking sites

If adults are intending to add 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 for Discipline

A policy based upon the following guidelines should be agreed upon by each different section of youth work if and when necessary. It should reflect the age group and general activities of the children.

Children should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling. Discipline is about our relationship with children not our mastery of them.

Good discipline is built on respect between leaders and children. (This does not imply equality but does have an implication for leaders' attitudes towards children).

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:

- Chastise the individual/group – criticise the behaviour not the person
- Move the offender to a less volatile situation - change the group activity
- Remove the child to a calm space away from others. Stay with them until they have cooled down, but keep the time out short.

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

Bullying: "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 Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

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 & helpers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

Ratios

When working with young people the following recommended minimum ratios 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 any special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratio.

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.

Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety

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.

Ensure there is enough space and appropriate activities for all children.

Have a First Aid kit and phone available.

Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc).

Check 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.

Risk Assessments

A generic written risk assessment will be carried out by the Health and Safety Advisor for the Church at the beginning of each academic year. This will cover the general week to week Sunday morning activities. A specific risk assessment will be carried out by them for any other one off youth activities which may take place throughout the year.

Risk assessments will be made available to the Leadership Team.

A safe community

Safe Premises

The church takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the premises are safe for all who use them. The following checklist identifies guidelines to ensure the safety of all, especially, children and young people:

- 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 Leaders for action to be taken

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 gospel imperative to welcome the sinner needs to be set alongside the gospel imperative that the protection of children must be paramount.

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 meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused. This might also state that the abuser or alleged abuser (until such time as the allegation has been cleared or proven) must decline offers of hospitality from church members where there are children present in the home.

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

A contract would include the following:

It will identify the meetings the person will attend

It will specify that they will always sit apart from children

It may ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises

It will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children are present

It will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children

It will state that the person will never be alone with children while attending church functions

It will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children meet.

Guidance will be sought on whom within the church can and should be notified if an offender joins the congregation.

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

Helpful Numbers

Oldham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH team)

8.45am—5pm 0161 770 7777

Out of hours emergency duty team 0161 770 6936

E mail: child.mash@oldham.gov.uk (children / families with children)

adult.mash@oldham.gov.uk (adults)

Oldham Designated Officers

Colette Morris 0161-770-8870 07583101863 colette.morris@oldham.gov.uk

Wendy Nicholls 0161-770-0008 07974 619094 wendy.nicholls@oldham.gov.uk

Police non-emergency: 101

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

North West Baptist Association- safeguarding contact: Tim Presswood

Phone: 07730 532961

Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot OX11 8RT Tel: 01235 517700 Fax: 01235 517715 Email:

safeguarding@baptist.org.uk

Website: www.baptist.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1125912

Tel: 01235 517700 Fax: 01235 517715 Email: safeguarding@baptist.org.uk

Website: www.baptist.org.uk Registered Charity Number: 112591

