



Child Protection Policy

February 2017

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1 Introduction

1.1 Why Should Churches Have Safeguards?

In England and Wales the law states that people who work with children have to try to keep them safe.

Having safeguards in place:

- Protects children and young people from harm or abuse.
- Protects paid or voluntary workers from false allegations.
- Enables paid or voluntary workers to know what to do if they are worried.
- Shows that our church is responsible and values the work with children and young people.

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which has a broader definition than child protection as it includes the important element of prevention.

For the safeguarding policy to be effective, the whole church must be committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people creating a safe environment for them to grow and develop.

All who work with children and young people must read and adhere to the church's Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

1.2 Safeguarding — Gospel Insights

There are several reasons why we need safeguarding policies and procedures.

1.2.1 Placing a Proper Value on Children

Jesus challenged the outlook of his day that placed children as second class citizens. He was angered when his disciples thought him too busy to spend time with children (Mark 10v13-16). When his disciples argued about greatness, he took a child and placed the child in their midst and told them to "become like children" (Matthew 18v1-4). At the start of the final week of his earthly ministry, Jesus delighted in the praises of children in the temple (Matthew 21v15-16). Any church taking seriously these words will ensure that children are welcomed and inviting to share in the common life of God's people.

Such a community will be horrified at any harm done to a child and offer a loving and safe environment where they can grow and develop. It will resist the temptation to turn a deaf ear to the appeals of help from a child and will create an environment where children's voices are always taken seriously. At one point Jesus spoke about the terrible consequences of being a stumbling block to "one of the least of these" (Matthew 18v6-10). Sadly the church has not always done this.

1.2.2 Dealing with People who Offend Against Children

The view of the Baptist Union is that those who have committed any kind of sexual offence against a child in the past should not normally be permitted to hold any position of trust with children or young people in the life of the church. Some find this view a challenge to the Christian gospel of forgiveness and the offer of new life which we find in Jesus. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the Christian church has used the language of forgiveness and 'second chance' somewhat lightly in the past and has certainly colluded with those who have used their positions of trust in the church to gain the opportunity to harm and abuse children.

Experience has taught us that desires that lead to the sexual abuse of children are deeply ingrained in the personality of the abuser. In the light of this the following reflections can be made:

- The experience of being forgiven and restored is an ongoing process and can mean avoiding those situations that are a particular temptation for us.
- The process of being forgiven will involve facing up to the seriousness of our sin and recognising the impact that it has had on others.
- The way of forgiveness always entails risk. However, to take the risk of placing those who have offended against children in the past in positions of responsibility and care for children in the present is a risk that we do not have the right to take.
- While we should not call into question the power of God to transform a person's heart by the power of the spirit, we must always be cautious about our own ability to discern when such a transformation is genuine and when it is not. A person who has been genuinely transformed will recognise that deception has been part of a pattern of behaviour in the past and will accept the need to the church to be cautious and not place children at risk.
- Those who have abused children in the past should be helped to find a place in the life of the Christian community enabling them to live with the consequences of their past in the light of God's forgiveness and acceptance. Although service with responsibility for children is not appropriate, there may be other ways in which they can express their service of God and contribute to the life of the church.

1.2.3 Creating a Community of Care for All

Safeguarding policies need to be set in the context of a desire to see the church is a community of care. We are called to live out the new command of Jesus in our life together: 'I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another' (John 13v34). The complex and often painful issues of child abuse requires us to exercise the greatest wisdom in fostering a climate of pastoral care in which the needs of different groups of people can be fully met. Sometimes it feels as if the claims for sensitivity and understanding by these groups compete with each other.

First, there is the demand to create a safe environment for our children which must be our priority.

Second, we will seek to provide pastoral care to those who were themselves abused as children. Many 'survivors' of abuse will never be able to tell their stories to others in the church; it would be too painful. They may not know how their story will be heard or received. Those who abused them may be loved and respected members of the church fellowship. The church fellowship that treats the safeguarding of children and young people as an inconvenience and a hindrance to their work, will give an unwelcome message to the survivors of abuse.

Third, there are those against whom accusations are made. Whenever this occurs the individuals concerned are deeply hurt and a community is often thrown into turmoil. Taking an accusation seriously while offering appropriate pastoral support to the accused is fraught with difficulties. Because all allegations must be followed with the utmost seriousness it can sometimes feel as if the person who is being accused is being treated as guilty before they have had a chance to answer the charges. All of those who were with children in whatever context are vulnerable to this eventuality. When accusations are made appropriate support needs to be available.

Finally, the church has a responsibility of pastoral care towards the person who has offended in the past. Child abuse must not be perceived, through our actions and attitudes, to be the 'unforgivable sin'. We must find ways of enabling the person was offended in the past to find their appropriate

place in the fellowship of the church.

The challenge to the church is to seek to develop a community of care where children find a safe place, survivors find a place of healing, the accused find support and abusers find redemption.

1.3 Definitions

1.3.1 Abuse and Neglect

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. There are four types of abuse as officially defined in government guidance: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

1.3.2 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Physical abuse shapes and influences the child's behaviour, and their emotional and educational development. It may vary in degree of injury, whether directly or indirectly, from physical injuries, neurological damage, disability or even death.

1.3.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse significantly harms a child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be particularly damaging in infancy.

1.3.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in

looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Children who have been or are currently being sexually abused may display a wide range of behaviours, including inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual knowledge inappropriate to age.

A child's ability to cope with the aftermath of a discovery or disclosure of sexual abuse is strengthened by the support of a non-abusing adult who believes the child. The reactions of other adults who interact with a child during this time can also have an impact on the child's ability to cope with what is happening.

1.3.5 Neglect

Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Long term neglect is likely to cause far more development delay and impairment than any other form of abuse. In extreme cases severe neglect can lead to the death of a child.

A distinction must be made between neglect caused by financial poverty which can be alleviated by financial help and that caused by emotional poverty. These may co-exist, but relief of the former does not lead to relief of the latter.

13.6 Spiritual Abuse

The term 'spiritual abuse' is not one of the official definitions of abuse but is sometimes used to describe some of the particular features of abuse arising within religious organisations. 'Spiritual abuse' is increasingly being used to describe those situations where an abuse of power takes place in the context of a faith community. The following is a widely used definition of spiritual abuse.

"Spiritual abuse occurs when someone uses their power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice to satisfy their own needs at the expense of others."

There are a number of ways in which practice in churches can lead to the abuse or neglect of children:

- 1/ A belief in demon possession resulting in the labelling and naming of a child as 'evil' or a 'witch'.
- 2/ Placing pressure on children to make decisions that are not appropriate to their age or developmental stage.
- 3/ Creating an environment in which children are discouraged from asking questions or holding alternative views.

2 Implementing a Safeguarding Children Policy

2.1 Policy Statement

POLICY STATEMENT

on

Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church

Barrow Baptist Church

(referred to as 'the church' in the Policy Statement)

The vision of the church is 'Making Missionary Disciples'. In fulfilling this vision the church:

- Has a programme of activities with the children and young people
- Welcomes children and young people 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 gender, 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) [or Working Together under the Children Act (Welsh Assembly Government 2006)].

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all: especially children and young people associated with the church. We commit to praying for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we also commit ourselves to the following policies and to the continuing 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 the duty of all to respond to concerns about the wellbeing 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. 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 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.

Responsible People

The church has appointed a Safeguarding Trustee to:

- Oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees.

The church has appointed a Designated Person for Safeguarding to:

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

Policy and Procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the school room.

Each worker with children and young people, 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, including definitions of abuse, will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church.

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

Level one safeguarding training, as well as a report on the outcome of the annual review, will be given annually at the church meeting in March.

2.2 Roles of Safeguarding Personnel

In the life of the church, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. However, for the policy to be effective, some responsibilities are given to named people.

2.2.1 Trustees

- Must all be fully conversant with the church's Safeguarding Children Policy.
- Ensure that the policy is monitored and reviewed annually.
- Support those who are working with children and young people.
- Ensure training needs of workers are met, and there is a budget for provisions.
- Ensure that the policy is communicated to all within the church.
- Ultimately responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented and resourced in the church.
- Have a duty of care to the children and young people who are involved in the life of the church.
- Responsible for the outworking of the church's policy and procedures should an incident need to be investigated.
- Responsible for any legal obligations that arise under the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

2.2.2 Safeguarding Trustee

- Ensure on behalf of the Trustees that there is a process in place for writing and updating the safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the trustees.
- Ensure the policy and procedures are reviewed annually and report to the trustees.
- Responsible for keeping trustees notified of any safeguarding incidents in the life of the church.
- To attend an annual review of the policy and procedures; see evidence of the recruitment procedure and review any incidents reported.
- To attend the annual seminar and training session.
- Receive any minutes from Safeguarding meetings from the administrator.

2.2.3 Designated Person for Safeguarding

- Receive and record information from anyone who has safeguarding concerns.
- Assess information promptly and carefully; clarify and obtain more information where needed.
- Consult with outside bodies where appropriate to discuss concerns.
- Make formal referral to Social Service or police if appropriate.
- Inform the Safeguarding Trustee and minister of any referral. Wherever possible the Designated Person will discuss incidents with the Trustee and minister before referral.
- Make referrals as appropriate to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

- Be the link between the church and local Baptist Association for safeguarding matters.

2.2.4 The Minister

- As a trustee, shares responsibility with all trustees for the adoption and implementation of the church's safeguarding policy.
- Ensure that the church takes seriously its responsibilities regarding safeguarding and help the church to see this as a part of the church's gospel responsibilities.
- Be aware of any safeguarding and child protection issues within the church.
- Responsible for ensuring appropriate pastoral support is provided in the context of any safeguarding investigation. It may not be appropriate for the minister to offer pastoral care directly but to make sure these needs are met. It is not appropriate for the same person to offer pastoral care to the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator of abuse.
- Must be able to take a role to seek to hold the church together in these situations.
- Wherever possible the minister should not be appointed as the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee.
- Ensure regular training in safeguarding children and young people is offered; also, be firm about workers attending training events.

2.2.5 Workers with Children and Young People

- Without exception, all should take a personal responsibility for implementing the policy.
- Know and implement the guidelines for good practice.
- Follow the agreed code of behaviour with children and young people.
- Be aware of the ways in which children and young people are harmed and the possible signs of abuse.
- Know what to do if a child or young person discloses abuse.
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about a fellow worker.
- Know who to speak to if they have any suspicions or concerns.

2.2.6 Leaders of Children's and Young People's Groups

- Know all of the above role for workers with children and young people.
- Know how to appoint new staff and volunteers including DBS checks.
- Know the principles of good supervision.
- Know how to contact the Designated Person.
- Know how to access pastoral support for workers.

2.2.7 Assistant Minister and Children's Worker (where in post)

- Ensure all new workers have been through the application process.
- Ensure all workers have a job description.
- Encourage and support leaders in maintaining a good structure of supervision.

2.2.8 Administrator

- Co-ordinate the applications for DBS disclosures.
- Issue policies and procedures to all who work with children and young people; keep all up to date on any changes or amendments.
- Provide application forms, seek references as required, and provide all safeguarding relating information to new workers.
- Ensure that all children and young people have a parental consent form.
- Record minutes from all meetings relating to safeguarding and issue to relevant people.
- Keep records of all who work with leaders and young people and the children and young people in each group.
- Responsible for keeping all confidential documents and information in a lockable filing cabinet and also for destroying unneeded confidential documents in a responsible manner (i.e. shredding them). All electronic storage devices holding confidential information must be password protected.

2.2.9 All Church Attendees — Members or Non-Church Members

- Ensure there is a welcome for children and young people and intolerance for all that brings them harm.
- Be alert to situations where children may be vulnerable.
- Know who to speak to if they suspect a child or young person is being harmed.
- Know the procedure of reporting a concern and where to find the child protection cards.

2.3 Policy Review

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures shall be reviewed annually by:

- Safeguarding Trustee
- Designated Person for Safeguarding
- Minister
- Assistant Minister

The review will consider and report the following;

- Any new legislation or guidance which requires the policy and procedures to be amended.
- If there have been any incidents or concerns, have the procedures been followed and do they need to be strengthened?
- Is there any new work with children and young people that needs to be written into the procedures?
- Have all who are working with children and young people been appointed under the agreed procedure?
- What training has been offered and what training is planned for the next year?

The policy and procedures shall be reviewed annually by the diaconate.

Level one Safeguarding Training shall be given annually to church members at the AGM.

All additions and amendments to the policy will be recorded by the administrator on an amendment log.

2.4 Policy and Procedures Amendment Log

3 Safeguarding Procedures

3.1 Responding to Concerns

We all share the responsibility for promoting the welfare of children and young people. Without clear procedures for dealing with allegations staff, volunteers and church members may not know what to do if an allegation is made, or a child discloses that they are being harmed. This could lead to them doing nothing.

When written procedures are in place and communicated effectively to all those who work with children and young people, workers will have clear expectations placed on them. Workers will also be held accountable when they do not follow these procedures.

3.1.1 Understanding Abuse and Its Symptoms

The following are some indicators which may suggest abuse;

- Unexplained injuries, especially on areas of the body not usually prone to injury.
- An injury that has not been treated/given medical attention.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Changes in behaviour or mood, for example quiet and withdrawn.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Signs of neglect such as under nourishment and inappropriate clothing.

The presence of one or more of these indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is taking place. It is not the worker's job to investigate or decide if something is abuse, only to report on what they observe.

Knowing whether a child is being abused or neglected may be difficult to judge but workers need to be alert to the potential indicators of abuse and neglect, and also know how to respond to the concerns they have. Workers should all know who to report these concerns to.

3.1.2 Who Harms Children?

Children and young people can be subject to harm in any and every setting. Harm may be perpetrated by both males and females, and by other children and young people.

The person who harms a child or young person:

- Is most often someone known to the child, such as a parent, carer, sibling, friend or neighbour.
- Is often an adult with whom the child has a valued relationship and may be in a position of trust within an organisation to which the child belongs or has contact.
- Can be of any background; social, economic, cultural or ethnic.
- May act in isolation or together with other adults.
- Can be another child or young person.

3.1.3 Ways Harm May be Discovered

On occasion an incident or injury will give cause for concern but often it is a series of incidents

or concerns which indicate that a child may be suffering or at risk of harm.

- Children and young people might share with a trusted adult a concern they have about their safety or disclose that they are being harmed.
- A child's behaviour, physical appearance, developmental progress and emotional demeanour might indicate that they are being abused or neglected.
- There may be a history of concerns noted over a number of occasions.
- Sudden changes might be observed in a child's behaviour.
- An adult's interaction with a child or young person might give cause for concern.
- Parents/carers may be experiencing difficulties that could potentially cause damaging effects on their child, such as domestic abuse, substance misuse or mental health issues.

3.14 How Can Children and Young People Express Their Concerns?

All children and young people must know how to contact the Designated Person, who is responsible for acting on their behalf to safeguarding concerns. However, children and young people who are being abused will often only talk about what has happened to them with people they trust and with whom they feel safe. Therefore, it is important that all members of the church know who to contact (the Designated Person) if a child or young person talks to them about an abusive or harmful relationship.

3.15 When a Child Expresses a Concern

When a child or young person talks about harm or abuse that they are suffering;

- React calmly and create a safe environment for the child to share their concerns.
- Listen carefully and allow them time to say what they want to say without rushing them or interrupting them.
- Do not ask questions like, "Is it daddy you are afraid of?" Instead ask open questions like, "Who is it that you are afraid of?"
- If there is cause for concern explain that you have to tell someone who knows what to do to help them. Do not promise that the concern will be kept confidential.
- Accept what the child says and reassure them that you know how difficult it must be for them to confide in you. Tell the child that they are not to blame and that they have done the right thing in speaking to you.
- Be aware that the child or young person may be scared and they may have been threatened if they tell of what has been happening to them.
- Remember that most children and young people feel loyalty to their parents or other significant people in their lives and often find it difficult to say things to their detriment.
- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the child language and record any questions you may have asked to prompt a response.

3.16 What to do if Abuse is Suspected or Disclosed

Everyone has the responsibility of ensuring children and young people are safe within the church. If the behaviour of a child or young person gives any cause for concern, if an allegation is made about a child or young person being harmed, or if the behaviour of any adult towards

children or young people causes you concern, you must follow the procedures for responding to concerns.

- Do not dismiss your concern.
- Do not confront an adult whose behaviour concerns you.
- Do not make the decision yourself on whether abuse is taking place or not.
- Do not investigate or act alone.

The person with the concern must either complete a child protection card and report the concern to the Designated Person, or telephone the Designated Person who will make a written record, within 24 hours.

On receiving the report, the Designated Person is to review the concern and refer it to the appropriate people.

3.1.7 Responding to Concerns about Behaviour of Fellow Workers

All workers should make a report if they feel uncomfortable about the behaviour about a fellow worker or there is a breach of the code of conduct.

There is an 'allegation of misconduct' form to complete for this procedure that must be given to the Designated Person.

When the concern involves the Designated Person:

If this were to arise, all of the church members must know to whom they must speak.

This person is the Safeguarding Trustee or the Minister.

When the concern involves the Minister:

Any concern involving a minister must be immediately reported to the regional minister of the Baptist Association in addition to following the normal procedure for reporting a concern.

3.1.8 Procedure for Responding to Concerns

STAGE 1

Anyone who has a concern about the welfare of a child / young person or the behaviour of an adult

The person who has the concern has a duty to
RECORD AND REPORT

A written record must be made of the concern using a child protection card and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.

If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.

**STAGE 2**

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

The Designated person has a duty to
REVIEW AND REFER

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.

If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.

**STAGE 3**

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee / Deacon and the Minister may have a duty to
SUPPORT AND REPORT

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the local Association, the Independent Safeguarding Authority or the Charity Commission.

3.2 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. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

To work with children and young people is not a right but a privilege and the need for safety is paramount as we seek to give children and young people the best experience we can of Christian living.

3.2.1 Appointment Procedure for Volunteer Workers

1. Write a role description on the application form and ask the candidate to complete the rest of the form.
2. Check the candidate's criminal record and provide a copy of this policy.
3. Two members of the church, one of whom is to be an elder, are to confirm the appointment of the candidate, by signing the application form.
4. Appoint for a probationary period.
5. Provide an induction programme and any further training needed.

3.2.2 Appointment Procedure for Paid Workers

Follow the procedure as above for volunteer workers but also:

- Advertise the job vacancy appropriately.
- Shortlist the applicants.
- Hold a more formal interview.
- Check the applicant's right to work in the UK.
- Issue a contract of employment to the successful applicant.

3.2.3 Appointment Responsibilities

Letting people know the need for workers:

- Church notices / notice board.
- Members' meeting.
- Personal approach by children's/youth worker or minister.

Administration of application forms: Administrator

Application forms available from: Administrator

Application forms returned to: Administrator

Finding a new volunteer: Person appointed by the Trustees

Drawing up a job description: Person appointed by the Trustees

Conducting interviews: Person appointed by the Trustees

Making the appointment decision:	Person appointed by the Trustees
Taking up references:	Person appointed by the Trustees
Induction programme/training:	Person appointed by the Trustees
Probation period/review:	Person appointed by the Trustees

The appointment decision needs to be approved by the elders. Paid staff need to be approved at a church meeting.

3.2.4 References

Each successful candidate must provide at least two references; one from inside church and one from outside church. These must not be relatives or related by marriage, must be over 18 years old and at least one of them must be able to talk about the person's ability to work with children and young people.

3.2.5 Obtaining DBS Disclosures

The administrator will make an appointment with the applicant to complete a DBS request. The applicant shall provide the identification documents which are required for the request to be completed. When the DBS is returned with clearance it is then filed by the administrator.

DBS disclosures must be renewed every five years.

3.2.6 Agreement to Work within Safeguarding Procedures

On appointment, every candidate will receive a full copy of the church's safeguarding policy and procedures and should sign an undertaking to work within the terms of the policy and procedures and to attend relevant training sessions.

The agreement shall be a signed written statement.

This practice reinforces the seriousness with which the church takes its commitment to the safeguarding of children and young people.

3.2.7 Probationary Period

Appointing workers for a probationary period gives opportunity to assess their suitability for the role they have taken on in the light of the way in which they:

- Engage with children and young people
- Co-operate with other workers
- Work within the boundaries of the safeguarding procedures

Also this period gives the candidate a way of withdrawing from the position if it is not what they had envisaged.

During the probationary period the candidate will be observed with ensuring that;

- They are working within the code of behaviour agreed in the church's procedures
- They are developing healthy relationships with children and young people and understand the need to respect boundaries
- They are working well with the other members of the team

The probationary period may also highlight and identify further training that is needed if necessary. At the end of this period a conversation will be held with the candidate by the children's/youth worker to reflect on their experience over the period and review the appointment.

3.2.8 Induction and Training

An induction programme will be arranged by the children's/youth worker to introduce the candidate to their role; this should include training in the church's safeguarding policy and procedures if it hasn't already been discussed.

Initial training should include:

- Recognising possible signs of abuse
- How to listen to a child or young person without passing judgement in the event that a disclosure is made
- When and how to report any concerns; including how to contact the Designated Person
- The code of behaviour for workers
- Ideally training should be refreshed every three years.

3.2.9 Appointing Young Leaders

The young leaders of today are the adult leaders of tomorrow. They can be valuable members of any youth or children's team in church, providing valuable time, energy and ideas.

To encourage young leaders we need to ensure that they are safe, the children and young people are safe, and that they are well supervised and cared for. Young leaders can be from the same peer group as those they are working with, so boundaries can become blurred.

3.2.9.1 Leaders Under 18 Years of Age

By law, under 18 year olds are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team, but should not be managed in the same way as the children and young people they are working with.

Training and mentoring will be encouraged to help the young leader to develop their skills, attitudes and experience. They must not be looked at as "just another pair of hands".

- A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never be given sole responsibility for the group.
- When considering ratios, the young leader need to be counted as a child not a leader.
- The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.
- The young leader will need a completed parental consent form.
- If the young leader attends a residential activity they must have separate sleeping accommodation from both adult leaders and the children and young people they are working with.
- Young leaders who take leadership responsibilities in the group which they are a member will not have to go through the appointment procedure.
- Young leaders who are appointed to work in a group with children and young people where they are not a member must go through the appointment procedure.

3.2.9.2 Young Adult Leaders Aged 18 and Over

Leaders aged 18 and over are adults and so will need to go through the full safeguarding appointment procedures.

If the young leader is part of a peer group within the church, the boundaries can become blurred if they are a leader of a group in which they are also a member. It is advised that young adult leaders should not be given leadership roles in the age group directly below them.

Two areas of the code of behaviour will be particularly relevant to this age group:

Electronic Communication

Special consideration is needed here as young adult leaders are more likely to be in touch with young people by text and social networking sites. It is inappropriate to stop this altogether; however, you need to make sure they are not putting themselves or others at risk.

Abuse of Trust

Young adult leaders need to be 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.

3.2.10 Support and Supervision

All new workers will need to be supervised more closely until it is sure that they are working safely and within the code of behaviour the church has adopted.

Without being intrusive, workers can help one another maintain good practice in safeguarding children and young people.

Safeguarding issues will be regularly on the agenda at meetings for leaders and helpers with children and young people.

Accountability will help to ensure that if one of the workers is behaving inappropriately that behaviour will be identified and reported to the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

All workers need to know who to speak to if they see someone behaving inappropriately.

3.3 Safe Behaviour

All children and young people, whatever their age, gender, racial background, culture or disability, should always be treated with respect and dignity; their safety and welfare should be a priority.

The code of behaviour is an important safeguarding measure and also models positive patterns of Christian behaviour to children and young people.

The code of behaviour is first and foremost about protecting children and young people, but is also to help protect workers from false accusations or unnecessary suspicion.

Behaviour, actions and attitudes of those who work with children and young people needs to be carefully thought through and defined. Remember that:

- What one person sees as a harmless joke, another person sees as a form of ridicule that belittles and demeans.
- A gesture of affection and friendship could be seen as intrusive and threatening.

3.3.1 Respect

- Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect.

- 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 or young person.
- Listen well. Be careful not to assume you know what the child or young person is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken, how it is said, observe body language.
- Do not invade the privacy of children or young people when they are using the toilet, showering or in their bedroom (residential).
- Do not engage in rough games that involve in physical contact between a leader and a child or young person and do not play sexually provocative games or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun.
- Do not engage in scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.
- When it is necessary to control or discipline a child or young person, do not use physical punishment. (A situation may arise however where a child or young person needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person).
- Another adult should be present if a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be washed. If possible, the child's parent should carry out this task.
- Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

3.3.2 **Guidelines to Avoid Being Alone With Children and Young People**

- A worker should never plan to be alone on church premises with children or young people. If there are insufficient leader/workers to have two in each group, doors should be left open or the groups could work together in the same room. Wherever possible, doors should be fitted with glass panels.
- At least two adults should be present before the children or young people enter the group, and at least two adults should remain until the last child or young person has left the group.
- A worker should never invite a child or young person to their home alone. It may be acceptable to invite a group if another adult is present. The parents/carers should know where their child or young person is and what time they will be returning home.

3.3.3 **Unplanned Occasions When a Worker is Alone with Children or Young People**

- Assess the risks involved in sending the group home against the vulnerability of being alone with them.
- Wherever possible immediately phone another appropriate person to report the situation and make a written report to give to the Designated Person.

3.3.4 **Working One to One**

Children and young people will want to speak to someone they trust when looking for help and support. Working one to one with a child or young person can come out of a number of situations.

- Listening to a child or young person offering support or advice as they share an issue they are facing.
- Mentoring, Pastoral guidance, discipleship or accountability where privacy and confidentiality are important.

Where possible hold the conversation in a quiet corner of a room where others are present. If this is not possible, be in view of others through an open door or a door with a glass panel.

If the above is not possible the following guidelines should apply:

- Another person should be in the building and the young person should know they are there. Another adult should know the meeting is taking place and with whom.
- Set an agreed time limit to the meeting and stick to it.
- All workers should have specific permission by the church to work one to one.
- A simple log sheet should be kept recording any one to one meetings.
- Supervision of workers should be used to monitor frequency of appointments and content of meetings.
- Workers need to maintain a healthy self-awareness when working one to one to make sure they do not get in over their head and the young person does not become too dependent on them.
- If a worker believes that the young person is at risk of harming themselves or another person they have the responsibility to pass that information on; therefore, great care should be taken before promising confidentiality.
- Any meetings should be in a public place at an appropriate time.

3.35 Transporting Children and Young People

Vulnerable situations can be created when workers transport children and young people to and from church activities or on planned outings. Please see the church's driving policy for further information. Anyone who transports children and young people must read and sign the church's driving policy.

3.36 Guideline for Appropriate Physical Contact

Occasionally physical contact will happen, such as putting your arm round a child who is crying. However an innocent touch could be seen as a threat to a child or young person who has suffered abuse.

The following guidelines should be followed when considering whether or not touch is appropriate:

- For whose benefit is this taking place; the child or young person or your own?
- Avoid any physical contact if no one else is present.
- Remember that not all express affection or concern in a physical way.

3.37 Abuse of Trust

Relationships between children or young people and their leaders should be a relationship of trust. However, there is the potential for the trust to be abused by the leader, who is in a position of power over the child or young person. All who are in a position of trust must realise the power this gives them over the ones they care for and therefore:

- It is always wrong for a leader to enter into a sexual relationship, or a romantic relationship with a young person, whose vulnerability could be exploited, and whether consensual or not, the imbalance of power makes it an abuse of trust.

- Although a romantic relationship is more obvious when the leader is a mature adult, it is less obvious if the leader is also a young person. If a romantic relationship does occur, the leader must cease the relationship of trust or the romantic relationship with the young person.

3.38 Electronic Communication

Electronic communication has become very important and popular over the last few years, and although it is an easy way of communicating, especially with young people, there are dangers that call for vigilance.

- Because it is often an informal mode to communicate, it can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood and workers can easily cross the boundaries in their relationships with children or young people.
- Some adults intent on causing harm to children or young people choose this way to communicate as a way to meet or 'groom' children and young people.

3.39 Guidelines for Safe Use of Electronic Communication

- Electronic communication should never become a substitute for face to face contact with young people. Clear language should be used, avoid abbreviations.
- Parents or carers must give permission for a worker to have email addresses, mobile phone numbers etc., and workers must only communicate with children and young people whom appropriate permission has been given.
- Workers must not put pressure on a child or young person to reveal their email address or mobile phone number etc.
- Electronic communication should not be used to contact children of primary school age.
- Only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed safeguarding procedures should use this way to communicate to children or young people on behalf of the church.
- Contact with children or young people by electronic communication should be used only for information purposes, not for general chatter.
- When a young person uses this form of communication when they are in need or having a crisis, the conversation must be recorded by the worker and a log must be kept.
- Workers must not share any personal information with children or young people, and also not request or respond to any personal information from a child or young person other than what is necessary and appropriate as part of their role.
- Electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. and emails to children or young people must have a church header showing it to be an official way of contact.
- Only contact by mobile phone for information, and avoid text language to avoid misunderstanding. Do not engage in text conversations.
- The use a phone camera should comply with the church policy for taking photos; workers must not keep images of children or young people on their mobile phones.
- Instant messaging services (IMS) should be avoided, but if used a log must be kept.

- If a leader chooses to communicate to young people using social networking sites, there should be a site solely for youth work; they should not use their personal site.
- When communicating with young adults via social networking sites, ensure all content is appropriate, being aware of photos and who can view the site.
- All electronic communication should be kept within public domain, be transparent and open to scrutiny, and wherever possible recorded.

3.3.10 **Good Practice**

- Be aware of teaching material that may not be suitable; show sensitivity for individuals in your group.
- Children and young people must not be on church premises without a responsible adult.
- When there is a rotation of staff in a group, communication is important for awareness of issues in a child or young person's circumstances.
- No one should be involved in an activity with children or young people whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

3.3.11 **Guidelines for 'Reasonable Force'**

The use of force can be regarded as 'reasonable' only if:

- The circumstances of the particular incident warrant it.
- The degree of force used is in proportion to the incident and is the minimum needed.
- The age and level of understanding of the child is taken into account.

Otherwise any use of force is unlawful. Thus reasonable force should not be used automatically in situations or as a form of discipline, but only where other behaviour management strategies have failed. Physical intervention to force compliance with instructions should never be used as a substitute for good behaviour management.

Reasonable force might involve a leader:

- Physically interposing between children.
- Blocking a child's path.
- Leading a child by the arm.
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of his or her back.
- In extreme circumstances, holding, pushing or pulling a child (e.g. to separate children in a fight).

3.3.11.1 Preventative Strategies

The church actively promotes positive behaviour management strategies and seeks to develop good relationships at all levels, thus reducing the need for the use of any form of physical intervention except in an emergency situation. All leaders will seek to follow strategies likely to reduce the need for force in dealing with difficult children, based on the age of the child and the context in which they are applied. They will endeavour at all times to:

- Move calmly and confidently.

- Make clear, simple statements, telling the child to stop and the consequences of failing to do so.
- Intervene early. Communicate with the child throughout the incident.
- Maintain eye contact.
- If necessary, summon another adult before the problem escalates.
- If necessary, remove audience from immediate location.
- Leaders should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting from anger or frustration.

3.3.11.2 When Reasonable Force May be Used

In keeping with the ethos of the church, reasonable force will only be applied as a last resort and in a way that preserves the dignity and respect of all concerned.

Calm and measured responses will be considered before any force is applied in any situation. It is often inappropriate for a leader to intervene in an incident without help if he or she may be at risk of injury. In this event, he or she will remove other children who may be at risk and summon help from another adult. Reasonable force may be appropriate to restrain a child where action is necessary for self-defence, where there is an imminent risk of injury or damage to property or where a child is compromising good discipline. Examples are:

- A child attacks a leader or another child.
- Children are fighting.
- A child is in danger of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play or misuse of dangerous materials / substances.
- In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a leader may need to take any action consistent with the use of reasonable force, for example, to prevent a child running into the path of oncoming buses or throwing something which might hit someone.

Leaders should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a child around the neck or the collar so as to be likely to restrict breathing.
- Hitting a child.
- Throwing an object at a child.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Holding or pulling by the hair or ear.
- Holding a child face down on the ground.

Leaders should not intervene without help when dealing with an older child, a physically large child, more than one child, or where there is serious risk of injury. Instead, they should remove other children who might be at risk, summon assistance from other adults, inform children that this is being done and continue to defuse the situation orally.

3.4 Safe Practice & Safe Premises

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and has adopted procedures that promote their safety and wellbeing.

3.4.1 Parental Consent

When children and young people are in our care, the parent/carer must complete a registration and consent form.

Parents and carers must notify the church of any changes.

The details on the registration and consent form should be available to the group leader each time the group meets.

Parents/carers must:

- Have a contact telephone number of the leader of the group their child attends; also details of the group/activity, start and finish times etc.
- Know that the church has a Safeguarding Children Policy.
- Know who to contact if they have a concern for their child (Designated person) and their contact telephone number.

3.4.2 Health & Safety Policy

Church buildings are not always the safest buildings for children to be in: many are old buildings and some have not been designed with the best interests of children in mind.

The church has adopted a Health & Safety Policy which is displayed on notice boards around the church.

All who work with children and young people must:

- Know their individual responsibility to uphold the church's Health and Safety Policy.
- Know how to report incidents and concerns under the church's Health and Safety Policy.
- Know where the First Aid equipment is kept and how to report an accident.
- Know the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

3.4.3 Registers

All group leaders must keep a register of their group, recording the names of the children and young people who attend the group each time the group meets. The register should also include the names of the staff that lead or help in the group each time the group meets.

3.4.4 Risk Assessments

All leaders of children's and young people's groups should assess the risks involved in the programme they are planning.

A risk assessment means looking at what could go wrong and deciding on ways to prevent or minimise that risk.

A General Risk Assessment should be done at the beginning of each term or set of sessions, considering the programme and the venue.

Specific Risk Assessments should be done for activities which are out of the ordinary (e.g. a trip

out), or an activity with particular risk factors (e.g. cooking or woodwork).

The method below is dependent on identifying potential threats and then assessing the risk that those threats could pose.

- A threat is anything that could cause harm.
- The risk is the combination of likelihood that a threat will be realized with the consequences of the threat being realized.

Individuals with particular needs should be specifically taken into account when assessing risks for groups or events.

3.4.4.1 Step 1: Identify the Threats

Walk around the venue, think through your programme and think about the individual children and young people you are working with. Take into account age and special needs, whether physical, emotional or behavioural.

- What or who could reasonably be expected to cause harm?
- Look back at accident records / incidents. What has been a threat in the past?

3.4.4.2 Step 2: Consider the Consequences

For each threat think through who might be harmed and how:

- Groups of people?
- Individuals (e.g. a child with special needs).
- What type of injury?

3.4.4.3 Step 3: Evaluate the Risks and Decide on Precautions

What can you do about the threats?

- Can I get rid of the threats altogether?
- If not, how can I control the threats or consequences so that the risk is low enough to be acceptable?

3.4.4.4 Step 4: Record Your Findings and Implement Them

Writing down your risk assessments and sharing them with your colleagues helps to ensure everyone understands the risks and subsequent controls. The risk assessment can then be reviewed and re-used at a later date.

3.4.4.5 Step 5: Review & Update Your Risk Assessment

When working with children and young people, the level of risk will vary upon the particular individuals you are working with, and the gifts and abilities of your workers. Thus risk assessments should be reviewed when necessary.

3.4.4.6 Examples of Risk Assessments

General Risk Assessment – Activity: Youth Club			
Identify the Threats	Who might be harmed and how?	Evaluate the risk and decide on precautions	Review your assessment and update if necessary
<p>Inadequately supervised children/young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidents • Bullying 	<p>Young People. Leader & Helpers. Parents.</p>	<p>Ratio of staff to young people. All rooms that are being used to be adequately staffed. Any young people with special needs? Do they need particular help for certain parts of the programme?</p>	<p>If a volunteer can't come at the last minute, how does that affect the evening's programme?</p>
<p>Accidents playing games</p>	<p>Young People. Leaders & Helpers.</p>	<p>First aid kit and first aider on premises. Think through games – are they suitable for the age profile of young people? Access to phone.</p>	<p>Playing outdoors away from usual venue. Re-assess risk. Is field clear of hazards?</p>
<p>Safety of premises</p>	<p>Young People. Leaders & Helpers. Parents.</p>	<p>Walk around the premises and consider what could reasonably be expected to cause harm.</p>	<p>Another group is sharing the premises on a particular night.</p>
<p>Use of kitchen</p>	<p>Young People. Leaders & Helpers.</p>	<p>Young people to stay out of kitchen unless adequately supervised.</p>	
<p>Trips Out</p>		<p>Separate risk assessment to be done.</p>	

Specific Risk Assessment – Activity: Youth Club			
Visit Local Park – Meet at church and walk to park			
Identify the Threats	Who might be harmed and how?	Evaluate the risk and decide on precautions	Review your assessment and update if necessary
Large group of young people walking down the road. Danger from cars. Potential danger from and to public.	Young People. Leader & Helpers. Public.	Split young people into small manageable groups. Increase staffing levels. Previously identify any possible danger areas in advance – avoid those areas.	
Use of field for football / rounders.	Young People. Leaders & Helpers. Public.	Check area for hazards – e.g. broken glass. Ensure area is suitable and sufficiently away from public.	
Lose young people.	Young People.	Ensure young people know where they can / can't go alone or with leaders. When you leave church building and leave park – roll call.	
Sport	Young People. Leaders & Helpers.	First aid kit. Mobile phone. Permission forms for young people. Parent contact information	

3.4.5 Group Ratios

The group leader must ensure that they have a suitable ratio of adult leaders and helpers to children and young people. A number of factors may mean that the recommended minimum ratios should be increased.

- Do any of the children have special needs that require additional support?
- Do any of the children or does the group as a whole present challenging behaviour that can be difficult to control?
- If the building or room where the group meets is too large, additional staff may be needed to contain the children in a safe way.
- It is ideal to have both male and female workers in a mixed group, especially for older age groups.
- If special factors emerge from the group risk assessment then the recommended ratios should be increased.

3.4.5.1 Recommended Minimum Ratios

Age Range	Indoor Activities	Outdoor Activities
0 – 2 years old	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years old	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years old	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years old	2 adults (ideally one of each gender) for up to 20 children with an extra adult for every additional 10 children.	2 adults (ideally one of each gender) for up to 15 children with an extra adult for every additional 8 children.
13 years old and over	2 adults (ideally one of each gender) for up to 20 children with an extra adult for every additional 10 children.	2 adults (ideally one of each gender) for up to 20 children with an extra adult for every additional 10 children.

Do not include young leaders under the age of 18 among your number of adult workers when calculating ratios.

In a one-off situation where a member of the leadership team is unavailable and the ratios fall below the required level the remaining leader should:

- Determine whether it is safe to continue the group. If the children or young people's safety is being put at unacceptable risk the group should be cancelled.
- If the group continues to run, the leader should write a report explaining why the staff level was under the required level and what actions were taken to reduce any risk to the children

and young people. This should be given to the Designated Person.

- If the reduced staffing level will lead to the leader being left alone with a child or a group of children or young people, the group should be cancelled. If there is an on-going situation where there are insufficient leaders and helpers to apply the required group ratios, an assessment should be made to reduce the risks so that the group can run in a sustainable way.
- Could you adapt the programme to reduce the level of risk?
- Could the group meet with another group so that additional staff cover is available on the premises?
- Could you cap the number of children attending the group?

Any decision to run a group with staff ratios that are below the recommended level should be taken to the Charity trustees of the church who shall:

- Record in their minutes the decision they make about the group continuing to run.
- Record the reason why they believe their decision is justified.
- Record any measures taken to minimise the risks to children and young people.

In no circumstances should the Charity Trustees plan to continue running a group where only one adult will be present with children and young people.

3.4.6 Outings and Overnight Events

For all events where children and young people are taken off the church premises:

- A special risk assessment should be carried out, including an assessment of the appropriate ratio of adults to children.
- Parents/carers should be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
- The children and young people should be divided into groups, each with a responsible adult, even if the whole group is to remain together. Each adult should be given a written list of the children and young people that they are responsible for.

3.4.6.1 Overnight Events

Particular care needs to be taken for overnight events, not least when it comes to sleeping arrangements. Sensible precautions will minimise the risks for children, young people and workers.

- Is the proposed venue suitable for providing sufficient rooms for children and adults to sleep, toilets and washing facilities?
- Are there enough fire exits from the sleeping accommodation, know where the fire extinguishers are and are all the workers conversant with the procedure to follow in the event of a fire? There should be a fire drill as soon as possible after entering the premises. Large rooms used for sleeping larger numbers should have two means of exit.
- Emergency contact information is needed for a local doctor, nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital, caretaker of the premises etc.
- Separate parental consent forms should be obtained for each event and parents/carers should be given the address and telephone number for contacting in the event of an emergency.

- If it is a mixed group, there must be a mix of male and female workers.
- There should be a meeting before the event with the parents/carers of the children or young people who will attend. This will enable them to ask questions and share concerns; also you can give them as much detail about the event as possible.
- At least one of the event leaders should be responsible for First Aid and should hold a valid certificate.
- The person responsible for the catering must hold a Basic Food and Hygiene Certificate.
- Check the insurance cover for the building in which you will be sleeping. There may be a limit on the numbers it accommodates.
- Check the building and know where the water, electricity and gas can be turned off.
- Have some safety rules for the children and young people, such as not to enter the kitchen without asking and not wandering off without telling a leader where you are going.
- Make sure the children and young people know the correct clothing to bring. It is useful to give them a 'kit list' for residential activities.
- Where outdoor activities are concerned, leaders should have the appropriate qualification such as the Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA) for camping or hill walking.

3.4.7 Photography

It is not illegal to take photographs of children and young people but we must comply with all relevant legislation. However, it is possible to be responsible without being over restrictive.

- Signed consent must be obtained from parents/carers for photographs to be taken at church activities and the parents/carers should be aware of where the photographs are likely to be used.
- Sensitivity and courtesy should be practised when photographing children and young people. Their consent to having their photograph taken is as important as the consent of the parent/carer.
- When displaying photographs of children and young people, they should never be identified by name, nor should it be possible to identify an individual child or young person from the photograph, for example if a group photograph has one male child and the rest are female, information relating to this photograph could identify the male child.
- Photographs should be stored safely in a place that has been agreed and minuted by the trustees.
- Leaders should not store photographs of children and young people on their mobile phones.
- Photographs of children and young people should not be distributed to other individuals without the permission of the parent/carer.

3.5 A Safe Community

It is important that people who work with children and young people are appointed carefully, that these people behave appropriately and adopt safe practices to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the life of the church. However, when children and young people become a part of the life of the church, they become part of a far wider community which can have

the potential to enrich their development and growth, but also can bring with it additional risks that need to be addressed.

Firstly, this wider community involves other children and young people and we cannot ignore the fact that children and young people can be cruel and unkind to one another. We therefore need procedures in place which address the potential for bullying.

Secondly, children and young people are often introduced and welcomed into a wider church where on the premises they may interact with a wide range of people who have not been through any kind of 'vetting' procedure and may not have any awareness of the church's safeguarding policy and procedures. If an issue arises where a person attends the church who is known to have offended against children or young people in the past, although as a gospel community we seek to offer forgiveness and a new life, we also need to do all we can to enable this person to find their place in the church in a way that children and young people will not be at risk.

3.5.1 Prevention of Bullying

The government has defined bullying as:

“Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.”

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Name calling, teasing, taunting, mocking.
- Kicking, hitting, pushing, intimidating.
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature or sexually abusive comments.
- Taking belongings.
- Inappropriate text messaging and emailing.
- Sending offensive or degrading images by phone or over the internet.
- Gossiping, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- Excluding people from groups.
- Activities such as initiation ceremonies or practical jokes which may cause physical or emotional harm.

Bullies often pick on a particular feature of a person's appearance or character such as racial difference, disability, sexuality, hair colour or gender.

Bullies can be:

- Children or young people bullying others in their peer group, or other children and young people either older or younger.
- Adults bullying children and young people.
- Children and young people bullying adults.

Bullying can cause a great deal of harm to those on the receiving end. Those affected by bullying can believe they have nowhere to turn, can be scared to speak out, often blame themselves and can become fearful and reclusive.

Some signs that indicate that a child or young person is being bullied are:

- Withdrawal; lack of desire to join in activities
- A drop in school marks
- Torn clothing or bruises
- Loss of friends
- Avoidance of groups and other activities
- Need for extra money or supplies

In order to prevent bullying the following procedures should be adopted;

- The children and young people themselves should be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour which makes it clear that bullying is not acceptable.
- All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously — details will be checked carefully before action is taken.

Bullying behaviour should be investigated and stopped as quickly as possible. The parents of the bully and of the bullied child should be informed and an attempt should be made to change the behaviour of the ones involved. All allegations and incidents of bullying must be recorded together with any actions taken.

3.5.2 When a Known Offender is Present

The church community should be welcoming and open to all; a place for people who have failed and people in need. Those who have abused children and young people are included in this welcome but the protection of children and young people must be the priority.

Current research suggests that:

- Sexually offending can be a kind of addiction, deeply ingrained in the character of the person
- Those who abuse children can be persuasive in expressing remorse and present themselves as people living a different way of life as a way of being entrusted to work alongside children and young people.

If a known offender wishes to attend the church there must be a written contract in place.

4 Resources and Contacts

Local Child Protection Contacts	
Baptist Association Regional Ministers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diane Tidball 07971 337 872 2. Ellen Price 07739 808 644 3. Steven Price 07867 971 854 4. Mike Fegredo 07972 350 242
Local Authority Child Protection Unit	<p>Children’s Social Care Enquiries: For advice / to report a concern, contact the Children’s Duty Desk: 0116 305 0005</p> <p>Out of Hours Emergency Contact:</p> <p>If you require urgent advice outside of office hours, the local authority emergency duty team (EDT) can be contacted on: 0116 255 1606</p>
Local Police Child Abuse Investigation Team	<p>If you have information about an offence and it is not an emergency, local police can be contacted on 101.</p> <p>If it is an emergency (a life is imminently in danger or a crime in progress), telephone 999 immediately.</p>

<p>Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)</p>	<p>For urgent advice you can phone the CCPAS helpline any time.</p> <p>Call 0845 120 4550</p> <p>We ask that you call this number during office hours for any advice that is non-urgent.</p> <p>www.ccpas.co.uk</p> <p>CCPAS also have a range of resources and publications available to download and purchase.</p>
<p>Safe to Grow</p>	<p>www.safetogrow.org.uk</p> <p>Contains detailed information on the vetting and barring scheme and updates on procedures for safeguarding children and young people.</p>