

Safeguarding Policy

Champions Church, Skipton

2025

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This policy is drafted using the AOG draft template Safeguarding Policy; it replaces the previous Champions Church Policy from 2019.

Summary Overview

The document is the **Safeguarding Policy** for Champions Church, Skipton, an Assemblies of God GB Christian organisation. It outlines the church's commitment to safeguarding children, young people, and adults with care and support needs, ensuring a safe environment within church activities and governance. The policy is structured into sections covering organisational details, governance and culture, prevention, practice guidelines, responding to allegations, pastoral care, and appendices with additional procedures.

Organisational Detail

Champions Church is located in Skipton, North Yorkshire, and serves the local community with various children's activities and ministries for vulnerable adults. The church operates under the Assemblies of God GB denomination, with Rev Michael Hulland as the senior leader and safeguarding lead, supported by Deputy Safeguarding Lead Beth Bolton.

Governance and Culture

The church's Board of Trustees manages the charity's stewardship, while the church leadership oversees vision, ministry, and pastoral care. They emphasise the importance of creating a safe and caring environment, valuing every child and adult, and empowering children to report harm. The church endorses human rights frameworks including the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, committing to prevent and report abuse or neglect.

The leadership commits to safeguarding children and adults against physical, sexual, emotional, financial, discriminatory abuse, exploitation, and neglect, adopting government legislation and local safeguarding procedures.

Governance & Culture - Regulatory Compliance and Leadership Commitment

The policy recognises regulatory requirements for charities to maintain up-to-date safeguarding policies, conduct safe recruitment including criminal record checks, and report compliance annually. Trustees hold legal responsibility for management and compliance, working alongside spiritual leadership to set organisational values.

The leadership promotes a safe, inclusive church culture respecting children's rights and adult dignity, complying with the Equality Act 2010. The church appoints safeguarding designated leads to handle allegations, encourages direct referrals to authorities if concerns are mishandled, and commits to training and supervision of workers.

The church cooperates fully with statutory safeguarding authorities such as Children's and Adult Social Services and the Police, following UK legislation and national guidance including "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE).

Prevention

The policy defines abuse and neglect comprehensively for children and adults, recognising that abuse can be perpetrated by anyone, often by those in trusted positions. It outlines the four main categories

of child abuse—physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect—and includes child sexual exploitation and extremism as serious concerns. Definitions align with UN conventions on children’s and human rights.

Practice Guidelines

The leadership commits to safer recruitment by ensuring written job descriptions, application and self-declaration forms, interviews, references, qualifications verification, disclosure and barring checks (DBS), induction, training, and ongoing supervision. The church also promotes safeguarding awareness by providing information to children and adults on where to get help and ensuring a code of conduct for all workers.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

The policy details prompt, sensitive, and procedural responses to allegations, including immediate safety, listening and recording without investigation, reporting to safeguarding leads, following statutory reporting procedures, maintaining confidentiality, and providing support. Documentation and follow-up reviews are also emphasised.

Specific procedures are outlined for physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse, including urgent medical help, contacting Children’s Social Services or Police, and withholding information from parents unless advised. Similar procedures apply for adults with care and support needs, respecting their autonomy while seeking statutory advice.

Allegations against workers require liaising with Children’s Social Services and referral to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours. The LADO oversees allegations against people working with children, including volunteers and paid staff, providing advice and guidance throughout the process. Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is considered where appropriate.

Pastoral Care

The church undertakes risk assessments for activities, offers pastoral care and support to those affected by abuse, and manages pastoral matters responsibly. When offenders attend the church, leadership supervises them and sets safeguarding boundaries. Trustees are assigned oversight responsibilities for safeguarding matters.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES (APPENDICES)

Safer Recruitment

The church follows a framework for safe recruitment including job descriptions, application and self-declaration forms, interviews, references, qualifications verification, DBS checks, induction, probation, and ongoing support. For workers from outside the UK, appropriate background checks from their home countries are required.

Training and Team Support

All workers receive appropriate safeguarding training and supervision, with regular team meetings to discuss concerns and feedback. Safeguarding supervisors ensure training needs are met.

Working in Partnership

The church establishes safeguarding expectations with partners, including those abroad, and ensures organisations using church premises comply with safeguarding standards.

Communication

The policy promotes safeguarding through good communication, balancing confidentiality with the need to protect individuals at risk. Resources such as helpline numbers and professional authority materials are used to raise awareness.

Overseas Mission and Local Events

The policy applies to overseas mission workers and local/regional/national events. Mission workers are expected to apply UK safeguarding standards while respecting local cultures, avoiding excessive one-on-one contact with children, and following reporting mechanisms for allegations. Event organisers and venues share responsibilities for safeguarding, ensuring policies, DBS checks, supervision ratios, and safety measures are in place.

Visual Overview and Procedures

Appendix 2 provides flowcharts and detailed procedures for concerns about children and adults' welfare and abuse allegations against workers, reinforcing the structured approach to safeguarding.

This safeguarding policy reflects Champions Church's comprehensive commitment to protecting vulnerable individuals within its community and activities, adhering to legal requirements and best practices.

Section 1

Organisational Detail

Champions Church-Skipton

Carleton Road Skipton North Yorkshire

BD23 2AU

Telephone: 01756 700113

Mobile: 07931202323 (Rev Michael Hlland)

Charity Number 1052055

Denomination: Assemblies of God GB

Insurance Company: Aviva Policy number 032249/01/25

Safeguarding Lead: Michael Hlland

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Beth Bolton

Champions Church is an Assemblies of God GB Christian organisation serving the local community of Skipton. The place of worship includes various children's activities, welcoming vulnerable adults through the ministry of the life of the church.

The Assemblies of God belief statement:

We are a Pentecostal movement that believes that every individual can and should have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and have the opportunity to be a part of a local vibrant church.

Governance and Culture

The Board of Trustees are stewards of the charity of the church.

The leadership of the church is responsible for the vision and ministry, including the pastoral care, of the church.

Reverend Michael Hulland is the senior leader of Champions Church, Skipton.

As church leaders, we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We recognise the importance of our ministry with children, young people and adults and our responsibility to protect everyone in our care.

We believe every child should be safe, valued and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm. All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.

Equally, adults in our church should be enabled to live fulfilling autonomous lives and should have access to every aspect of church life.

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in church is the responsibility of the whole church. As a leadership team, we endeavour to make our church a safe environment for all. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of human rights and the international covenant of human rights which states that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein without distinction of any kind; such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political, or other opinion national or social distinction, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

We also concur with the convention on the rights of the child. This states that children should be able to develop their full potential free from hunger, want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse or neglect, negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse while in the care of parents, legal guardians, or any other person who has care of the child.

The following statement was agreed by the church leadership:

“We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the abuse and neglect of children and adults and to report any such abuse or neglect that we discover or suspect.

We are committed to the safeguarding of children and adults and ensuring their well-being. We recognise that children and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, as well as financial and discriminatory abuse and other forms of harm such as exploitation and neglect.

We endorse and adopt the policy, procedures and guidance set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with the governments’ national legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.”

SECTION 2 - POLICY

GOVERNANCE & CULTURE

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Charities, including faith organisations and churches who work with vulnerable beneficiaries, are expected to have a current, up to date safeguarding policy, along with evidence that all those working with children or adults at risk (including trustees) have been safely recruited and undertaken any relevant criminal record checks. Charities also need to state on their annual returns that they have met the safeguarding requirements set by the regulator.

TRUSTEES & CHURCH LEADERSHIP (“Leadership”)

The Trustees are appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for how our church charity is managed in line with the guidance and expectations of the Regulator (Charity Commission or OSCR). The trustees have a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as working alongside the church’s spiritual leadership to set the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

THE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

We undertake to:

- Promote a Safe & Healthy Church Culture
- We respect the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We value and respect children and want to hear their voices.
- We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.
- We understand the importance of creating a welcoming and inclusive, safe and healthy environment and are committed to ensuring that we meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, implementing all other relevant legislation as part of safeguarding.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures and practice guidance reflect this, so that adults can have access to every aspect of the life of our church.
- We are committed to supporting parents and families and ensuring that our church is a safe place for all.
- The church has appointed a Safeguarding Designated Lead and a Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator as points of reference, to act on all allegations or suspicions of abuse in reporting to the statutory safeguarding authorities. In our commitment to openness, should anyone have a concern that our church or the Safeguarding Leads have not dealt appropriately with a safeguarding concern we would encourage that person to make a direct referral to Social Services or the Police.

WORK WITH SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITIES

- We recognise the role that the statutory safeguarding authorities (Social Services and the Police) have in investigating all suspicions and allegations or discovery of child abuse and the abuse of adults and will cooperate fully with all agencies to protect those at risk of harm or abuse:
- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there is a concern about a child.
- Adult Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse when concerned about the welfare of an adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- We will follow the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults and good practice recommendations.
- We will act in accordance with national and local safeguarding guidance such as laid out in Working Together to Keep Children Safe (*next update September 2025*) KCSIE and acknowledge that "safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility" and that "everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play".
- We will liaise with the local statutory safeguarding partnerships such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) or any other local safeguarding mechanisms.
- North Yorkshire Local Authority Designated Officer (lado@northyorks.gov.uk) Telephone: 01609 533080
- We shall ensure that our premises meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 (which incorporated the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding and sharing relevant information.

SUPPORT THOSE IN OUR CHURCH WHO SERVE CHILDREN AND ADULTS

The Leadership have appointed a Safeguarding Designated Lead and a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to respond to any safeguarding concern or suspicion of abuse. The Leadership fully supports them in their role of acting in the best interest of the child or adult and reporting to the statutory authorities all allegations or suspicions of abuse.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Rev. Michael Hulland (Senior Leader)**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Ms. Beth Bolton**

We commit to providing safeguarding training and development opportunities for all our workers (paid and voluntary) and will regularly review the training needs, and the operational guidelines attached to this policy.

We will also support, resource, monitor and provide supervision to all those who undertake work with children or adults, and those in positions of trust.

We commit to providing induction training for all those working with children and adults.

We seriously take our responsibility for ensuring that everyone is safe in our care and that their dignity and rights are maintained.

SAFEGUARDING IN PRACTICE

We commit to supporting, listening to, and working towards healing for everyone affected, either directly or indirectly by any form of abuse.

We are a welcoming church, which recognises that in following our mission, we may have sexual offenders join us. In such circumstances we will talk with the person concerned, and with any safeguarding professional involved to ensure that their involvement in church does not compromise the safety and well-being of children or adults. To ensure this we will take appropriate and proportionate measures, including working with relevant partners to complete a risk assessment and asking the individual to adhere to a safeguarding agreement.

We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.

Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be closely managed by the Church Leadership Team reporting to the Trustees where appropriate. Any safeguarding concerns will be managed using our safeguarding procedures and through obtaining professional guidance where appropriate.

All safeguarding concerns should be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead in the church. No one in receipt of a disclosure of abuse, or suspicion of abuse should investigate the matter.

SECTION 3 – POLICY DEFINITIONS (UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS ABUSE & NEGLECT)

Child abuse, or abuse against an adult, can be a difficult and complex issue to understand. A person may abuse or neglect by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often, the abuser is known or is in a trusted relationship with the child or adult. Research shows that abuse can be perpetrated by males and females, by adults and by children, as well as those in positions of trust and authority. Sadly, people in such positions have misused their power and authority within churches to abuse.

The four main categories of child abuse are physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. It is important to note that a child may be suffering from more than one form of abuse. Safeguarding professionals must assess if they need to intervene in order to protect a child and this is based on whether it is felt a child is suffering from, or likely to suffer from, significant harm. There are other forms of abuse (such as child sexual exploitation) which come under these four main headings when instigating a child protection plan.

In order to safeguard those in our place of worship and organisation we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Adults may also be in need of protection due to physical, sexual, psychological (which includes emotional abuse) and neglect (including self-neglect) as well as financial, institutional, discriminatory abuse, modern slavery, trafficking and domestic violence. Detailed definitions, signs, and symptoms of abuse, are included below.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

What is abuse and neglect?

A form of maltreatment of a child. 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 others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse that 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 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 persistent 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 participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another individual. It could involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), frequently causing children to feel frightened or in danger, as well as the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Whether or not the child is aware of what is happening or not involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve a high level of violence. 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. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 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)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE):

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Extremism:

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable, including the young, by seeking to sow division between communities because of race, faith or denomination. Justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 5, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

SECTION 4 – POLICY PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers (paid or unpaid) will receive induction training and undertake appropriate safeguarding training regularly according to 'good practice' guidelines, and training should cover signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond as a minimum. This training may be provided either by our church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (if confident and competent to do so) or by a professional safeguarding organisation via their training programme(s), or another recognised body, organisation or qualified individual.

Our understanding of prevention is also enhanced by our commitment to regular training for church leaders and those in key roles within the church, such as through ThirtyOneEight. www.thirtyoneeight.org

POLICY STATEMENT (SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS)

As a Leadership Team, we will endeavour to ensure that children and adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter of concern.

As a leadership, we recognise that for many victims/survivors of abuse, where the abuse has taken/takes place within the context of the church or by someone professing a Christian faith, it can have an impact on their spiritual development.

POLICY STATEMENT (CODE OF CONDUCT)

As a Church Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers shall be issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with additional care and support needs.

The Home Office has guidance regarding 'Abuse of Trust' when caring for young people and the vulnerable. This can be found on gov.uk. This guidance is intended to apply to those caring for young people or adults at risk of harm in both paid and unpaid work, including volunteers, regardless of whether they are in the public, private, voluntary or volunteering sectors. It is important that places of worship and organisations have clear boundaries in regard to the personal relationships which can develop.

SECTION 5 – POLICY

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

POLICY STATEMENT (RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE)

The Church Leadership shall ensure that detailed procedures are implemented which address the following when responding to allegations of abuse:

- Reporting a Concern
- Obtaining appropriate professional advice

Documented processes shall set out detailed procedures for when there is/are:

- Concern about a child's welfare
- Concern about the welfare of an adult (with care/support needs)
- Concern about alleged abuse against a person who works with children/young people
- Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults (with care/support needs)

SECTION 5a – PROCEDURES (RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE)

When an allegation of abuse is made, it is vital to act promptly, sensitively, and in accordance with established safeguarding procedures. The following steps should be taken to ensure all allegations are treated appropriately and all parties are protected:

- **Immediate Safety:** Ensure the immediate safety of the individual(s) involved. Remove the person alleged to have caused harm from any situation where further abuse could occur, if necessary and practical.
- **Listen and Record:** Receive the allegation with care and without judgment. Listen attentively and avoid asking leading questions. Make a detailed, factual written record as soon as possible, noting dates, times, what was said, and who was present.
- **Do Not Investigate:** Do not attempt to investigate the allegation yourself. Avoid discussing the matter with those alleged to have caused harm or others not directly involved.
- **Report to Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Immediately inform the designated safeguarding lead or their deputy. If the allegation concerns the safeguarding lead, report to an alternative senior church member, such as the linked Safeguarding Trustees
- **Follow Reporting Procedures:** The safeguarding lead will determine the next steps, which may include notifying statutory authorities (such as police or social services) and ensuring that a formal process is followed.
- **Confidentiality:** Share information only with those who need to know in order to protect the individual and follow up on the allegation appropriately. Ensure all records are kept secure and confidential.

- Support: Offer appropriate support to the person making the allegation and to those involved, including signposting to counselling or pastoral help if required.
- Documentation: Maintain clear, detailed, and secure documentation of all actions taken, correspondence, and decisions made throughout the process.
- Follow Up: After statutory authorities have been notified and the situation stabilised, review procedures and decisions to ensure that all necessary actions were taken and consider if any policies or practices need amendment.

It is essential that all staff, trustees and volunteers are familiar with these procedures and understand the importance of responding swiftly, sensitively, and according to policy whenever allegations of abuse arise. Safeguarding is an ongoing commitment and must be integrated into every aspect of event planning and delivery, with clear roles and responsibilities for all involved.

ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE

If a child has a physical injury, an indicator of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Deputy will:

- Seek medical help if needed urgently via phoning 999.
- Contact Children's Social Services (or a professional safeguarding organisation) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home. If the issue is urgent, the Police Protection Unit and/or the Out of Hours Children's Services must be contacted without delay.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services directly for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by ThirtyOneEight, if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team directly. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

PROCEDURES FOR WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT THE WELFARE OF AN ADULT

Definition of "adult"

As adult safeguarding systems have developed there has been a move away from using the term 'vulnerable adults', whilst recognising that certain pieces of legislation (e.g. the Police Act 1997) and different agencies use this term. The term 'adult at risk' is generally now replacing the previously used term 'vulnerable adult' (focusing on the situation rather than the characteristics of the adult themselves). The label 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for any abuse lies with the abused adult. The Care Act 2014 does not use the word vulnerable, but rather an 'adult with care and support needs', who is, or is at risk of abuse or neglect. Also reference in Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership, (2015) and 'adults in need of protection'. 'Adults' is used in this policy to mean adults in need of protection.

This safeguarding policy and procedures will use the various terms interchangeably except where referring to specific legislation or government guidance.

SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

The Care Act 2014 places the duty upon **Adult Services** to investigate situations of harm to adults. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide, not the church.

If an adult with additional care and support needs has a physical injury or indicator of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life. Advice needs to be sought from the statutory agencies if it is felt that their choice might contradict their welfare needs.
- If the adult with additional care and support needs is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

- For advice contact the appropriate Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse.
- The Police Public Protection Unit will also provide advice and will need to be contacted where the concerns are of a serious nature.

**PROCEDURE FOR WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT
ABUSE BY THOSE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN OR ADULTS**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures, will need to:

- liaise with Children’s Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The role of the LADO is set out in HM Government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education. and is governed by the Authority's duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004. This guidance outlines procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed.
- inform the Office of General Manager at AOG National Office if the allegations concern a Status Minister or other Senior Minister responsible for the church in question regardless of status);
- the LADO will be contacted within 24 hours as follows:

Name::	North Yorkshire
Phone::	01609 798005
Email::	lado@northyorks.gov.uk
Online form link (child)::	https://safeguardingchildren.co.uk/Resources/lado-notification-form/
Online form link (adult)::	
Fax::	
Post::	
Opening Hours::	Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm
In an emergency outside of these hours, contact:	03001312131

In addition to this, whether or not there are such mechanisms in operation, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. Where we are liaising with a Designated Officer we will discuss with them about the need to refer to the DBS. If a Designated Officer is not involved, we will contact the DBS if the situation is that the nature of concern leads us to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have made this decision in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

Note: *There may also be a requirement under law to make a referral to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) who hold the lists of people barred from working with children and adults with additional care and support needs – this will require discussion with the Designated Officer (please note that LADOs exist only in England – other nations should use the usual channels of communication with children’s services or their equivalent).*

The LADO works 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

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. They capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.

They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

SECTION 6 -PASTORAL CARE

With the various activities we are involved in as a church, we understand the safeguarding considerations and shall undertake risk assessments where appropriate for the various activities, enforcing clear guidelines for all in positions of trust in church. The Leadership is also committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of Champions Church.

COUNSELLING

The Leadership is committed to ensuring that it manages all pastoral matters appropriately, including the signposting of those in need to specific support as well as seeking advice and support as a pastoral team.

WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

When someone attending Champions Church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults with additional care and support needs the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, it will set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

The Trustees have been identified as key to be responsible for the overview and monitoring in any matters regarding Safeguarding and any issues reported to them by the DSL or Deputy DSL. These are:

- Mr Edward Dean
- Mr George Mackley
- Mr Nigel Cleaver
- Mrs Thembi Sharp

APPROVALS AND REVIEW

Policy to be adopted and reviewed every 12 months, or more frequently if there are any incidents which prompt a revision, or new legislation.

Signed by:

Print Name: _____

Role (Senior Leadership): _____

Date: _____

Signed by:

Print Name: _____

Role (on behalf of the Trustees): _____

Date: _____

Signed by:

Print Name: _____

Role (Designated Safeguarding Lead): _____

Date: _____

Signed by:

Print Name: _____

Role (Deputy Safeguarding Lead): _____

Date: _____

Appendices:

Additional procedures:

a. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Champions Church is committed to safely recruit workers (whether paid or voluntary).

Procedures include ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A disclosure and barring check has been obtained in accordance with the position that the person has applied for, where necessary, and in accordance with any obligations of external agencies (e.g. AoG for Status Ministers)
- As a church we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information
- A suitable induction and training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has access to, and has read the church safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- Suitable ongoing support and supervision is provided
- An annual suitability declaration is completed where necessary

All DBS checks, certificates, and outcomes will be recorded on the church CMS database (iKnow) and will be renewed every 3 years.

b. TRAINING A TEAM

All key church members, including Trustees and all workers (whether paid or voluntary), will be provided with appropriate training and given the opportunity to develop their skills so that they feel supported and valued in the work they

undertake. As a Leadership, we commit to ensuring all workers are supervised (where possible by a named individual who arranges regular meetings) where concerns or issues can be raised, work related or personal. It is also the role of the safeguarding supervisor(s) to ensure all training needs are met.

The leadership recognises the importance of team meetings to be able to discuss Safeguarding procedures and any observed/ anticipated concerns. These shall be convened on a regular basis and also provide an opportunity for ideas and issues to be aired, concerns expressed, and feedback given in a safe environment.

c. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We have guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not:

- We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding.
- It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets our safeguarding standards.

d. GOOD COMMUNICATION

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is preserved; this needs to be balanced with the need to protect a person who has been or is at risk of abuse. All those working with adults must be clear that it is not possible to keep information about suspected or actual abuse confidential. In order to protect the adult at risk of harm, or others at potential risk means that this will need to be

reported to the Safeguarding Leads.

e. LOCAL CHURCH MISSION

Policy Statement

This safeguarding policy applies to all our Mission workers and volunteers overseas and any members of our local churches that participate in locally-driven mission activity; whether planting/establishing churches within indigenous communities, visiting on short-term mission or placed as a long-term missionary in our many locations around the world.

Prevention of abuse

It is recognised that the cultures within which international missions are often working may adopt different standards to the care and treatment of children and young people. Nevertheless, the standards and principles adopted within the UK are expected to apply in international mission situations. The maltreatment of children and young people is contrary to Biblical values and practices and therefore cannot be tolerated.

Due regard will need to be given to the cultures within which activities are taking place, however under the expectation of applying UK standards to the practice of mission workers, some guidance may be useful.

Procedures

Our Workers/Missionaries should:

- be able to recognise situations which may present risks
- plan and organise the work and workplace so as to minimise risks as far as possible and be visible to other adults when working and talking with children
- take particular care for the needs of disabled children and other vulnerable children as research has shown that abuse can often go unrecognised and unreported due to people's attitudes and assumptions about disability
- ensure that others know where interviews of children are taking place and that someone else is around in the building

Our Workers/Missionaries should not:

- spend excessive time alone with children
- take children to their personal home, or to stay overnight, especially where they will be alone with you
- leave any person under 16 in charge of any children of any age. However, some local/national legislation may require this to be 18 years of age. Nor should children or young people attending any group be left alone at any time.
- hit or otherwise physically assault children
- develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

Responding & Reporting Mechanisms

All overseas mission activities should have a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for safer recruitment of both staff and volunteers/visitors (including DBS disclosures where these are necessary) and for ensuring that applicants are fully apprised of the safeguarding policy. All incidents, allegations or concerns identified during overseas mission activities must be reported to the Safeguarding Leads for the sending church if a part of locally-driven mission activity, who will then liaise with the appropriate authorities to ensure good practice is facilitated in relation to the reporting of any allegations of abuse within the relevant country.

If an allegation is made against a worker/missionary, that person must be removed from their duties or prevented from having any further contact with children and young people or adults with additional care and support needs immediately whilst necessary action is taken. Due account must always be taken of the laws and frameworks in place within any country in which the missions operate. In many cases, practice, values and beliefs in relation to safeguarding the vulnerable will be different to the UK. However, care must always be taken to ensure that the rights of the individuals concerned are upheld (*see the UN Convention on Human Rights and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*).

f. LOCAL CHURCH EVENTS

Policy Statement

Safeguarding the vulnerable is no less important at one-off events as it is in regular local, regional or national activity. In many ways there is a greater need to ensure that the planning of such events includes awareness of safeguarding and adherence to our safeguarding policy. The maltreatment of children and young people is contrary to Biblical values and practices and therefore cannot be tolerated. This safeguarding policy therefore applies to all our events and any employees or volunteers who participate in local, regional or national activity.

Single Approach

It is recognised that events occur in many formats, and that there are responsibilities for both the host/venue, and also the lead/planning organisation. There are no differences in standards and principles within the UK, regardless of the nature of the event.

There are responsibilities for the host/venue, and equally there are responsibilities for the lead organisation, however it is the event organiser that has primary responsibility for ensuring safeguarding at their event. We shall ensure that, whether we are a host venue, or event organiser at another venue, the following will be checked:

Venues should:

- Have a safeguarding policy
- Undertake DBS Checks on all employees and volunteers that require checks
- Use safer recruitment procedures
- Make any organisation that wishes to hold an event on their premises aware of their safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Establish what insurance the event organisers have in place (e.g. public liability insurance)
- Asking to see copies or details of the event organisers' policies and procedures.

Event organisers should:

- Ask to see proof of host/venue safeguarding policy & procedures
- Ensure that safeguarding policy and procedures are followed at their event, by

- o Appointing a Safeguarding Lead
- o Employing staff or volunteers that have been DBS checked (where required)
- o Planning activities and events that are appropriately supervised (ratios, trained staff etc)
- o Checking that locations are safe and secure

Responding & Reporting Mechanisms

All events and activities should have a designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for overseeing the activity and ensuring that all staff and volunteers/visitors are fully apprised of the safeguarding activity and requirements.

All incidents, allegations or concerns identified during events must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead for the organising church if a part of locally-driven outreach activity, who will then liaise with the appropriate legal authorities and professional support organisations to ensure good practice is facilitated in relation to the reporting of any allegations of abuse.

If an allegation is made against an employee or volunteer, that person must be removed from their duties or prevented from having any further contact with children and young people or adults with additional care and support needs immediately whilst necessary action is

Ensuring Safeguarding at Events and Activities

Safeguarding the vulnerable is a responsibility shared by everyone involved in organising or hosting events, whether local, regional, or national. In recognition of the gravity of abuse and its incompatibility with our values, this safeguarding policy applies to all our activities and to any employees or volunteers engaged in these events.

A consistent approach is necessary, with clear responsibilities outlined for both hosts/venues and event organisers. The event organiser holds primary responsibility for safeguarding at any given event, but both the host and organiser must work together to uphold the highest standards.

APPENDIX 2

Visual overview of procedures

