

## **Grace Church Dulwich**

### Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

for the Wellbeing of Children, Young People and Adults with Care and  
Support Needs (Vulnerable Adults)

***2019/2020***

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## Introduction and Overview

### Introduction

The objective of Grace Church Dulwich ("GCD" or the "Church") as described in the Grace Church Dulwich Memorandum of Association is the advancement of the Christian Faith. GCD is a Church of England church without a parish with a Bishop's Mission Order and under the extended oversight of the Bishop of Maidstone (this states that GCD needs to operate within the House of Bishops and diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures details of which are set out in **Appendix 6**). As part of this ministry the Church provides instruction to youth and children, as well as pastorally caring for adults in our congregation. We undertake this ministry in Dulwich and the surrounding area.

### Our ministry to children and young people

The Church's ministry to children and young people in and around Dulwich includes the following:

- During the Sunday morning service at Rosendale School we run a Crèche for 0 to 3 year olds and a Sunday Club for 3 to 13 year olds.
- We run a Youth Group for 13 to 18 year olds meeting in various homes around Dulwich on Sunday evenings.
- From time to time we run a weekly bible study group for sixth formers at the home of the associate pastor for youth and children.
- From time to time, each of the Eagles Sunday Club group and the Youth Group has a day/weekend away and they also get together for social events several times a year.
- We operate a Toddler group 'Scallywags' which meets on Mondays during term time at the Dulwich Library Hall, Dulwich from 10.00 -11.20 am.
- From time to time we run mid-week Bible studies for women where we offer a Crèche facility at various homes around Dulwich.
- We run a weekly bible study group for women where we offer a Crèche facility at various homes around Dulwich.
- From time to time we run holiday clubs for primary school aged children, as well as day trips for our older Sunday club attendees and the members of the Youth Group. This includes travelling as a group to such events.

Although many members, children and young people at GCD attend and/or involved with external camps, GCD's ministry does not include the attendance of children and young people at externally organised camps and thus such activity is outside the scope of this document.

### Our ministry to adults

We welcome everyone to our Sunday services, irrespective of denomination or background unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.

Regulars at the Sunday services and members of the Church are encouraged to be part of small group Bible studies meeting in various homes in and around Dulwich (known as Growth Groups), which are usually held on weekday evenings, although from time to time we may also run such groups mid-week during the day. Once a month we hold prayer meetings to pray for the life of the Church, the wider Christian community and the society around us.

Periodically we run a course called Christianity Explored with individuals or groups. Regular ministry training evenings (known as "toolbox" training sessions) are also run at various locations, as are occasional

courses looking at particular issues, such as courses looking at marriage or parenting courses. From time to time we also hold invitational events, which would usually include a short talk from a Christian perspective, a time for questions and answers, often a meal, and occasionally a form of entertainment such as music or a quiz.

The Church also offers the chance for individuals who are adult members of the Church, or those adults interested in Christian things, to meet with members of the Leadership or other designated members of the Church with the intention of offering Christian encouragement, instruction, pastoral counselling, the chance to read the Bible together and/or the chance to pray together where appropriate and desired.

### **The need for safeguarding policies and procedures**

The Church Council (At GCD: Simon Dowdy, Minister; Fiona Neden, women's ministry team leader; Andy Meadows, Associate pastor for youth and children; Andrew Neden, Treasurer; John Bartlett, Church Warden; Ben Jones, Church Warden, Vicky Widdows, Secretary; Katie Robertson, Nick Hallett and Andrew Burke) recognises the importance of the ministry/ work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and the responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to its care by providing a safe and caring environment. In this document, the Church Council for GCD will be referred to as the "Leadership" and references to "we" are to the Leadership.

The Leadership acknowledges that all children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and neglect. We believe that, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, national or social origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, they have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. We understand that abuse of children and young people can occur in any community or context, including while in the care of parents or legal guardians. Similarly, we understand that abuse of vulnerable adults can occur in any community or context, including within families and by other people known to them. We will work in partnership with their parents, legal guardians or other carers, and other agencies to promote their welfare.

The Leadership has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance and the Bishops Mission Order. The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone: eight (formerly the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) ("31:8") and prepared with due regard to the government's latest guidelines, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013', 'No secrets: guidance on developing policies to protect vulnerable adults 2000', and 'Protection of Freedoms Act 2012'. Other documentation referred to includes the House of Bishops Policy & Practice Guidance, and the Southwark diocese guidelines 'a safe church'.

### **Principal undertakings**

We, the Leadership, undertake to:

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect, sensitivity and fairness, providing a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Encourage adults who may be vulnerable to lead as independent a life as possible, to choose how to lead their life, and to be active contributors to the church community.
- Enable and encourage safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to promptly and in a manner consistent with this policy.
- Ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.
- Ensure that induction and on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities are provided for all its workers (staff members and volunteers of the Church who supervise, lead or teach children, young people or vulnerable adults), developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to

protect everyone, both the children, young people and vulnerable adults from possible abuse, but also to protect the workers from the risk of being in situations which could lead to false accusations being made.

- Support the Safeguarding Coordinators in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures.
- Build and maintain constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding. We agree not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.
- Regularly review these policies and procedures.

## **Matters covered in this document**

This document will cover the following areas:

In order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, it is important that those working with them understand what abuse is and how to recognise it. We equally need to ensure that those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults know how to correctly respond to an allegation or suspicion of abuse including with whom they may discuss this and what steps should be followed. This will be covered in **Section 1**.

The Leadership has an obligation to ensure that appropriate recruitment procedures for the selection of those working with or in contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in place and properly executed. In **Section 2**, this document will outline the policies and procedures which are to be followed in the selection, training and support of those who will be working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, we wish to operate and promote good working practice so that workers run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation. **Sections 3 and 4** will address a general code of conduct and specific good practice guidelines for those activities in which we are involved or undertake from time to time.

**Section 5** will cover certain other related matters to safeguarding issues.

## Section 1 - Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

### Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse 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 in a trusted relationship with them.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy. Please refer to **Appendix 2** regarding children, **Appendix 3** regarding vulnerable adults and **Appendix 4** regarding historic abuse.

### The Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy have been nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities. Whilst the intention is that concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator directly, concerns may in the first instance be reported to the Minister or the Church Wardens.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Judith Elgood 020 7274 5478  
Safeguarding Administrator (DBS Administration GCD): Sarah Born 020 7733 5933  
Safeguarding Administrator (DBS Administration GCD): Katie Jones 07780 754442  
Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator GCD: Andy Meadows 07850 887619

### Responding to allegations of abuse

Since abuse is a matter which may result in criminal investigation and prosecution, under no circumstances should a Church worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.

**Step 1:** The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report their concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. In the absence of being able to contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator above, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to the Deputy. If the suspicions implicate all the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to 31: 8 or alternatively to the Social Services or the police.

**Step 2:** Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy receiving information on allegations or suspicions of abuse will collate, clarify and document the nature of the allegations or suspicions by discussing with the person reporting the allegation or suspicion. They will seek to obtain details of the allegation or suspicion including names, date, time, location, etc. as applicable. They will document clearly the information available. They will not request information from the individual who may be experiencing abuse (unless this is the person making the allegation). They may seek further information from or consult further with the Minister and Church Wardens (so long as such individuals are not implicated in the allegation or suspicion) and they should further consult with 31: 8 in order to determine whether the concern does indeed qualify under the definition of potential abuse.

**Step 3:** Should the concern relate to an allegation or suspicion of abuse as defined in this document, then for child-related issues, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy will then follow the procedures set out in **Appendix 2** under the heading 'Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse'. For vulnerable adult-related issues, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy will then follow the procedures set out in **Appendix 3**. For concerns relating to historic abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy will then follow the procedures set out in **Appendix 4**.

Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may also be required by the conditions of the Church Insurance Policy immediately to inform the Insurance Company, and serious incidents also need to be reported to the Charity Commission. Under the Church of England protection policy, the Bishop's Adviser on child protection should also be informed.

Where the concern relates to something which does not meet the definition of abuse per se (e.g. someone acting in a way which is in breach of this policy but not in a way which would meet the definition of abuse in this policy), then the matter will be raised with the appropriate members of the Leadership, who will seek to ensure such breaches do not continue and will if necessary apply appropriate pastoral discipline. This may involve suspension of the individual concerned from their role in the ministry or indeed direction that their involvement in the ministry should cease entirely.

Once the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy has fulfilled their duty to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion, and having established that it is appropriate to pass this on to the authorities concerned, whether the Social Services Department or the Police, then the responsibility to investigate the matter further rests with the Social Services or Police respectively.

Whilst we recognise the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the relevant safeguarding agencies or seek advice from 31: 8, we would hope that members of the Church will use the procedures outlined above. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator /Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly.

Key contact details:

- 31: 8, telephone 0303 003 11 11
- for issues relating to children, contact Lambeth Social Services on 020 7926 5555 (out of hours 020 7926 5555); further numbers are available from: <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/social-support-and-health>
- for matters relating to vulnerable adults contact Lambeth Adults' and Community services on 020 7926 5555 (out of hours 020 7926 5555). Further social services information is available from: <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/social-support-and-health>
- The Police Child Protection telephone number is 999
- Kate Singleton - Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and Safeguarding Adviser for Southwark Cathedral 020 7939 9423

## **Communication on a need-to-know basis**

Suspicions and allegations must not be discussed with anyone other than those specified above or the Minister and Church Wardens directly. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with the procedures specified in this document and kept in a secure place.

The Leadership is committed to effective safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy in their roles. The Leadership further understands that related information which is in the possession of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator /Deputy will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis. This should not be taken to preclude the discussion between the Safeguarding Co-ordinator /Deputy and the Minister and Wardens of the matter concerned.

## **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with vulnerable adults or children**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures where applicable, will need to liaise with Social Services and the

Leadership in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a designated officer (formerly called a LADO). Additionally, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), who will decide whether the individual should be added to the list of people deemed unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults.

### **Support to those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering informed and appropriate pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to those attending the Church who have been affected by abuse.

We will also ensure that appropriate pastoral care is offered to any member of our church community against whom an allegation is made.

Since abuse is almost by definition a criminal matter which may result in investigation and potentially prosecution by the authorities, where the allegation or suspicion of abuse is the subject of current investigation by statutory agencies and authorities, such pastoral care to either possible victims or the alleged perpetrators will need to be offered after careful discussion with the authorities concerned in order to avoid prejudicing any ongoing formal investigation or criminal prosecution.

### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the Church is known to have abused children, young people or vulnerable adults, we must take advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and from 31: 8.

The relevant parts of the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care but, in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

## Section 2 - Safe recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

### **Procedures for recruitment, training and supporting of workers.**

*We recognise that we have an obligation to ensure that appropriate recruitment procedures for the selection of those working with or in contact with children and vulnerable adults are in place and properly executed.*

- The Ministers and staff workers are responsible for the appointment of leaders for small group Bible studies, and other courses run by GCD such as Christianity Explored, and women's mid week Bible studies. Those chosen to lead groups (which potentially contain vulnerable adults) will be well known to the Leadership, having played an active role in serving within the church community for some time.
- The associate pastor for youth and children, in liaison with a Safeguarding Administrator will be responsible for the recruitment of Sunday Club leaders, Youth Group leaders and crèche helpers.
- The minimum age for a Sunday Club leader or Youth Group leader will be 18 years old, with workers being able to help in Crèche from 16 years old; helpers under these ages will not be given unsupervised care of children.
- The associate pastor for youth and children will speak to all those seeking to work with children and young people on a voluntary or paid basis about the expectations of a leader and relevant safeguarding procedures to be carried out. They will complete an application form which includes a declaration of any convictions and provide two referees. Where an applicant is new to the Church, then at least one of these references must be from a previous church. The Safeguarding Administrator / Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a member of the Leadership will take up and check references.
- All Sunday Club, Youth Group and Crèche volunteers will undertake a probationary period of 6 months.
- All volunteers, including the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, will be asked to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) form to check for any criminal convictions relating to children or vulnerable adults (see section on handling disclosure information below). Where appropriate, DBS Disclosure forms will be renewed after 3 years, or if eligible a status check will be carried out instead.
- The DBS process will be undertaken by a Safeguarding Administrator or Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator. No individual may complete the DBS checks for either themselves or for any of their family members. This will be undertaken by another Safeguarding Administrator or Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- All staff and volunteers will confirm in writing (which may include email) that they understand and are prepared to work within the policy.
- All records will be kept with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator in a secure location.

*We are aware of our obligation to ensure that workers understand the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and that these are reflected in our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.*

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Deputy will ensure that anyone who is working with children, young people and vulnerable adults understands our Safeguarding Policy and how it impacts on their role, and agrees to work within it.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Deputy will arrange meetings with each Church group (Crèche, Sunday Club leaders etc.) to inform, discuss and to assist the members to implement the policy and procedures. Usually this will take place during one of the general training sessions run regularly by the associate pastor for youth and children.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Deputy make sure that each worker is provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy will ensure that each worker in their area of responsibility has a clear understanding of their role and the lines of accountability to the Leadership. Assistance may be provided by various members of the Leadership in this.

*We will provide suitable training in Safeguarding for those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.*

- Periodic group, or individual, discussions with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy will identify further training needs, which could include first aid and food hygiene.
- Such individuals and groups will be kept up to date with changes / additions to the safeguarding policies and procedures by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy.

*We need to inform all those involved in Church activities, or whose children are participating in Church activities, of our Safeguarding arrangements.*

- Parents / carers of children and young people participating in Church activities will be informed of our safeguarding arrangements and policy. We will also ensure general awareness of the policy among adults in the congregation.
- Copies of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be made available upon request.
- In order to notify members of the Church of revisions to the Safeguarding Policy, one of the Church Wardens may include a short report at each Annual Meeting on developments in our Safeguarding Policy or may instead separately update all of those who work with Children or Vulnerable Adults (for instance by way of an e-mail providing the revised safeguarding policy for review).  
We will handle disclosure information in a proper way.

- Prior to completing a Disclosure and Barring Search (DBS), a volunteer or member of staff must complete a self-declaration form, which includes their consent for a DBS to be carried out. The DBS application is done online. By completing the form they will be consenting to the transfer of their information to 31: 8 (GCD's agent) and the Disclosure and Barring Service for the purpose of a Disclosure Application.
- A volunteer or member of staff's information is forwarded to GCD for the checking of their identity documents.
- Once the disclosure process is complete, the DBS may post a volunteer or member of staff's certificate directly to them at the address they provided on their form (if they have opted to receive a hard copy of the certificate). Please be aware that this is an important document and GCD may need the volunteer or member of staff to show their certificate to GCD before they start work/volunteering in the role.

- A Safeguarding Administrator will note down relevant details from the DBS certificate such as: the name of the subject; cert number; date of issue. This information will be stored electronically on a spread sheet. Access will be strictly controlled to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties, and it will only be used for the purpose for which it was requested. It is a criminal offence to do otherwise.

*We are committed to provide a practical response in the area of Equal Opportunities*

- We will comply fully with the DBS code of practice and treat all applicants for positions fairly. We will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- Where we do request a disclosure, we encourage all applicants to provide details of any criminal record. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by the Safeguarding Administrator or Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

### Section 3 - General Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

#### Crèche and Sunday Club/Children's Church

*We recognise the need to create a climate in which everyone feels safe and secure enough to enjoy and value working, worshipping and playing together.*

- Children will be escorted by their Sunday Club leaders from the main meeting hall to the hall used for Sunday Club in their age appropriate groups. At the end of Sunday Club, the children (save for those of secondary school age – i.e. Eagles) will be brought back to the main meeting hall for collection by parents / carers. Crèche aged children will be delivered to and collected from Crèche by their parents / carers.
- A register of attendance will be kept by the group leader for each group including every adult present, even if that adult is only there for part of the session. Periodically, the old registers will be collected and then stored indefinitely in a locked filing cabinet. Any unusual events or conversations which may be linked to allegations or suspicions of abuse should be written down and kept with the register. If an allegation of abuse is made in years to come, then the Church will need to be able to establish who was present on any given date. The register should note when parents / carers have opted to stay with their children.
- Parents / carers may be permitted to observe groups but not to take part unless they have been through the Church's recruitment and training process, although obviously, they are able to look after their own child.
- Adult/Children Ratios:
  - o We will observe the following Adult/Children ratios:

0 to 2 years	1:3 (one adult to every three children - minimum 2 adults for whole group)
2 to 3 years	1:4
3 to 8 years	1:8
8 to 18 years	2 adults for up to 20 children with an additional leader for every 10 children thereafter
  - o These ratios follow official guidelines for children aged 0-8; over 8 the ratios are a recommendation.
  - o Where more than one group meets in the same venue, and the groups can be seen by others, either all the time, or by regular inspection, the total number of adults to children within the room or within audible distance should be within the ratio suggested but an individual group may have fewer adults.
  - o Parents / carers who choose to stay with their own child will not be included in the above ratios.
- Where an adult and young person need to be alone together for counselling or teaching, another adult should be made fully aware of the meeting and be available until it ends.
- Workers should be careful to avoid using any language or behaviour that could be misconstrued as inappropriately intimate.
- All workers will treat everybody with dignity, respect, sensitivity and fairness.
- If a child with special needs is present in the group, the child and/or their parents / carers will be asked how their needs can be best met. We will do all that is practically possible to meet these needs.
- Parental / carer consent is needed if children are taken off Church premises (i.e. Rosendale School). In particular, a child should never be taken to a worker's home without the consent of parents / carers.

- If a child is to be visited at home, a parent / carer should be there, and a brief written record made of the visit including times and who was present. This should be stored with the registers.
- If a child aged 17 or under, without adult supervision, wants to join Sunday Club or Youth Group activities they are to be welcomed and may stay. However, they will be asked by the leaders to obtain their parent / carer's permission before joining future Sunday Club or Youth Group activities. The leaders should make a note in the register indicating their attendance and this request.

## **Toileting guidelines for Crèche and Sunday Club**

*For children in school year 4 and below / or those with mobility issues:*

- A Crèche or Sunday Club leader should inspect the toilet area and make sure there is no one in the toilet cubicles.
- Wherever possible, the child should then visit the toilet while the Crèche or Sunday Club leader stands where they can see the toilet area and would be aware of anyone else entering the toilets.
- Male leaders should never assist a child in a toilet cubicle (unless for their own child); a female leader should encourage the child to do as much as possible by themselves, and only assist when and where needed.
- When supervising a child who wishes to go to the toilet, leaders should make sure they are in sight of another leader.

*For children in school year 5 and above:*

- Children may go to the toilet in pairs, unaccompanied by an adult. Children will be asked to check that no-one is in the toilet area before entering it. If only one child wishes to go to the toilet then the protocol for year 4 and below applies.

## **Health and Safety**

- An annual review of premises will be undertaken by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy to consider all aspects of safety for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- An appropriately qualified first aider or medically trained health professional is to be available with a properly equipped first aid kit and accident book. A list of the people to call upon is contained in the front of each of the Sunday Club and Crèche registers as well as in the first aid kit itself.
- The contents of the first aid kit will be regularly checked.
- Parents / carers should be asked to read and sign the accident book when an accident occurs.
- All Sunday Club, Crèche workers and those leading the meetings should be aware of the fire drill.

## **Transporting children on behalf of the Church**

- All those who drive children on Church-organised activities should have held a full and preferably clean driving licence for over two years. Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the Church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.
- On outings, the transport to and from and the expected time of return must be agreed with the child's parents / carers. Parents / carers will sign consent forms before major outings and will be informed of the itinerary.

- When driving children, they should be in the back of cars with appropriate safety restraints. A common-sense approach should be adopted with teenagers as to where they sit.

### **At the weekly Youth Group meeting(s)**

- Youth activities will be overseen by at least two leaders.
- Where there are children / young people under the age of 18 years at an activity, adults should be present or within earshot.

### **At midweek women's Bible studies or other meetings**

- Where a child is being looked after by a Church approved volunteer and the child is within shouting distance of their mother / carer, we will observe the principle that one volunteer may look after up to 3 children (excluding their own) providing it is practically manageable. Beyond this number, we will ask for additional volunteers to be in attendance.

### **Vulnerable adults participation in Church activities**

Please see **Appendix 3** for the definition of 'Vulnerable Adult' for the purposes of this policy.

- Since a Christian should NEVER abuse or exploit someone in their care whether vulnerable or not, generally ministering to Vulnerable Adults will look like normal service for those involving them in ministry or meeting with them as part of the Church's ministry.
- Part of the Church's ministry will involve the provision of pastoral care to those in the Church. The Leaders of Growth Groups are specifically tasked with the provision of pastoral care to those in their groups and are there to love, protect, serve and pray for everyone – including vulnerable adults.
- Most of the time, the usual approach taken when welcoming any adult to Growth Groups, the main meetings and meeting up informally etc will be suitable for a Vulnerable Adult however sensitivity will be required with respect to any particular needs they may have or risks they may pose to other members of the activity concerned.
- Where there is concern on whether or not they should be participating in an activity such as praying with someone from the Church or when someone is reading the Bible with them, it is wise to seek their permission before engaging in the activity; however if by virtue of their vulnerability they are not capable of providing the permission, then it should be sought from their carer.
- Where a vulnerable adult is concerned, depending upon the vulnerability, it may be important for activities to be done in plain view of others and in the knowledge of those who are responsible for their care.
- Generally it is the approach of the Church that male group leaders would provide pastoral care to the men in their groups and female group leaders would provide pastoral care to the women in their groups in a 1-on-1 situation.
- In some situations, pastoral care will be provided to people by the Ministers, staff workers, Church Wardens or other designated individuals. In a 1-on-1 situation, pastoral care to vulnerable adults should generally be provided by someone of the same gender although this is not to preclude the Ministers, staff workers, Church Wardens or other designated individuals from visiting the sick or elderly. However, when undertaking such a ministry, they should be careful not to allow themselves to be placed in a situation which could be easily misconstrued as inappropriate or indeed which could lead to allegations which are difficult to refute due to a lack of third parties being present. It may, for instance, be wise to consider visiting in pairs.
- In the rare incidences where you suspect someone could be taking advantage of a vulnerable adult, refer to **Appendix 3** for the steps you should take.

## **E-safety**

- We will ensure that all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- Where e-technology is being used by members of a Youth Group to communicate with each other during a Youth Group activity such as a weekend away, we will ask them to make sure their communication with each other is kind and sensitive.

## **Social networking sites**

- Youth Group leaders need to be extremely careful of any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site and below are a number of principles to follow when communicating via a social networking site:
  - o The leader should not be 'friends' with group members on Facebook, Instagram or other similar platforms.
  - o All regular contact online with Youth Group members should be done via the open Facebook group, which can be publicly seen by all Youth Group members.
  - o Private messages can be used for administrative purposes only, with another leader copied into the message, e.g to arrange a one-to-one bible study.
  - o Photographs should only be uploaded after parental consent has been granted.
  - o Youth Group leaders should not 'tag' Youth Group members in photographs, but instead allow young people to tag themselves.
  - o Youth Group leaders should ensure their privacy settings on any social networking site that they use result in only 'friends' being able to view their profile, not the Youth Group members, and these privacy settings should be reviewed monthly.

## **E-mail communication and private messaging on social networking sites**

- Below are a number of principles which should be followed by Youth Group leaders when communicating by e-mail with children or young people:
  - o Obtain parental / carer agreement before using email services to communicate with a child or young person.
  - o As a guiding principle, do not send a message which you would not be happy to copy to the child or young person's parents / carers.
  - o Use clear, unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation. For example workers should never use terms such as "luv", "lol" or an "x" as a kiss to finish a message.
  - o The Youth Group leader must retain copies of all messages sent to a child or young person or sent to them by one of the children or young people in the Church and make them available to be reviewed if necessary by someone in Leadership on request.
  - o Children and Young People should also be informed that we cannot promise confidentiality and that the youth worker may need to discuss their e-mails with someone. Whilst problematic e-mails are likely to be rare, this may help deter young people from sending flirtatious, insulting or abusive emails.
  - o Be aware children and young people can find it easier to communicate via email because nobody is physically present. This means the child or young person may be more willing to share personal and sensitive information about themselves or a given situation than they would face to face. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, counselling should only be done by those qualified to give it.

## **Communicating by mobile telephones**

- Texting can be done anywhere, any time and is therefore more difficult to undertake in a suitably 'professional' manner. This makes it even more important for youth and children workers to be accountable for the things they say.
- Below are a number of principles which should be followed when communicating with children or young people by SMS, WhatsApp, iMessage, Facebook Messenger or other similar app:
  - o As a guiding principle, do not send a text which you would not be happy to copy to the child or young person's parents / carers.
  - o Not every child or young person has the use of a mobile phone and, even if they do, parents / carers may not want the worker to have the number. Always obtain parental / carer agreement before using this method of communication.
  - o Where possible use group rather than individual texting.
  - o Copy in another leader to all text messages sent to any child or young person.
  - o Workers should take care with the language they use, avoiding ambiguous abbreviations (such as 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love') and always end with their name. Whilst children and young people may understand such abbreviations correctly, parents / carers may easily misinterpret such messages and therefore it is important that workers are careful that messages are free from the risk of such misunderstanding.
  - o All texts or conversations should be saved, and where there are concerns raised in the texts from a safeguarding perspective, the texts should be passed on/shown to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy.
  - o Be careful not to send long strings of unanswered texts which may be a sign the communication is not welcome.
  - o Texts should not be sent to a child or young person after 10pm or before 7am.

## **Data protection**

- Children and vulnerable adults have a right to be protected from harm. Where disclosing information might place a child or vulnerable adult at risk, then safeguarding considerations will take precedence over data protection, as allowed for by EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 and the Data Protection Act 2018, together with all other applicable legislation in force from time to time relating to the processing of personal data and privacy.
- Where photos or videos are to be taken of children within the Church, information on the proposed use must be given, and permission (either verbal or written) must be obtained from their parents / carers at the time the photos are taken, followed up with written permission before publishing them. We should avoid using photos of individual children, but instead use a group photo. Children should not be identified by surname or any other personal details.

## **Discipline of children and young people**

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life and is an expression of God's love for an individual. (Hebrews 12:5-12 & Proverbs 22:6). Given different parents / carers have different understandings of what is reasonable level of discipline to be used with children, those workers assisting in a Crèche or Sunday Club context need to show great care in this area. Discipline should generally be enacted in consultation with the parents / carers concerned. The following are some guidelines in this area:

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the children in your care.

- Work on each individual child's positives; do not compare a child with another, but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect children to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention, and resist allowing demanding children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other Sunday Club /Crèche leaders know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- If children are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.
- Sunday Club and Crèche leaders should not smack hit or shout at a child. To gain attention, change voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love, never in anger. Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry that you may deal with the situation unwisely.
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property, and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if the rules are not kept.
- Every child is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows therefore, that each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Some children have a tendency to be disruptive in a group. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate them if they are disruptive as a last resort. Potential strategies for dealing with disruption include the following:

- Have a disruptive child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take a disruptive child to one side and engage with them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths.
- Remedial action can be taken against a constantly disruptive child. They can be warned that you may speak to their parents / carers about their behaviour, they may be sent outside the room (under supervision), back into the Church service or, after consultation with a Church leader and advising the parent / carer, be banned from attending the group for a period of time.
- If a child's behaviour continues to be disruptive despite measures taken above, seek advice and guidance from a leader or their parents / carers.
- Pray with the other workers before the session and take time to debrief before you leave.

## **Touch**

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are normal needs for children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their coming to understand human relationships just as they are for adults. The following guidelines regarding touch are suggested:

- Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. For example, having a child sit on a leader's lap whilst sitting on the floor during main singing time may be acceptable but, having them sit on laps in a less public context should be avoided.
- Touch should be related to the child's or vulnerable adults needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and will generally initiated by the child or vulnerable adult rather than the worker, although it is acknowledged that a Crèche age child may not be able to communicate their needs and therefore can be picked up if this would comfort them.

- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating.
- Children and vulnerable adults have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances such as when they may need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying suncream etc.) encourage the child or vulnerable adult to do what they can themselves, giving appropriate help where necessary.
- Sunday Club, Crèche and other pastoral leaders should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should feel free to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misconstrued. Concerns about abuse should always be reported.
- Sunday Club and Crèche leaders should not smack, hit or physically discipline any child except by 'holding' which may be used if there is an immediate danger of personal injury to the child or other person.

## **Section 4 - Additional Practice guidelines for special activities**

In addition to the general practice guidelines outlined in Section 3 above, the following will be implemented:

### **Holiday Club**

- The children's worker and/or youth leader will oversee and record a risk assessment of the event and proposed activities. General safety rules will then be drawn up.
- OFSTED registration is required if we run activities of 14 or more days in any 12 month period; in this instance, a form is to be filled in notifying OFSTED of the holiday club at least 14 days prior to commencement.
- A general information and consent form will be completed and returned, giving contact details of parents / carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements. This form should be renewed annually.
- Parents / carers will be informed of the nature of activities undertaken and a contact telephone number.
- A register of those attending the club will be maintained together with a register of workers. This will include a record of arrival and departure times. At the end of the holiday club, the register is to be handed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will arrange for suitable storage of the paperwork.

### **Youth Group / Sunday Club Trips**

- The Youth / Sunday Club leader will oversee and record a risk assessment of the event and proposed activities. From this, general safety rules will be drawn up.
- A health information and consent form will be completed by a parent / carer of each child attending. The parents / carers will see a list of activities proposed and will provide written consent for their child taking part. For overnight trips, parents / carers will also be advised of the sleeping arrangements which will be age appropriate and provide security for the children.
- For a trip at a centre, we will establish that they have appropriate public liability insurance. Information regarding the Church's own insurance cover is given in section 5.
- We will make sure that the workers on any trip includes a first aider or medically trained health professional, and that a properly equipped first aid kit is taken on all trips. The first aider will have to hand details of local GP and the nearest Hospital with A and E. They will be responsible for the medical consent forms for each child and will ensure that any medication for children is adequately stored.

During the trip:

- We will operate within our recommended adult/children ratios as stipulated above, and will ensure that we know the whereabouts of the children in our care at all times.
- We will keep a record of the significant activities carried out including which children took part.
- We will make sure everyone at the weekend away knows the fire drill, the safety rules, who the first aider or medically trained health professional is, and where to find the first aid kit.
- No mains operated electrical/ electronic equipment may be used unless it has passed portable appliance testing (PAT).
- We will always obtain parental / carer consent before taking children swimming, and will make sure a qualified lifeguard is there and that boy / girl behaviour is appropriate.
- After the event, consent forms and associated information will be handed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator to be stored indefinitely in a locked filing cabinet.

### **Church Away Day**

- When children are being looked after by volunteers from other churches, the Sunday Club co-ordinator will ask to see a copy of the safeguarding policy of each church being represented and ensure the volunteers have read it.
- The Sunday Club co-ordinator will ensure volunteers from other churches have undergone an enhanced DBS check before taking part in serving the children.

### **Sallywags Garden party and other similar events**

- An adult will be appointed to be in charge of all aspects of childcare for any event involving pre-school children, including heading up the crèche team.
- A risk assessment will be carried out at any venue used to host the event, and suitable actions will be taken to safeguard the children.
- A register of attendees, and adults looking after the children, will also be recorded and handed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator for safe storage.

## Section 5 - Other Matters

### Key Information on the Church for Safeguarding matters

Name of organisation:	Grace Church Dulwich (hereafter, the 'Church')
Address and telephone number for safeguarding administration purposes:	c/o 19 Ferndene Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 0AQ 020 7733 5933
Sunday meetings held at:	Rosendale Junior School, Turney Road, West Dulwich, SE21 Start time 10.30 am Sunday Club from 10.45am – 12.00 pm
Email address:	<a href="mailto:info@gracechurchdulwich.org">info@gracechurchdulwich.org</a>
Denomination/Organisation:	Church of England church without a parish with a Bishop's Mission Order and under the extended oversight of the Bishop of Maidstone
Charity number	1111740
Company number	5554986
Insurance company	'Church Fellowship Policy' with Ansvar giving cover for property damage, personal accident, employers liability and public liability

### Insurance & Liabilities

*'If a church has not taken reasonable steps to care for children in its care and in the appointment and management of its workers, then that church may face legal action for damages should an offence occur.'*  
(Diocesan Policy Document)

Damages may be awarded against the person who committed the abuse or against the Church body or office holder if held liable through negligence. Such liability might occur if:

- The person committing the abuse was an employee of the church body or office holder and committed the abuse in the course of such employment.
- The church body or office holder was one to whom the care of the child had been entrusted.
- The church body or office holder was otherwise held by the court to have owed a duty of care to the child to safeguard him/her from abuse.

**IMPORTANT: it is the Leadership that is legally liable for any claims for negligence** in appointing and recruiting inappropriate staff or volunteers. It is crucial that the procedures are rigorously followed.

The Church will maintain public liability cover with an indemnity limit of at least £5m and employer's liability cover with an indemnity limit of £10m. However, the insurance policy will make it clear that if the Church is not observing the guidance provided in this document then liability insurance cover may be lost. Failure to observe current 'best practice' can result in litigation if injury or damage occurs.

### **Key Source Material**

- This document is based on a Model Safeguarding Policy supplied by 31: 8.
- 'Protecting All God's Children', the child protection policy for the Church of England.

## **Appendix 1 - Leadership Safeguarding Statement**

The Church Council (Simon Dowdy, Minister; Andy Meadows, Associate pastor for youth and children, Fiona Neden, women's ministry team leader; Andrew Neden, Treasurer; John Bartlett, Church Warden; Ben Jones, Church Warden), Vicky Widdows, Secretary; Katie Robertson, Nick Hallett and Andrew Burke recognises the importance of its ministry / work with children and young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to its care.

The following statement was agreed by the organisation in November 2019.

Grace Church Dulwich is committed to the safeguarding of children and ensuring their well-being. Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) as well as vulnerable adults, and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe everyone should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children, young people and vulnerable adults we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognize that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs, and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve or they are under church discipline.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children, young people and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our church where the value of all people is recognised and challenges are responded to appropriately.

### **We are committed to:**

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs and following good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy in their work, and working with them in taking appropriate actions needed in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that all those in Leadership or working in the various ministry areas agree to abide by this document.
- Supporting parents and families.
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake the ministries described in this document.
- Supporting all those who either are members of the Church or join our meetings who are affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.
- Reviewing this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

**We recognise:**

- Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child or adults with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If you have any concerns for a child then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Co-ordinators for the Church:

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Judith Elgood, telephone 020 7274 5478  
 Safeguarding Administrator (DBS Administration): Sarah Born, telephone 020 7733 5933  
 Safeguarding Administrator (DBS Administration): Katie Jones, telephone 07780 754442  
 Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Andy Meadows, telephone 07850 887619

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

Signed by the Leadership of the Church:

Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____
Signed Name _____	Date _____
Date _____	Signed Name _____

## Appendix 2 - Child abuse

### Definitions

#### *What is a child?*

Any person under the age of 18 years. "Working together to safeguard children 2013"<sup>1</sup> states 'the fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young offenders' Institution does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

#### *What is abuse?*

Working Together to Safeguard Children states that 'somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or 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 for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.' It recognises four areas of potential abuse for children: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. Abuse can be described under any one of these four categories or a combination of categories:

- **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 the indicators of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** is 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 children 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 the 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 involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. 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. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> published by the Department of Health, 2013

Although not a formal category of abuse, it is important to be mindful of the danger of spiritual abuse. Spiritual abuse is the inappropriate use of religious belief or practices to attempt to 'force' religious values or behaviours onto vulnerable people. It applies to occasions when any of the above types of abuse are purportedly done in God's name.

## **Recognising possible signs and indicators of abuse**

These are only a guide and are not necessarily proof of abuse, but they may be useful indicators. Many indicators of distress in a child can point to abuse, but there may be other explanations too. This has sometimes been the reason for falsely accusing parents / carers of sexual abuse.

It is important that the following signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but that the possibility should be considered far more than in the past. They should make us stop and think - not jump to conclusions inappropriately!

### *Warning signs:*

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Nervousness/watchfulness.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Changed or inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

### *Signs requiring particular vigilance:*

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them, or where differing explanations have been received.
- Injuries which occur on the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries or illnesses which have not received medical attention.
- Any signs of neglect, under-nourishment or inadequate care.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

## **Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse**

Under no circumstances should a Church worker investigate allegations of abuse - our responsibility is to refer allegations or suspicions to the Police or Social Services who will do the investigating required.

*If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect which a worker suspects may have been caused by physical abuse or shows signs of neglect, or where there are concerns of emotional abuse, the lead worker*

*should contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy. Their actions will include one of the following, and generally should involve seeking advice of 31: 8 and may include consultation with the Minister or Church Wardens:*

- o Where appropriate, a conversation will be held with the parent / carer suggesting medical help/attention is sought for the child. The parent / carer will then initiate further action, if necessary.
- o For lesser concerns e.g. poor parenting, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy will encourage the parents / carers to seek help from the Social Services. If the parent / carer is unwilling to seek help, then the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy may offer to go with them, and if this fails to illicit action, then advice will be sought from the Social Services and 31: 8.
- o Where emergency medical attention is necessary then this should, of course, be sought immediately, informing the doctors of any suspicions.
- o For very serious concerns, such as cases of deliberate injury, concern about a child's safety or if the child is afraid to return home, contact will be made with the Social Services and possibly also the Police. In this instance the parents / carers will not be informed until we have been advised to do so by the Social Services.

*If there are allegations of sexual abuse, the worker should:*

- Contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy immediately, unless they are the subject of the allegation or suspicion.
- not inform the parents / carers under any circumstances (they could have been involved).
- not inform/confront any alleged perpetrator under any circumstances.
- the fact that a worker feels the child's story is unlikely must not prevent appropriate action being taken. For example, a child may say that they have been abused by an older or younger person. In reality, the perpetrator could be a parent / carer or a close relative, but naming another person may be the only way in which this child can seek help.
- the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy will contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or 31: 8 and will refer the matter to Social Services and the Police.
- The role of the Church is essentially collecting and clarifying the precise details of the allegation and providing the information to Social Services, whose task it is to investigate the allegation.

*Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:*

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse

If there is concern about any of the above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy will:

- contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse (or alternatively Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or 31: 8 can be contacted for advice).
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support.

- Contact Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or 31: 8 and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

If the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy are not sure whether an official referral is warranted then they can contact Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or 31: 8 to discuss the legitimacy of their concerns. 31: 8 offers advice but is not part of the formal reporting chain. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy can also contact Social Services to discuss their concerns.

Whilst Church workers will normally refer straight to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy before reporting suspicions of child abuse to Social Services, the worker, as a member of the public, retains the right to report serious matters to Social Services directly.

It should also be noted that any allegations or suspicions are covered by pastoral confidentiality, so Church members have no automatic right to this information even if they are the subject of the allegation or suspicion. The sharing of information is always limited to a need to know basis in order to protect the interests of all the parties concerned.

## **Guidelines for if a child tells us they have been abused**

### *General points*

- Above all else, listen, listen, listen!
- Show acceptance of what the child says, however unlikely it seems.
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware the child may have been threatened.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let the child know that you are always ready to listen.
- Avoiding asking questions as you might put something into their mind that was not there.
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you) writing down exactly what the child said and when he/she said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, and kept for an indefinite period in a secure place.

### *Helpful things you might say or convey*

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says).
- I am glad you have told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will try and help you.

### *Concluding*

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and you believe them.

- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent the child returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse).
- If you are unsure that the allegation or suspicion is a real concern, then it is far safer to contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy for advice.
- Consider your own feelings and get pastoral support from the Leadership if needed.

## Appendix 3 – Adults with Care and Support Needs (Vulnerable adults)

### Definition of vulnerable adult / adult in need of protection

An adult is someone over 18 (unless specific legislation states otherwise).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the European Convention on Human Rights, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) all state that adults should be free from abuse.

It follows that some adults because of circumstance or particular vulnerability or risk may be in need of protection<sup>2</sup>. Vulnerable adults are also known as ‘adults at risk’.

An adult is deemed ‘vulnerable’ if they are in receipt of a ‘regulated activity’<sup>3</sup> and the person involved as carer/ giver of the regulated activity is required to have a DBS search. Regulated activities as listed in the legislation are:

1. The provision of assistance to an adult because of their age, illness or disability, if that includes managing the person's cash, paying their bills or shopping on their behalf.
2. Anyone who provides various forms of assistance in the conduct of an adult's own affairs, for example by virtue of an enduring power of attorney.
3. A person who transports an adult because of their age, illness or disability either to or from their place of residence and a place where they have received, or will be receiving, health care, personal care or social care; or between places where they have received or will be receiving health care, personal care or social care. This will not include family and friends or taxi drivers.
4. Any health care professional providing health care to an adult, or anyone who provides health care to an adult under the direction or supervision of a health care professional.
5. Someone providing personal care including physical assistance with eating or drinking, going to the toilet, dressing, oral care, because of an adult's age, illness or disability; or supervising an adult who can't make a decision to do any of the above without prompting/ supervision because of their age, illness or disability.
6. Social care by a social worker.

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<sup>2</sup> 'No secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse' - Department of Health and Home Office (March 2000)

<sup>3</sup> The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

## Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)<sup>4</sup>

Regulated activity continues to exclude any activity carried out in the course of family relationships and personal, non-commercial relationships.<sup>5</sup> In addition, members of peer support groups (eg Growth Groups) are not in regulated activity, even if the group is directed or supervised by a healthcare professional.

'Abuse' is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

- **Physical Abuse:** This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.
- **Psychological or Emotional Abuse:** These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.
- **Financial or Material Abuse:** This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.
- **Neglect or Act of Omission:** This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired.
- **Discriminatory Abuse:** This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.
- **Institutional Abuse:** This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

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<sup>4</sup> These definitions are extracted from 'No secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse' - Department of Health and Home Office (March 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Section 58 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 provides for this; section 58 was not amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

- Domestic Abuse: Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

### **Signs of Possible Abuse (vulnerable adults)**

#### Physical

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

#### Sexual

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

#### Psychological

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

#### Financial or Material

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

#### Neglect or Omission

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

#### Discriminatory

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect

- Poor quality or avoidance of care

#### Institutional

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

### **Initial Response to a Concern or Allegation of Abuse**

If there is a concern that a vulnerable adult may have been abused or a direct allegation of abuse is been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following:

- Allow them to share whatever they wish, without putting pressure on them to identify the alleged abuser.
- Do not ask leading questions, but rather reflect back what is being said, allowing them to express themselves.
- Sensitively explore the issues and possible action.
- If what you hear raises concerns about their immediate safety or the safety of another vulnerable adult, explain this and suggest they could help keep themselves and others safe by sharing this with an experienced and understanding person from Adult Social Services or the Police.
- Discuss the concern with your Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy, which may then lead to you or the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy contacting Adult Social Services or the Police Child Protection Team for advice.
- Make careful notes of what is alleged, i.e. what they said, how you responded, what led to the allegation being made (preferably within one hour of the person talking). This document should be signed and dated, and handed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy to be kept confidential and stored securely for an indefinite period, along with all hand written notes even if subsequently typed up.
- It may be appropriate to reassure them that they do not have to make a formal statement leading to a prosecution unless they wish to but that this can be discussed with someone from the Police Protection Unit or Adult Social Services.
- Consider offering to accompany them if/when they speak to the authorities.
- Be aware that if they decide to make a formal statement which leads to a prosecution, your notes could be used as evidence and you may be required to attend a court hearing.
- Avoid discussing the substance of the allegation from then on but offer emotional support during any proceedings, concentrating on areas that have arisen as a result of the abuse rather than the abuse itself.
- Ensure you have adequate supervision.
- Seek advice from 31: 8 and the appropriate counselling bodies e.g. Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC) or British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). In some cases, allegations have to be reported to both the Charity Commission and the ISA; also consider whether our insurers need to know.

## **Responding to an adult experiencing domestic violence**

When supporting a man or woman (women are more likely to face issues of domestic violence and so we will refer to the adult in feminine terminology):

- Do believe her. It is likely that what she is describing is just the tip of the iceberg.
- Do reassure her that it is not her fault and that she doesn't deserve to be treated this way.
- Don't minimise the danger to her or blame her for his violence.
- Signpost her to an organisation which can help her find a place at a domestic violence refuge and where she can obtain legal advice/ representation.
- Do support and respect her choices – even if she chooses to return to her abuser, it is her choice.
- Help her with a safety plan, such as setting aside some money, keeping copies of important papers, having clothes packed. Plan how she can exit the house safely.
- Do protect her confidentiality.
- Where there are children in the relationship then consider the child protection implications. Under no circumstance can you promise total confidentiality.

## **Involving Adult Services / Social Care or the Police where there is concern for a vulnerable adult**

Where possible, concerns should be passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator (or Deputy) but difficulty in contacting these individual(s) should not delay action being taken. If a Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy is concerned that a vulnerable adult may have been or is in danger of being abused, they should contact Adult Social Services and/or the Police if appropriate.

If they are not sure whether an official referral is warranted then they can contact 31: 8 to discuss the legitimacy of their concerns. 31: 8 offers advice but is not part of the formal reporting chain. They can also contact Adult Social Services to discuss their concerns.

The primary responsibility for managing any investigation process rests with managers of the Adult Social Care social services teams. When the concern is about someone in residential care, the Care Quality Commission will be involved. Where a crime may have been committed, the Police will investigate.

Organisations have a duty to act on any concern of abuse of a vulnerable adult to ensure that the situation is assessed and investigated. The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the person concerned.

## **Responding in an emergency to a vulnerable adult who alleges abuse**

Adult Social Care Teams operate Emergency Duty Teams (EDT) outside regular office hours, at weekends and over statutory holidays. They are available to offer advice and will also take action to protect a vulnerable adult, including arranging emergency medical treatment and, where appropriate, involving the Police.

A member of the EDT would not be responsible for a criminal investigation but if the allegations are serious, a co-ordinated approach between the Police and the EDT may result to produce the best possible outcome for the vulnerable adult.

## **Action by Adult Social Services / Adult Social Care**

Once a referral is made to Adult Social Care they will check to see if the vulnerable adult or alleged abuser is known to them. If the vulnerable adult is known, details of the referral will be passed on to the worker involved. The worker and a team manager will then decide if an Adult Protection Inquiry should proceed. If the individual isn't known to Adult Social Care, it is likely a duty worker and manager will make that decision.

## **Effective listening**

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above everything else, listen without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality.
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

### Helpful Responses

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

### DON'T say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

## **Appendix 4 – Guidelines for Responding to a disclosure of Historic Abuse**

In the course of their work the Leadership and those offering pastoral support at the Church may hear disclosure from adults regarding abuse that happened to them when they were children, from children regarding abuse that happened to them when they were younger or from adults regarding abuse that happened to them as adults but some time ago.

The Church is required to take advice and may need to report allegations or disclosures of criminal acts to the Police.

When someone tells you they have been abused, or have conducted abuse, whether recently or many years ago:

### General Points:

- Above all else, listen
- Keep calm, and show understanding/acceptance of what is said, however unlikely it seems. Reassure the individual that they were right to tell you
- Never push for information. Avoid leading questions and ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said
- Let the individual know what you are going to do next and that you will keep them informed. Let them know that you will need to tell someone else – don't promise confidentiality

### Action you must then take:

- You must contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy and tell them what you know (you do not need to disclose any names at this stage unless told otherwise). If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy, please contact one of the Church Wardens, details of whom are set out at page 4
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour, but always within 24 hours), writing down exactly what was said and when, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity/situation). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. A copy of these notes must be passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy
- You retain the right to report serious matters directly to Social Services or to the Police. Even so, as soon as possible (and within 24 hours), you must contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy
- Apart from telling the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, a Deputy or a Church Warden, the information must be treated as confidential and not shared with co-leaders or other Church members
- Under no circumstances should you investigate concerns of abuse yourself
- The contact details of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy can be found on page 5 of this document
- Consider your own feelings and ask for pastoral support from the Leadership if needed, and consider with the Leadership what pastoral support is needed for the individual involved

## Appendix 5 – Useful Organisations

31: 8	0303 003 11 11 <a href="http://www.thirtyoneeight.org">www.thirtyoneeight.org</a>
Childline	0800 11 11 <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a>
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000 <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a>
Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	<a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com">www.equalityhumanrights.com</a>
Care for the Family	<a href="http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk">www.careforthefamily.org.uk</a>
Churches for All (CFA)	<a href="http://www.churchesforall.org.uk">www.churchesforall.org.uk</a>
Go Sign	<a href="http://www.gosign.org.uk">www.gosign.org.uk</a>
Livability (Helping disabled people to care for themselves)	<a href="http://www.livability.org.uk">www.livability.org.uk</a>
Open Ears	<a href="http://www.openears.org.uk">www.openears.org.uk</a>
Through the Roof	<a href="http://www.throughtheroof.org">www.throughtheroof.org</a>
Torch Trust for the Blind	<a href="http://www.torchtrust.org">www.torchtrust.org</a>

**Appendix 6 - Church of England Safeguarding Policy**  
**Parish of .....**

**Safeguarding Policy Promoting a Safer Church**

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on .....

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy, our church is committed to:

- promoting a safer environment and culture
- safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church
- responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- responding to those who may pose a present risk to others.

The parish will:

- create a safe and caring place for all
- have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the Incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures
- safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse
- ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish
- display on church premises and on the parish website the details of whom to contact with safeguarding concerns or support needs
- listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse
- take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops' guidance, including immediately notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies
- offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred
- care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties
- ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually
- review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practice at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints Judith Elgood as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Incumbent: .....

Churchwardens: .....

Date: .....