Station Hill Baptist Church

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Based on Guidance for Baptist Union of Great Britain Churches May 2023

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

For the purpose of this guide, the term ‘child’ refers to anyone under the age of 18 years.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy, we are using the following simple definition taken from Thirtyone:Eight (Church Safeguarding Charity):

‘Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care of or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation’.

The “Church” in this document, refers to Station Hill Baptist Church (SHBC)

SECTION 1 – SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT FOR STATION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

Our vision

The value and importance of every individual was emphasised by Jesus during His life on earth. As His followers, we at SHBC affirm our commitment to the nurturing, protection, and safeguarding of every person associated with the church.

In fulfilling this vision, we:

- Welcome children and adults at risk into the life of our community
- Run activities for children and adults at risk
- Make our premises available to organisations working with children and adults at risk

Our safeguarding responsibilities

The church recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability.

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all associated with the church and will pray for them regularly. In pursuit of this, we commit ourselves to this policy and to the development of sound procedures to ensure we implement our policy well.

- **Prevention and reporting of abuse**

  It is the duty of each church member to help prevent the abuse of children and adults at risk, and the duty of each church member to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and adults at risk. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

- **Safer recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

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

- **Respecting children and adults at risk**

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

- **Safer working practices**

  The church is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and adults at risk and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

- **A safer community**

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

Safeguarding contact points within our church

The church has appointed the following individuals to form part of the church safeguarding team:

Charmaine Elkerton, Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)
They will advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered, or suspected.
Email address CharmaineE@stationhill.family

Esther Brooks, Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding (DDPS)
They will support the DPS and deputise in their absence
Email address: estherbrooks134@gmail.com

Mike Loveridge Safeguarding Trustee
They will raise the profile of safeguarding within the church and oversee and monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the church Trustees.
Phone number 07795 468 828
Email address: mloveridge23@btinternet.com

Rachel Lambert, Safeguarding Administrator
Overseeing the volunteer and paid worker safer recruitment process
Email address: safeguarding@hottchurch.onmicrosoft.com

Our Church Minister is also an important part of the Church Safeguarding Team.

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

(Further definitions of these roles can be found in Appendix 4 – Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities)

Putting our policy into practice

- A copy of the safeguarding policy statement will be displayed permanently on the church noticeboard and is available on our church website.
- Each worker with children and/or adults at risk will be directed to the full copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures on the church website and will be required to confirm that they have read and will follow them. A paper copy requiring a signature is available if requested.
- A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of, or other person associated with, the church.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually, and any necessary revisions adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures.
- The policy statement will be read annually at the church ACM, together with a report on the outcome of the annual safeguarding review.

SECTION 2 - SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

Each Trustee, church leader and worker (paid or voluntary) needs to be familiar with these procedures, and we strongly recommend that those in leadership roles attend both Level 2 and Level 3 BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training (delivered through our local Baptist association team: the West of England Baptist Network) to ensure that they have the knowledge and confidence needed to deal with safeguarding issues as they arise.

All church workers (paid and voluntary) who work with children and/or adults at risk should attend the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding training before they are able to work without supervision. BUGB has also published a Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding guide for new workers (paid and voluntary) that is available free of charge from their website. This document is designed to be an interim measure whilst a new member of staff or volunteer is waiting for a Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding course to take place.

2.1 PROCEDURE FOR RECOGNISING, RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ABUSE

2.1.1 What to do if Abuse is Suspected or Disclosed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a range of settings, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. There are many ways in which people suffer abuse. For more information, please see Appendix 1.

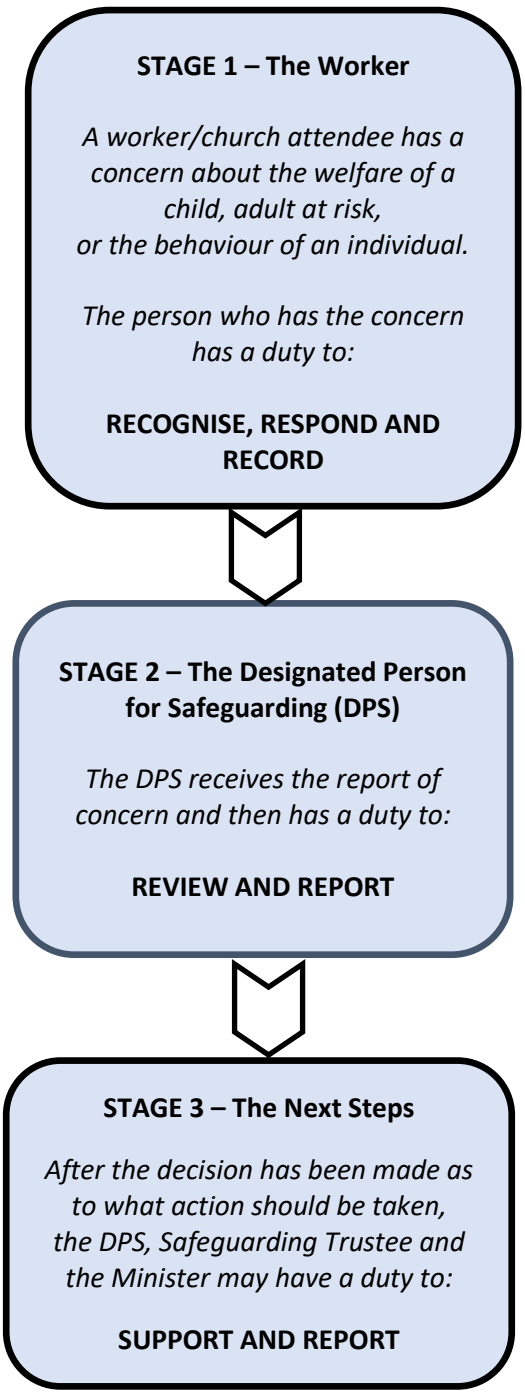
Everyone has their part to play in helping to safeguard children and adults at risk within the life of the church:

- If the behaviour of a child or adult at risk gives any cause for concern
- If an allegation is made in any context about a child or adult at risk being harmed
- If the behaviour of any individual towards children or adults at risk causes concern

WHAT TO DO	WHAT NOT TO DO
• Listen to and acknowledge what is being said. • Try to be reassuring & remain calm. • Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next. • Try to give them a timescale for when and how you / the DPS will contact them again. • Take action – don't ignore the situation. • Be supportive. • Tell them that: They were right to tell you; You are taking what they have said seriously; It was not their fault; That you may need to pass this information on to the appropriate people; • Be open and honest. • Give contact details for them to report any further details or ask any questions that may arise.	• Do not promise confidentiality. • Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval. • Do not minimise what is being said. • Do not ask probing or leading questions or push for more information. • Do not offer false reassurance. • Do not delay in contacting the DPS. • Do not contact the alleged abuser. • Do not investigate the incident any further. • Never leave a child or adult at risk waiting to hear from someone without any idea of when or where that may be. • Do not pass on information to those who don't need to know, not even for prayer ministry.

2.1.2 Responding to Concerns

When there are concerns that a child, young person or adult is being abused, the following process must be followed. More detailed information can be found in Appendix 2.



A record must be made of the concern, either handwritten or typed. If you have one, use a standard incident report form, if not write your notes on any paper or device available to you. Either way pass your concerns to the DPS within 24 hours. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have an incident form available.

The written record should be linked to the 4 W's: Who, What, Where, When; be made as soon as possible after the event; be legible; include the name, date of birth and address of the child or adult at risk; include the nature of any concerns and description of any bruising or injuries that have been noticed; include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible; include any action taken; be signed and dated; be kept secure and confidential (available only to the DPS and others responsible for safeguarding).

The report will be reviewed by the DPS with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. See Appendix 2 for examples of possible actions. Any formal referral to the Police or Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.

The DPS will make the Regional Safeguarding Lead aware of any referrals to the statutory authorities.

Pastoral support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns (this could be the church as a whole, but more specifically victims; alleged perpetrators; children; adults at risk; other family members; church workers; the DPS; Minister; members of the leadership team.

Where formal referrals are made, reports may need to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Charity Commission.

If the DPS is not available or is implicated in the situation, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the church's Safeguarding Team.

If you think that anyone is in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the Police by calling 999.

2.1.3 Responding to Concerns Raised about Adults at Risk

When a concern is raised about an adult, it should be treated in the same way as a concern about a child, i.e., the church worker (paid or voluntary) should:

1) **Recognise** that abuse may be taking place.
2) **Respond** to the concern.
3) **Record** all the information they have received.
4) **Report** the concern to the DPS, who may, in turn, report it to the statutory authorities.

The Care Act 2014 provides helpful guidance on these situations:

> *"If the adult has the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their safety and they do not want any action to be taken, this does not preclude the sharing of information with relevant professional colleagues. This is to enable professionals to assess the risk of harm and to be confident that the adult is not being unduly influenced, coerced, or intimidated and is aware of all the options. This will also enable professionals to check the safety and validity of decisions made. It is good practice to inform the adult that this action is being taken unless doing so would increase the risk of harm".*

It is not your role to decide whether someone has mental capacity and is therefore able to make decisions that impact on their safety and well-being. Decisions on mental capacity are best made by professionals with the relevant background information to hand. Always share your concerns with the DPS even if you do not have the consent of the adult to do so – in this instance, make sure the DPS knows that the person concerned has not given consent for the information to be passed on.

The DPS will consider all the information to hand and decide whether it is appropriate for the information to be reported to the statutory authorities (see appendix 2 for further information). If there are any concerns about an adult's mental capacity, the DPS will contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team for advice.

2.1.4 Allegations Against Workers

If you see another worker acting in ways which concerns you or might be misconstrued, speak to the DPS about your concerns as soon as you can. This includes the actions or behaviours of those in leadership positions in the church.

Church workers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual accountability, holding each other to the highest standards of safeguarding practice. The following procedure should be followed:

1) When an allegation of abuse has been made do not approach the alleged perpetrator about it.
2) Follow the usual safeguarding procedure: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report.**
3) Once the allegation has been reported to the DPS they can liaise with the relevant statutory authority and with the regional association Safeguarding Lead if they need further advice.
4) Whilst waiting for an outcome from the statutory authorities, the worker about whom concerns have been raised will be supervised as closely as possible, without raising suspicion.
5) Once the statutory authorities are involved, the church will follow their advice with regard to the next steps to take (for example suspension of a worker, putting a contract in place).
6) A written record of all discussions with statutory authorities or other parties should be maintained by the DPS and stored securely and confidentially, where only those directly involved in safeguarding (DPS, Safeguarding Trustee, Minister) can access them.
7) No information about the allegation will be shared with people in the church other than those

directly involved in safeguarding, not even for prayer purposes.

The suspension of a worker following an allegation is, by definition, a neutral act. Our priority as a church is to protect children and adults at risk from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator. If the church is considering suspending a paid worker pending an investigation, then it is best to seek support from the Regional Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

It may be necessary, for the sake of the child / adult at risk or to satisfy the needs of an investigation, for the alleged perpetrator to worship elsewhere. In such cases the DPS at the new church will be informed of the reasons for this happening.

When concerns are expressed about the Minister

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister should always be reported immediately to the Regional Safeguarding Lead in addition to following the church's usual procedures. Do not tell the Minister that a concern has been raised about them.

When concerns are expressed about the church DPS / Safeguarding Trustee

Any safeguarding concerns involving the DPS or Safeguarding Trustee should be raised with the Minister, who in turn should consult the Regional Safeguarding Lead. Do not tell the DPS / Safeguarding Trustee that a concern has been raised about them.

2.1.5 Abuse of Trust

Relationships between children and adults at risk and their church workers can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The worker is someone in whom the child or adult at risk has placed a degree of trust. This may be because the worker has an educational role, is a provider of activities, or is even a significant adult friend. It is not acceptable for a church worker to form a romantic relationship with a child or adult at risk with whom they have a relationship of trust.

While by no means restricted to young leaders, those who are in their early adult years will need to be particularly aware of the need not to abuse their position of trust in their relationships with other young people who are not much younger than themselves.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 expanded the list of roles which are legally considered to be positions of trust to include anyone who is in a teaching, coaching, instructing, training or supervising role within sport or religion. This means that since May 2022, if an adult of any age is in a role where they are working directly with young people aged 16 and 17 and forms a romantic or sexual relationship with them, they could be charged with criminal offences. If you have concerns about a relationship forming between an adult helper and a young person, then you should notify the DPS.

2.1.6 Allegations Made Against Children and Adults at Risk

Children and young people are, by nature, curious about the opposite sex. However, where a child is in a position of power, or has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abusive. Where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child, this is abusive. This is sometimes referred to as Peer-on-Peer Abuse or Child-on-Child Abuse. Such situations will be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

When such an instance occurs, they will be investigated by the statutory authorities in the same way as if an adult were involved, although it is likely that the perpetrator may also be regarded as a victim in their own right, as they may have also been abused. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of this type of behaviour, as most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens or even younger.

Allegations against adults at risk will be investigated by the statutory authorities. If the alleged perpetrator is unable to understand the significance of questions put to them or their replies, they can access support from an 'appropriate' adult whilst they are being questioned. This role can be filled by a range of people, such as a family member, carer, social worker, etc. In court, adults at risk may be allowed to be assisted by an intermediary or give evidence through a live link.

When an allegation is made against a child or adult at risk, the following procedure should be followed:

1) Do not approach the person about whom the allegation has been made or their parents/carers.
2) Follow the church's safeguarding procedure: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report.**
3) Seek advice from the DPS, who will speak to the Police or social services about when to inform a parent. The DPS will also seek advice about what steps need to be taken to ensure the needs of both the victim and alleged perpetrator are met; this may include placing the child or adult at risk on a Safeguarding Contract or equivalent (see section 3.4.2: Safer Community / Working with Alleged or Known Offenders).
4) Make sure there is pastoral support in place for the child or adult at risk throughout the process involved.

2.1.7 Pastoral Care

Following an allegation/suspicion

When an allegation/suspicion arises in the church, a period of investigation will follow, which will be stressful for all involved. The church will ensure that one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, another offers support to the victim/s and their family, and another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator, without compromising the alleged victims or their families. It may be necessary to appoint other people to support the families involved.

Where a statutory investigation is underway, this support will be provided with the knowledge of the statutory authority involved.

Where the perpetrator accepts some responsibility, they will be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be appropriate once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

Supporting those who have experienced abuse

As a church, we are committed to caring for those who have experienced abuse and refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain's ***Supporting Those Who Have Experienced Abuse*** guide to ensure that we adhere to a model of best practice.

We recognise it is important that those who have experienced abuse:

- Are accepted for who they are, without being made to forgive or being put into a position of feeling guilty and responsible for what happened to them.
- Know that God loves them unconditionally, and that nothing can or will change this truth.
- Can be confident that those in the church community who know about the abuse are with them on their journey – no matter how long or difficult that journey may be.

It may be necessary to signpost individuals to specialist support. The DPS has a list of relevant local information and contacts, ready for anyone who may need it.

2.2 SAFER RECRUITMENT

As a church, we are committed to safer recruitment practices. When recruiting both paid and volunteer church workers, the following process will be applied:

1) We will develop a clear role profile, person specification, and application form.
2) When advertising a role which involves working with children or adults at risk, we will make it clear that any appointment may be subject to a DBS check at the appropriate level.
3) All applicants will be asked to complete an application form and include the names of two referees.
4) Shortlisting of applicants will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader directly overseeing the role being recruited for.
5) Interviews will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader.
6) References, a Self-Disclosure Form and an enhanced DBS check must be completed satisfactorily before the appointed person starts in their role.

Note: Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for anyone disqualified from working with children or adults at risk to knowingly apply, accept, or offer to work with children or adults at risk. It is also a criminal offence to knowingly offer work with children or adults at risk to an individual who is so disqualified or to knowingly allow such an individual to continue to work with children or adults at risk.

Additional checks for paid workers

In addition to the above checks which should be completed for both paid and volunteer church workers, an applicant's UK residency status and/ or right to work in the UK will be checked when recruiting for a paid role.

References

Formal written references will be requested, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference. **References should not be sought from family members**.

Appointment and Supervision

The church's safeguarding policy and procedures will be discussed with the applicant, and they will be required to sign their agreement to adhere to them. All workers will have a role description and clear lines of accountability to a leader and the leadership team.

Paid workers will also have an assigned supervisor with whom they will meet regularly to discuss work and address any issues or areas of concern. There will be a probationary period of six months in the role before any paid appointment is confirmed.

There will also be regular team meetings to review procedures, share concerns, and identify other matters that may need clarification and guidance.

Training
It is important that all workers understand our church's agreed safeguarding procedures and attend BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training at least once every **four** years. Where a worker is successfully recruited but has not yet been able to attend the training, they should be given a copy of the Baptist Union of Great Britain's ***Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding*** booklet and asked to complete the relevant sections. Additional specialist training will also be arranged where needed, for example, in First Aid.

Young helpers under 18 years of age
In law, young helpers under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that they are helped to develop and hone their skills, attitudes, and experience. Young helpers must always be closely supervised by an adult leader and never given sole responsibility for a group of children. When considering ratios of staff to children, young helpers need to be counted as children, not leaders. The safeguarding procedures apply to a young helper just as they do to any other person. Parent/carer permission needs to be sought for young helpers to attend an event or help with a children's group, just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age.

2.3 SAFER BEHAVIOUR

The church has a code of behaviour for all those working with children and/or adults at risk so that everyone is shown the respect that is due to them:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Think about the language and tone of voice that you are using when engaging with children, young people, and adults at risk. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on those you are working with. This applies to both in-person and online interactions.
- Listen well to everyone. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or adult at risk is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is being spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the individual's body language to better understand what is being said.
- Be aware of any physical contact you may have with a child or adult at risk and record it when necessary. For instance, if you need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to someone in distress, or protect yourself or others from danger.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult at risk, even in 'fun'.
- Do not scapegoat, belittle, ridicule, or reject a child or adult at risk.
- Keep a record of any significant incidents or concerns on a Safeguarding Incident Form (see Appendix 3). Enter the names of all those present and anything of note which you observe, e.g., details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made, etc. All workers who witnessed the incident, overheard it, or responded in any way should record the details and sign and date the form.

Specific considerations when working with children:

- Do not invade the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering.
- The level of assistance with personal care (e.g., toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Avoid rough games involving physical contact between a worker and a child.
- Avoid sexually provocative games.

- When it is necessary to discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. There may, however, on the rare occasion, be circumstances where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.
- Only invite children and young people to your home or on trips in groups and always make sure that another worker is present.
- Notify the DPS of any children's trips that take place in the name of the church. Parental permission must always be sought.
- Do not give lifts to children or young people on your own. Ensure that if transporting children as part of your church role, you have the correct insurance cover in place as well as parental permission (See section 3.3.9 on Transport). No person under 18 years of age should be left in sole charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.

No one should normally be left working alone with children, young people, or adults at risk, but should instead work as part of a team. If there are insufficient leaders for groups:

- Internal doors should be left open.
- At least two people should be present before external doors are opened for an event.
- Consider whether you could combine groups or rearrange planned activities.
- Reconsider whether you can run the group safely, carrying out a Risk Assessment to record your findings.

If workers do find themselves on their own with children or adults at risk, they should:

- Assess the risk of sending the child or adult at risk home.
- Phone another team member and let them know the situation.
- Train additional leaders as soon as possible.

If a child or adult at risk wants to talk on a one-to-one basis, you should make sure that:

- You try to hold the conversation in a corner of a room where other people are present.
- You leave the door open if you are in a room on your own.
- Another team member knows where you are.
- You do not promise confidentiality.

Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with a group and whether they should be male or female workers, or both. See section 3.1.1 for recommended ratios. A couple or immediate family members should be considered to count as only one person when planning events or activities and the distribution of workers through different groups; for example, if a couple or immediate family members want to work together, then a third person will need to be assigned to that group. Wherever possible, couples or people who are related to each other should work with separate groups.

The only adults allowed to participate in children's and adult-at-risk activities are those safely appointed and appropriately trained. The leader of the activity should be aware of any other adults who are in the building whilst the activity is running.

SECTION 3 - BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The church is in an amazing position in society, with the opportunity to minister to individuals from the whole community, from the very young to the very old. These best practice guidelines are in place to help those working on behalf of the church to do it well, prioritising the safety and well-being of those they are working with. Whilst this section is divided into adults and children, some aspects of good practice will overlap.

3.1 – WORKING WITH CHILDREN

3.1.1 Ratios

When working with children the following recommended minimum ratios of workers to children apply:

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

This does not take into account special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability, and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratios. In calculating the ratios of workers to children, young helpers who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the workers.

3.1.2 Children with Additional Support Needs

Children and young people who have additional support needs can be at greater risk of abuse. They could require more help with personal care, such as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding, mobility, etc. Some children may have limited understanding and behave in a non-age-appropriate way. Please speak with the parents/carers of children/young people with additional support needs and find out from them how best to assist the child or young person. Older children will have their own views of how they can be best supported.

3.1.3 Visiting Children or Young People at Home

It is unlikely that workers will need to make pastoral visits to children and their families at home on behalf of the church. If a situation occurs, where it is needed, then it should be done in pairs, and with the prior agreement of the Minister. As discussed previously, a married couple would normally count as one person.

3.1.4 Children with no adult supervision

When children turn up to and want to join in with church activities without the knowledge of their parents/carers, workers will:

- Welcome the child and try to establish their name, age, address, and telephone number.
- Record their visit in a register.
- Ask the child if a parent/carer is aware of where they are. Where possible, phone and make contact.
- Without interrogating the child, find out as soon as possible whether they have any specific needs (e.g. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Give the child a consent form and explain that it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.

3.1.5 Mentoring

If a worker is working with a young person as part of the recognised church mentoring programme:

- The parents of all young people involved in mentoring are required to sign a letter to say they are aware that the mentoring is happening and with whom it is with.
- Mentoring meetings should only be held in agreed-upon places and should be in view of other people.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time, and someone should be aware that a meeting is taking place and where it is being held.
- A basic record should be kept of dates of significant meetings and any text messages or emails.
- Appropriate boundaries should be put in place regarding times and demand, i.e., not phoning or texting late at night, etc. A record should be kept of all communications with a young person by the mentor.
- A written record should be kept of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.

3.1.6 Peer Group Activities for Young People

All youth activities will be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with safer recruitment procedures. It is accepted that groups aged 16+ may benefit from being led and run by peers. In this situation, adult leaders will contribute to programme planning and reviews and will always be present to oversee any peer-led activities taking place.

3.1.7 Physical Contact

- Keep everything public. A hug within a group context is very different from one behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the workers'.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Workers should avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure their personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances such as when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc), workers should encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves but, consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should help each other by constructively challenging anything that could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

- If a team member is unsure about whether the actions of another volunteer or worker constitutes a concern, they should raise this with the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Whilst this section relates specifically to physical contact with children, the same consideration should be given to interactions with adults in the church, especially those who might be considered Adults at Risk. Not everyone is comfortable with physical contact, such as a hug, and all those working and volunteering in the church should be mindful of this.

3.1.8 Digital Communication with Young People

Safe Communication
A worker's role description will set out the church's expectations about how they are to communicate with young people and how this will be monitored. For example, should the worker be contacting children and young people directly or through parents? Are they allowed to email/text/ call a young person? How will this contact be recorded? It should also include the expectations of the church in relation to their use. On the general consent form, parents/carers sign to agree that the young person can receive such communications.

Young people also need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to electronic communications. It is important to remember that, as well as the parent/carer, young people have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their contact details and should not be pressured otherwise.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with children aged 11 years and younger. For more information on online safety, please refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain ***Cyber Safety Guide***, which can be found on their website, as well as the ***Guide to using Social Media to Communicate with Young People***, which is also available on the BUGB website.

Email
Email should be limited to sharing generic information, e.g. to remind young people about meetings (using bcc, not cc when using multiple email addresses). If email is being used, workers will ensure that they are accountable by copying each message to a designated email address. It is important that workers use clear and unambiguous language, to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, for example, avoiding inappropriate terms such as 'love' when ending an email.

Communicating using Instant Messaging (e.g. Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram)
Instant messaging should be kept to an absolute minimum. Workers should save significant conversations and keep a log stating with whom and when they communicated. This applies to communication both with children, young people, and with adults at risk. Instant messaging should not be the primary means of communication between workers and those they are supporting.

Mobile Phones
Workers need to be cautious and careful in using mobile phones to communicate with young people:
- Mobile phone use should primarily be for the purposes of information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language and should not use abbreviations like 'lol', which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.

- Paid workers will be issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- Workers should not take photos of children, young people, or adults at risk unless permission is sought in advance and should not store such photos on personal phones.
- Where the youth and children's work is primarily delivered by volunteers, the church should consider having a central mobile phone used for communication. This should be held centrally and not by one individual.

Social Media

- Workers should have social media accounts that are used solely for children's / youth work communications and are totally separate from their own personal accounts. This is to ensure that all communication with children and young people is kept within the public domain.
- Workers should not send private messages to children on social media. Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Workers should not accept 'friend' or 'following' requests from children on their personal accounts, nor seek to be 'friends' or a 'follower' of any child known to them in a church context.

Taking Videos and Photographs of Children

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, churches must be very careful if they use still or moving images of clearly identifiable people. Previous legislation was reinforced through the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage is recorded.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from the crowd is not necessary.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including email, postal address, or telephone number.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.

Consideration of safeguarding when live streaming church services and events

Where children and young people are participating in services or events, we will ensure that appropriate parent or guardian consent is in place. Where children and young people are unable to be shown on camera, consideration will be given to how else they can participate in the service.

This is in line with the guidance as set out in the Baptist Union of Great Britain guide: Recording and Livestreaming Services: Safeguarding Guidelines for Churches.

3.2 WORKING WITH ADULTS AT RISK

3.2.1 Premises

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

3.2.2 Language

Every effort will be taken to use appropriate language and suitable vocabulary, enabling the greatest level of inclusivity and accessibility. We will be mindful of the language used within worship and the language used to describe people (such as derogatory words focusing on aspects of someone's disability, race, or sexuality rather than the person themselves).

3.2.3 Worship

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

- Providing some copies of large print type for all printed materials
- Speakers always face the congregation and do not cover their mouths when talking, enabling those who rely on lip-reading
- Describing what is being presented on a screen for those who cannot see it clearly
- Using inclusive language
- Using a variety of liturgy and resources to cater for different levels of understanding
- Using a microphone during times of open prayer so that all can hear
- Consider holding a service which specifically caters to certain groups of adults at risk, such as those with learning disabilities, the deaf, or the visually impaired.

3.2.4 Insurance

We will take reasonable steps to safeguard adults at risk and will follow any specific safeguarding requirements as laid out by our insurance company.

3.2.5 Financial integrity

Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transactions, and gifts, as outlined below. These relate to both paid staff and volunteers:

- Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done.
- Workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- Workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Any gifts received should be reported to the church Trustees, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated church workers.
- Care should be taken not to canvas for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved.
- Workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest.

- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the Trustees. Workers should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interest.
- Expert legal advice should be sought on matters such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.

3.2.6 Photographs

Workers should make sure that they have the person's permission to take a photograph and that the subject is happy with the intended use of the pictures. When taking group pictures, workers should remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

3.2.7 Live Streaming Services

When a service or event is being live-streamed or recorded to be shared online at a later date, we will ensure people are aware that they are being recorded if they come to the microphone.

This is in line with the guidance as set out in the Baptist Union of Great Britain guide: Recording and Livestreaming Services: Safeguarding Guidelines for Churches.

3.2.8 Computers

All church computers will have suitable parental controls and blocks put on. Although this is not a failsafe, it will make using the computers for inappropriate behaviour more difficult, whilst also protecting any vulnerable users. We will create a policy specifically for church computer use, including terms and conditions for use as well as what will happen if someone breaches these conditions.

3.2.9 Record keeping

It is good practice to record pastoral visits or meetings, noting the date, time, location, subject, and any actions that are to be taken. The record of these meetings should stick to facts and try to avoid opinions. Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns, or disclosures should be passed on to the DPS and stored safely and securely for at least 75 years. Please refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain Safeguarding Record Keeping Guide available on their website.

3.2.9.1 Data Security

Due to the sensitive nature of the data collected as part of ensuring the safeguarding of children and adults at risk, all completed reports and forms should be stored in a secure cabinet where access is limited to the Safeguarding Trustee and the DPS. Information stored should only be used for the purposes of safeguarding. In addition to this, all registers and registration forms completed by staff as part of delivering activities to children should be returned to the Safeguarding Trustee to be stored for 5 years, along with all other safeguarding records, as these may be evidential in the case of possible abuse.

3.2.10 Pastoral Relationships

All those involved in pastoral ministry should work in a way that follows clearly defined procedures, which set out the boundaries to protect those carrying out the pastoral ministry as well as those receiving it:

- Workers should be aware of the innate power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust.

- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship should be avoided.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency developing within a pastoral relationship.
- Workers should be mindful of any physical contact or greeting they use within a pastoral relationship, seeking consent if physical contact is offered, for example, as a means to offer comfort.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers need to recognise the limits of their abilities and competencies and get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.
- Workers should seek advice from the DPS if they believe that someone, they are pastorally supporting is becoming dependent on them or developing an inappropriate emotional attachment.

3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY – Safer Practice and Safer Premises

3.3.1 Consent forms

It is essential that we have important information about all children and young people involved in any activities at the church, which is recorded on our consent forms**.** The first week someone attends, workers must record their name, medical emergency information, and a contact name and number. Then they must bring their completed form back with them. Similar details will be gathered for adults at risk.

Whenever someone is asked to participate in a service which is to be livestreamed or recorded and shown at a later date, written consent for them to be on screen will need to be acquired in line with the guidance set out in the BUGB Guide: Recording and Live Streaming Services and Events: Safeguarding Guidance.

3.3.2 Health and Safety

All activities for children, young people and adults at risk will comply with the church's current Health and Safety policy and will be conducted in accordance with *Guidelines for users of Station Hill Baptist Church*, with particular attention paid to the sections on Fire Action, First Aid, PAT testing, Health and Safety and Kitchen and Food Hygiene.

Buildings being used for children's and adult at-risk groups will be properly maintained. A representative from the teams involved will take part in an annual Health and Safety review to consider all aspects of safety for everyone involved in using the premises.

3.3.3 Fire

It is the responsibility of all group leaders/responsible persons within the building to ensure the safety of themselves and those who are in their care. In addition, it is a legal requirement that all group leaders/responsible persons are familiar with the emergency procedures in the event of a fire.

3.3.4 First Aid

Our church has several trained First Aiders, and there is a list showing who they are on the noticeboard. All church groups will ensure that they have sufficient trained first aiders on their regular team so that there is always a first aider present at events and activities.

We have at least one first aid kit as well as an incident reporting book, which must be completed in the event of any accidents, injuries, or incidents. There is also an additional first aid kit for external events. A nominated individual will ensure that the contents of the first aid kits are checked regularly. Completed accident forms should be passed on to the nominated individual.

3.3.4.1 Accident reporting

All accidents must be recorded in the Accident Book situated near the First Aid box in the Main Hall (next to the front door). If the accident concerns a child/young person, the person with responsibility for the child/young person must be informed at the earliest possible opportunity and asked to sign the written account to record that they have been informed. **When a form is filled in, it must not be returned to the folder but be passed to the Church Secretary or Health and Safety Officer as soon as possible.**

3.3.5 Supervision of Groups

The person responsible for a group/activity must sign in at the start and end of that activity so that it is apparent who the 'responsible person' for that activity is – even if you were already in the building or are staying on afterwards. You also need to make sure that you keep a register so that you know who is on the premises.

3.3.6 Food Hygiene

The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 state that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations. It therefore follows that those with responsibility for food, at least one worker, will need to possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc).

3.3.7 Risk Assessment

Before undertaking any activity with children or adults at risk, the leader will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out. It is advisable to appoint someone specifically for this task.

3.3.8 Insurance

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

3.3.9 Transport

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children, young people, and adults at risk on behalf of the church. They do not apply to private arrangements, for example, transport arrangements made between friends.

- Only those who have gone through the church's safer recruitment procedures for workers will transport children and adults at risk (within the DBS eligibility criteria).
- All drivers will have read the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Drivers will be aged 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.

- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that the vehicle being used is road worthy.
- All hired minibuses will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.

Our practice specifically for transporting children is as follows:

- Parental consent will be given for all journeys.
- All children and young people should be returned to an agreed drop-off point. At collection or drop-off points, children should never be left on their own; make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult.
- At least two workers (unrelated to each other and of different gender, where possible) should be present when transporting children as part of a church role.

3.3.10 Outings and Overnight Events Involving Children

There are some specific considerations which need to be made for outings and overnight events involving children:

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
- Consent forms will be obtained for the specific activities involved.
- There will be workers with first aid and workers with food hygiene certificates with the group.

Sleeping Arrangements

Sleeping arrangements for overnight events will be carefully considered. It is not acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with young people. Instead, workers should be situated in close proximity and ensure that the young people know where to go if they need help. There should be at least two workers on duty until all young people are asleep.

Where a young person is questioning their gender identity or considering, progressing, or has completed gender reassignment, we will consult with them and their parents about arrangements for residential trips and sleepovers. If needed, the DPS will seek advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

Adventurous Activities

No child will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The activity leader will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified, and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, the activity leader needs to ensure that the premises are licensed.

Fire Safety

The event leader will have a fire safety procedure in place, which will include the following:

- Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the overnight event is in a building, then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill will be practised on the first day.
- When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. The building will also need to comply with fire regulations.
- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

Safety
It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every child/young person participating in an overnight event, and this may include monitoring access on and off the site.
General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running around tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).

Swimming Trips
Recognising that children are likely to be dispersed around the swimming area with additional requirements for oversight as they get changed or visit the toilets, there will be an increased adult-to-child ratio for swimming trips. Prior to the trip, workers will establish the swimming ability of the children attending and obtain specific consent. Workers should never change in front of the children.

Named person for safeguarding on the trip
There will be a named person for safeguarding on all outings and residential trips. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding, but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree on how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

3.3.11 Outings and Overnight Events Involving Adults at Risk
As with outings and events for children, there are additional considerations for a group taking adults with additional needs, such as learning difficulties or mental health needs, on outings or overnight events:

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
- Planning for the trip should consider specific medical, physical, and support needs of each group member, bearing in mind that there may be people in the group who have individual care needs that will have to be met (including personal care).
- Adults at risk should be included in the planning of trips and events.
- Consideration should be given to the suitability and accessibility of the venue and accommodation, travel time and mode of transport, and the affordability of the event.
- Adults at risk should be given all the information about the trip beforehand so that they know where they are going, how long it will take to get there, and what type of activities they will be taking part in.
- There should be a minimum of two leaders with each group (unrelated to each other and of different gender, where possible); the individual needs of those attending may determine the additional number of people required.

Sleeping Arrangements
Consideration should be given to the individual needs of those staying overnight. If there is a need for personal care or additional support during the night, it would be better if the person's usual caregiver also attends the event and therefore shares a room with them.

Personal Care
It is not appropriate for church workers to perform personal care for adults at risk unless this is their usual task (i.e., if they have come along to help generally, but also have a caring role for a member of the group, they can provide personal care for that person).

Activities
Leaders should consider the mobility needs of the group when deciding on activities or events. For example, if group members have difficulty walking, including a walking tour around a town may be inaccessible to some who attend. If you have members of the group who use wheelchairs, then consideration needs to be given as to whether you have sufficient workers to support those who may need pushing.

Safety
It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every person in the group; this may include monitoring access on and off the site.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate, and advice sought from the event organiser/venue about the fire evacuation procedures. A copy of the event/venue risk assessment should be included with the group leader's risk assessment.

Consent and Medical Information
It is important to recognise that adults at risk are mostly able to give consent for their own involvement in activities, inclusion in photographs, and medical treatment. However, in some situations the question of capacity may arise. The guidelines clearly state that an adult at risk should have a say in their care and any arrangements made for them, however, there may be occasions when you need to involve others in decision making. In these situations, seek advice from the DPS with regard to who should be involved.

A medical consent form should be completed by each member of the group and held by the leader. This will include any health concerns, emergency contact information and contact details for their GP. This will allow emergency medical personnel to have access to information should the need arise.

Holding and Dispensing of Medication
Church workers should never agree to hold or dispense medication for those on an event. If someone is unable to manage their own medication, then consideration should be given as to whether their usual carer could attend with them or whether they will not be able to attend the event.

Named person for safeguarding on the trip
As with trips arranged for Children and young people there will be a named person for safeguarding for all outings and residential trips involving adults at risk. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding, but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

3.3.12 Hiring of Church Premises
The responsible adult for an activity held at SHBC must attend a training session based on the Baptist Union of Great Britain ***Guidance Leaflet PC10: Hiring of Church Premises***.

3.3.13 Use of toilets and showers

Group leaders should be aware of people using toilets away from the main activity, especially if more than one person is concerned. If a young person has special needs and requires help with toileting etc, advice should be sought from the parent or carer. If an adult at risk requires help on the toilet they should be asked to bring a carer with them to the meeting. If this cannot be arranged, it will unfortunately mean that they should not attend the meeting. Any person showering at the church must have a responsible supervisor of the same gender in the Café area as well as another group leader in the vicinity. Only the person using the shower may be in the shower room.

3.4 SAFER COMMUNITY

3.4.1 Bullying

Bullying is another form of abuse, and it can be verbal or physical. Bullying doesn't just happen to children; adults can be victims too. There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as a repeated pattern of behaviour intended to cause emotional or physical harm to another person or exert power over them. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically, regardless of their age, ability or status.

It is important to recognise that bullying happens within churches, and it is not isolated to the children and young people. Anyone in the church can be a victim of bullying, just as anyone in the church can be the bully, including those in leadership.

Some examples of bullying that could arise in the church context are:

- Being verbally or physically abusive towards another person
- Isolating or deliberately ignoring someone, or excluding them from group activities
- Spreading rumours and malicious untruths about another person in the church
- Use of email, phone, or social media to publicly challenge or undermine someone
- Name-calling and personal insults
- Making false accusations
- Sending abusive messages or degrading images via phone, email or social media

Bullying will always cause a great deal of pain and harm for those on the receiving end. Many people affected by bullying, both children and adults, believe they have nowhere to turn. They are scared to speak out and often blame themselves. They can become fearful and reclusive. It is important that churches are able to recognise when bullying is occurring and are prepared to take action to resolve the situation.

Some signs that can indicate a person is being bullied are as follows:

- Withdrawal from group or church activities; appearing anxious, tearful or more reticent than usual, particularly in a certain context; development of mental health difficulties, such as depression or anxiety disorders; drop in performance relating to any church roles; physical injuries.

In order to help prevent bullying, the following procedures will be adopted within the church:

- The children and young people will be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour for their groups, which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable. This should then be displayed somewhere visible to the whole church.
- The church will display signs stating the importance of valuing and respecting each other even in disagreements and this will be practically embedded into the leadership approach to others.

- Everyone in the church, whether children or adults, should know how they can report any incidents of bullying.
- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously, and details will be carefully checked before action is taken.
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated, and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.
- An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour.
- All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions that are taken.
- Where an allegation of bullying is made against a church or group leader, advice will be sought from the local regional safeguarding lead as to how this should be addressed.
- Incidents of bullying may be reported to the statutory authorities in line with the church's safeguarding procedures.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviour, such as respectfully challenging or disagreeing with someone else's beliefs or behaviours, setting reasonable expectations with regard to work deadlines and activities, or taking legitimate disciplinary action.

Online safety –Bullying online and on social media is as serious as physical, in-person bullying. In contrast to in-person bullying, there is often no escape from bullying online in a world where people, especially young people, are accessing their online world from wherever they are; there is no "safe space," and the emotional impact of online bullying can be significant as a result. With this in mind, the same procedures apply to disclosures of online bullying as in-person incidents.

3.4.2 Working with Alleged or Known Offenders

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of abusing children, young people, or adults is attending our church, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced allegations of abuse but hasn't been convicted.

In determining the details of the contract:

- The DPS will inform and take advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken with the help of the Regional Safeguarding Lead to determine the contents of the Safeguarding Contract using the BUGB safeguarding risk assessment tool.
- There will be a discussion about who should be informed about the nature of the offence and the details of the contract.
- The rights of the offender to re-build their life without people knowing the details of their past offence should be balanced against the need to protect children, young people, and adults at risk.
- The members of the church Safeguarding Team will always be informed.
- The DPS should determine whether the person is subject to supervision or is on the Sex Offenders' Register. If so, the DPS should contact the offender's specialist probation officer (SPO), who will inform the church of any relevant information or restrictions they should be aware of.

An open discussion will be held with the person concerned, which will contribute to the risk assessment and in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract will be drawn up that identifies appropriate behaviour. The person will be required to sign the contract, and this will be monitored and enforced. If the contract is broken, certain sanctions will be discussed and considered with the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

3.4.3 Alleged or Known Offenders who are themselves Adults at Risk

A risk assessment and formal contract may be quite a daunting process for someone with learning difficulties or a young person, yet having safeguards in place is still necessary. Therefore, an alternative may be to arrange a meeting with the individual in question where they can be taken through the main elements of a formal contract in a way that is non-threatening and easy to understand. Notes would be taken, and the individual would need to verbally agree to the requirements laid out in the meeting.

Rather than signing a formal 'contract', the individual would instead sign to say that they agree with the minutes or meeting notes and that they will stick to what has been agreed during the meeting. This will result in the same outcome as a contract, but is a more informal and appropriate approach for an adult at risk. The agreed requirements will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure that the individual is complying, exactly as a formal contract would be. The church will work with the Regional Safeguarding Lead throughout this process.

SECTION 4 - USEFUL CONTACTS

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** 0300 456 0108 Out of hours 03004 560 100 Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk
Police Contact 101, or 999 in an emergency.
Adult Care 0300 456 0111 Out of hours 03004 560 100 adviceandcontact@wiltshire.gov.uk
Regional Safeguarding Lead Kath Needham 07389 728 669 safeguarding@webnetwork.org.uk

Please ensure that, if possible, the Concern Report Form has been completed before contacting the services.

The response from the DPS, and the outcome, will be fed back to the original adult to whom the allegation or concern was disclosed who may then be asked to be involved in any further actions. The Safeguarding Trustee should be kept informed at all stages.

Seek support for yourself (within the organisation) in this difficult situation.
Never approach the alleged abuser.

APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Understanding, Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or a child or children. There are many different ways in which people suffer abuse. The list below is, sadly, not exhaustive.

Type of abuse	Child	Adult at risk
Physical	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.	To inflict pain, physical injury, or suffering to an adult at risk.
Emotional	The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.	The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.
Sexual	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.	Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour. No one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.
Neglect	Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.	A person's wellbeing is impaired, and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.

Type of Abuse	**Additional Definitions**
Financial	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement, or theft of money, property, or possessions.
Spiritual	The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g., minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.
Discrimination	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability.

Institutional	The mistreatment or abuse of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, poor professional practice, or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.
Domestic Abuse	Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between persons aged 16 or above who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of age, gender, sexuality, or social status. Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually, there is a pattern of abusive, coercive, and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 identifies children who see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims in their own right.
Online abuse	The use of information technology (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, etc.) to repeatedly harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner. The Online Safety Bill, 2021, introduced new rules for internet search engines and firms who host user-generated content, i.e. those that allow users to post their own content online or interact with each other. Those platforms that fail to comply with the rules could face penalties of up to 10% of their revenue, and in the most serious cases, some may even be barred from operating.
Self-harm	Self-harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An individual may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.
Mate crime	'Mate crime' is when people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.
Cuckooing	Cuckooing is the term used to describe occasions where the homes of adults at risk are taken over and used to distribute drugs or as a base for gang or criminal activities. The tenant may believe that the people who are in their home are their friends.
Modern Slavery	Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery, and trafficking. In the UK, we see examples of this through County Lines, Child Sexual Exploitation, and forced labour.
Human Trafficking	Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women, and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure, or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude, or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.
Radicalisation	The radicalisation of individuals is the process by which people come to support any form of extremism and, in some cases, join terrorist groups. Some individuals are more vulnerable to the risk of being groomed into terrorism than others.
Honour / Forced Marriage	An honour marriage / forced marriage is when one or both of the spouses do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage. There may be physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure exerted in order to make the marriage go ahead. The motivation may include the desire to control unwanted behaviour or sexuality.

Female Genital Mutilation	Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). FGM is a cultural practice common around the world and is largely performed on girls aged between 10 and 18. Performing acts of FGM is illegal in the UK, as is arranging for a child to travel abroad for FGM to be carried out.
Peer-on-Peer Abuse	Peer-on-peer abuse is where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.
Child on Child Abuse	Child on Child abuse is when a child abuses another child of any age or stage of development
Historic Abuse	Historic abuse is the term used to describe disclosures of abuse that were perpetrated in the past. Many people who have experienced abuse don't tell anyone what happened until years later, with around one-third of people abused in childhood waiting until adulthood before they share their experience.

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- a child or adult at risk discloses behaviour that is harmful to them
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g., becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- inappropriate sexual awareness in children
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive, and the presence of one or more indicators are not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring

APPENDIX 2 – DETAILED GUIDANCE ON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

STAGE 1 – THE WORKER

The duty of the person who receives information ,or who has a concern about the welfare of a child, young person ,or adult at risk is to, RECOGNISE the concerns, make a RECORD in writing, and RESPOND by passing on their concerns to the DPS. If he/she is not contactable or they are implicated in the situation, another member of the church Safeguarding Team should be contacted instead.

Concerns should be passed on to the DPS within 24 hours of it being raised. If anyone is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the Police by calling 999. If such a report is made without reference to the DPS, they should be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

A written record using the standard incident report form should be made as soon as possible after a child or adult at risk tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern.

The record should:

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later, the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- include the child or adult at risk's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed
- include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible
- include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- be signed and dated
- be kept secure and confidential and made available only to the church Safeguarding Team (including the church minister), representatives of any statutory authorities involved, and the local Baptist association.

If concerns arise in the context of children's or adult at-risk work, the worker who has the concern may, in the first instance, wish to talk it through with their group leader, where appropriate. However, such conversations should not delay concerns being passed on to the DPS. It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and pass on their concerns to the DPS.

If an issue concerns an adult at risk who does not give permission to pass on the information to anyone else, the worker should explain that they will need to speak with the DPS, who will have greater expertise in dealing with the issue at hand.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the workers, the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report, and will also themselves have a duty to pass on the concern to the DPS.

The safeguarding folder is placed near the First Aid box in the Main Hall. **When a form is filled in, it must not be returned to the folder but be passed to the DPS as soon as possible.**

STAGE 2 – THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)

The duty of the DPS on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that they have received and REPORT the concern on to the appropriate people, where necessary.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received, the DPS:

- should take into account their level of experience and expertise in assessing risk to children or adults at risk.
- must take into account any other reports that have been received concerning the same individual or family.
- may speak with others in the church where appropriate (including the Minister and church Safeguarding Team, unless allegations involve them) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision being made. Such conversations should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action.
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised.

The duty to REPORT

The DPS will decide who the report should be referred on to, working in conjunction with the church Safeguarding Team where appropriate. They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or adult at risk is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation.
- refer the concern to others who work with the child or adult at risk in question, asking for continued observation where appropriate.
- Inform parents/carers under certain circumstances, where doing so would not present any further risk of harm.
- Make a formal referral to the Police or local Social Services team. With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission. This is not always possible when considering passing relevant information about abuse or concerns to the statutory authorities, although it is possible to keep the information confidential to the relevant parties. This means not telling or hinting to others what has been disclosed, not even for prayer ministry purposes. For adults at risk, concerns will only be referred to the Police or Social Services without consent where:
    - the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
    - there is a risk of harm to others
    - in order to prevent a crime
- If an allegation is made against someone who works with children* the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or equivalent. The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
    - behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
    - possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
    - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

- If an allegation is made against someone who works with adults at risk*, it should be reported to the Police or Adult Social Services.

  **If a worker has an allegation made against them, they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated by the statutory authorities. It may also be appropriate to put a Safeguarding Contract in place; this should be discussed with the local Regional Safeguarding Lead.*

- Whenever a formal referral is made to the Police, Social Services, or LADO, the DPS should report the referral to:
  - The Safeguarding Trustee
  - The Minister
  - Regional Safeguarding Lead

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy. All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the DPS, and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

STAGE 3 – THE NEXT STEPS

Responsibilities to **REPORT** and **SUPPORT** in stage 3 of the process are shared by the church Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

The duty to SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions, and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected, including:

Victims; Alleged perpetrators; Children; Adults at risk; Other family members; Church workers; Church Safeguarding Team; Minister; Leadership Team.

The duty to REPORT

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

If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children, young people or adults at risk, there is also a statutory duty to report the incident to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

APPENDIX 3 – SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM

PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT OR CONCERN:
Name:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Role in Church:

DETAILS OF CHILD / ADULT AT RISK YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:
Name:
Date of Birth / Approximate Age:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them?
If not, please explain why:

IF UNDER 18 PLEASE INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE PARENT OR CARER:
Name:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Relationship to the child/ young person:
Do they know that you have concerns that you are sharing?
If not, please explain why:

DETAILS OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (IF RELEVANT)
Name:
Address:
Phone Number:
Email:
Are they an adult or a child (under 18):
Relationship to the child/adult at risk:
Does the child / adult at risk live with the alleged perpetrator?

DETAILS OF INCIDENT OR CONCERN:

- Remember to include the 4 W's – Who, What, Where, When.
- Be clear whether this is something you have been told about or something that you have observed directly.
- Include names of anyone else who witnessed the incident or is aware of the concern.
- Refer to the church safeguarding policy if you are unsure what to include.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

HAVE YOU CONTACTED ANYONE ELSE (SOCIAL SERVICES, POLICE, LADO, REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING LEAD, MINISTER)?

Please give details of who and when below:

Organisation:

Name of contact:

Date of contact:

This Incident Form should be passed to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) within 24 hours of any incident or concern arising. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have all the information requested in this form. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, please email the DPS Charmaine Elkerton CharmaineE@stationhill.family and DDPS Esther Brooks estherbrooks134@gmail.com straightaway and use this form to follow up on that email. Remember, if they are not available, call the Police or social services; do not wait for the DPS to be available.

Remember: Treat this information confidentially. Do not discuss the contents of this form with anyone other than the DPS, not even for prayer purposes.

Signed …….

Date …….

APPENDIX 4 - Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Each church needs to identify and fill several important posts that underpin effective safeguarding in the church. These notes outline the main responsibilities relating to safeguarding connected with key leadership roles at SHBC

Trustees

- Ultimately responsible for safeguarding
- Responsible for the implementation of policy and procedures
- Responsible for supporting the church workers
- Responsible for raising awareness about best practices within the church
- Responsible for ensuring that the relevant people have received the appropriate training

Safeguarding Trustee

Not necessarily the person who heads up safeguarding in the church – could be a Trustee/deacon with an interest and willingness to learn.

- Takes a lead on safeguarding matters for the trustees/deacons
- Is the point of contact with the Trustees/deacons for safeguarding issues
- Ensures church policy and procedures are reviewed annually

Designated Person for Safeguarding

- Receives all reports of concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- Listens, observes and passes on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice from the relevant people
- Acts as a link between the church and other agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Verifier

- Responsible for all aspects of processing DBS checks for church staff and volunteers (with the exception of the accredited minister who is checked by the regional association)

The Minister

- Shares with the Trustees the general responsibility for the adoption and implementation of the church's safeguarding policy
- Takes responsibility for ensuring that the pastoral needs of all are being met
- May need to be made aware of safeguarding issues in line with the guidance on page 6

The Safeguarding Administrator

- Oversees the safer recruitment process and ensures the records are maintained

APPENDIX 5 - Eden Kids Registration Form

STATION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

Eden Kids Registration Form

Child's Name	
Date of Birth	
School Year	
Address	

Parents/Guardians/Carers Contact details – *Please include name and emergency contact phone number whilst the child attends Eden Kids.*	
Tel no	Home Mobile
Email Address	

Medical Details – *Please outline any allergies or medical issues*
In an emergency, if I cannot be contacted, I give permission for my child to receive first aid or necessary hospital treatment, including anaesthetic **Signed……**
Dietary Information – *Please advise of any particular dietary issues that the Eden Kids Leaders need to be aware of. SHBC cannot guarantee that all foods available will conform fully to dietary requirements. Those attending Eden Kids are normally offered cold drinks, cakes or biscuits.*

Any Other Information – *Please provide any other information that is relevant for the Eden Kids Leaders to be aware of.*
Continued overleaf…

Using images of children/young people, including photography/video

To comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, we need your permission before we can photograph or make any recordings of the child named above. We may take photographs or video recordings of children at events, including church services. If we use these images in printed publications or on our website, we shall use first name(s) only, without surname.

1) May we use photographs in printed SHBC publications?	YES / NO
2) May we use the images on the SHBC website or at SHBC events?	YES / NO
3) May we record the images on video?	YES / NO
4) May we use the video images on the SHBC website or at SHBC events?	YES / NO

I certify that the information given above is correct at the date of signing and understand that it is my responsibility to inform Eden Kids Leaders of any changes.

Signed ..... Date .....

These confidential details will not be passed to any third party without written permission except under a legal obligation, will be stored securely, and are available for inspection or destruction on request by the signatory and/or the child named once 13 or older. Destruction may preclude the child from participating in any further Eden Kids sessions. They will be kept for five years after the child named leaves Eden Kids (in line with Baptist Union Safeguarding Records Guidelines) or as may be legally required.
If a young person/parent/carer needs to speak directly to an Eden Kids Leader prior to completing this form, please contact: ***CharmaineE@stationhill.family*** ***Station Hill Baptist Church operates a 'Safe to Grow' Policy which is in line with the Baptist Union policy on Child Protection. All adult Eden Kids leaders are DBS checked****.*

APPENDIX 6 – Procedure Agreement Form

STATION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

Agreement by workers to adhere to the safeguarding procedures

I (print name):……

have read the Church's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and agree to act according to these procedures in my contact with all people in Church activities.

I understand that a child is anyone under the age of 18.

I also agree to inform one of the Designated Persons for Safeguarding if I have any concerns about the behaviour of another person who may be in a leadership role with the young people or any other adult in the Church.

I agree to undertake training in safeguarding when it is offered.

Signed:

Date:

For more information:

Please see www.baptist.org.uk for more information about safeguarding in Baptist churches, including a range of specialist guides and a library of free downloadable resources.

BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training for your church:

Information and booking arrangements for the BUGB Levels 2 and Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding training can be made through your local Baptist association team. Please see their website for details of nearby courses or the opportunity to host safeguarding training at your church.

In an emergency:

If you find yourself facing an emergency situation, where you believe that someone attending your church is being harmed or is at imminent risk of harm, please ring the Police on 999 and ask to speak to an officer in the child or adult protection teams. Always keep records and let your DPS know that you have made this call.

BAPTISTS TOGETHER

This policy has been produced for use in Baptist churches in England and Wales.
Policy last updated: May 2023

Safeguarding Team, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot OX11 8RT
Tel: 01235 517700 Email: safeguarding@baptist.org.uk Website: www.baptist.org.uk
BUGB operates as a CIO with registered charity number 1181392