

**Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**  
**Easthampstead Baptist Church, Bracknell, RG12 7NS**  
**October 2011 (Revised 2017)**

# **Safeguarding Policy**

## **Policy Statement** **On**

## **Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church**

**Easthampstead Baptist Church, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 7NS**  
(Referred to as 'the church' in the Policy Statement)

The vision and purpose of the church is 'to love God, to love people and to grow together to become more like Jesus'.

In fulfilling this vision/purpose the church

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

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18yrs (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Safe from Harm (HM Government 1994) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2010).

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

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

### **Prevention and reporting of abuse**

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent neglect and the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

### **Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

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

### **Respecting children and young people**

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

### **Safe working practices**

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with children and young people that promote their safety and well-being.

### **A safe community**

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

### **Responsible people**

The church has appointed Eileen Charlton as the Safeguarding Trustee to:

- Oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's Charity Trustees

The church has appointed Simon Lace as the Designated Person for Safeguarding to:

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

### **Policy and Procedures**

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the notice board in the church office.

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

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

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

The policy statement will be read annually at the church meeting in October together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

# Safeguarding Procedures

The policy needs to be backed up by written procedures that detail how the policy will be enforced in practice. This document contains the procedures that cover each of the different areas headed in the policy:

**Prevention and reporting of abuse** (pg 4-5)

**Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers** (pg 6-7)

**Respecting children and young people** (pg 8-13)

**Safe working practices** (pg 14-18)

**A safe community** (pg 19)

These procedures should be reviewed annually taking into account any new legislation or guidance which can be obtained from the Baptist Union publication 'Transform' or the 'Safe to Grow' website: [www.safetogrow.org.uk](http://www.safetogrow.org.uk)

The Church Trustees are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and resourced within the church. (see Safeguarding Folder in church office for details of the trustees responsibilities)

The Safeguarding Trustee will ensure that safeguarding issues are presented to the other Leader Trustees at their regular meetings and information shared with the Elder Trustees via email.

# Prevention and reporting of abuse

Everyone has their part to play in ensuring the safeguarding of children and young people within the church:

- IF the behaviour of a child or young person gives any cause for concern -
- IF an allegation is made in any context about a child or young person being harmed -
- IF the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children or young people causes you concern - **DO NOT** dismiss your concerns  
(In particular do not ignore or dismiss concerns about a professional or a colleague)

## Procedure for responding to concerns

### STAGE 1

A worker or member has a concern about the welfare of a child/young person or the behaviour of an adult

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

A written record must be made of the concern using a standard incident report form and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (**Simon Lace**) within 24hours (if unavailable then to the Safeguarding Trustee (**Eileen Charlton**))

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

### STAGE 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

The Designated Person has a duty to  
**REVIEW AND REFER**

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

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

### STAGE 3

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

The Designated Person (**Simon Lace**), the Safeguarding Trustee (**Eileen Charlton**) and the Acting Senior Minister (**Steph Littlejohn**) may have a duty to  
**SUPPORT AND REPORT**

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

The church has a unique role to play when such concerns and reports are made as it will continue to be involved with the offering of support to the alleged victims and their families as well as the person the allegation is made against and their families. It will be necessary to allocate different pastoral carers to each group. Pastoral care may also be sought from the Regional Ministerial Team for those in leadership roles.

If the Designated Person (**Simon Lace**) or a member of their family is the cause for the concern workers and members should approach the Safeguarding Trustee (**Eileen Charlton**) or the Assistant Minister (**Steph Littlejohn**).

If either the Senior or Assistant Minister is suspected of causing concern the report should be made directly to the local Baptist Association in addition to following the normal procedures.

# Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

## Recruitment

Any Adult (volunteer or paid) who is going to work with children or young people, under the age of 18 years, will be recruited using the following process:

- Establish a role description for the role that the person is applying for (volunteer or paid worker) and provide that to the candidate
- Ask the candidate to complete an application form and sign a declaration that there is no reason why they should not be working with children and young people (see Safeguarding Folder in church office)
- Conduct a face-to-face interview using the 'interview framework' (see Safeguarding Folder in church office)
- Take up references
- Check the candidate's criminal record
- Appoint for a probationary period of 6 months
- Candidate to sign an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures ('Voluntary Agreement' see Safeguarding Folder in church office)
- Provide an induction programme and initial training

Who is responsible for this process or parts of it?

- Who is responsible for finding a new volunteer? **Ministry Leaders**
- Who is responsible for drawing up the role descriptions? **Ministry Leaders**
- How will role vacancies be advertised? **What's up with that and Direct invitation**
- Who will administer the application forms? **Church Administrator**
- Who will interview? **Ministry Leader with a Trustees' approved church member**
- What questions are to be asked? **See 'Interview Framework' in Safeguarding Folder in church office**
- Who makes the appointment decision? **Ministry Leader**
- Does the appointment need to be formally approved by Trustees or members?  
**Yes, names of people applying must be approved by Leaders at Leaders Meetings**
- Who is responsible for taking up references? **Church Administrator**
- Who is responsible for obtaining the CRB Disclosure? **Church Administrator/Ministry Leader**
- Who is responsible for the induction programme and the church's safeguarding training? **Induction and churches safeguarding procedures training – Ministry Leader and or Designated person for Safeguarding. Safeguarding training – use Bracknell council courses**
- Who will carry out the review at the end of the probationary period? **Ministry Leader**

Any young person, under the age of 18 years, who is going to work with children or young people, under the age of 18 years, in a group in which they do not belong, needs to be recruited using the above process.

If a young person is taking a leadership role as part of a peer group they should be doing it under the supervision of adult leaders and do not require to follow the above process. i.e. If a member of Unity + is leading occasional sessions they would not need to be put

through the recruitment process as long as there is adult leader supervision at those sessions.

Recommended best practice states that ideally young adult leaders should not be given supervisory responsibility for the age group directly below them.

Any person under 18 years will be classed as a child/young person where ratios of adults to children/young people are concerned.

All job descriptions, volunteer agreements and job contracts must include details of who the person will be accountable to and responsible for.

### **Ongoing support of volunteers and staff**

Annual reviews of all workers will be carried out by the Ministry Leader.

This must include: providing the worker with updates on safeguarding and checking their understanding of them; training requirements; a general review of the person's position and team involvement, and the signing of the 'Annual Review Voluntary Agreement' for the coming year (see Safeguarding Folder in church office).

Each worker must have their CRB enhanced disclosure renewed every 5 years

Each worker must attend Safeguarding training every 3 years

(The Church Administrator will monitor and administrate both of the above)

# Respecting children and young people

## Code of Behaviour for volunteers and staff working with children and young people

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on the individual child or young person
- Listen well to children and young people. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or young person is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said
- Do not engage in any of the following:
  - Invading privacy of children or young people when they are using the toilet or showering
  - Rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child or young person
  - Sexually provocative games
  - Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in 'fun'
  - Scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person
- When it is necessary to control and discipline children and young people, this should be done without using physical punishment. (A situation may, however, arise where a child or young person needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.)
- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed. If possible, the child's own parent or carer should be called in to carry out such a task
- Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature
- Workers should not normally plan to be alone with children and young people. When teaching in a small group situation doors should be kept open and glass panels not obscured. (See below for further details on working one to one)

### Working one to one

This should be avoided wherever possible. If it is necessary to meet with a child or young person in a one to one setting in order to facilitate better listening, or support, or the giving of advice it is important to choose the venue carefully. Any contact with a young person should be in a public place, at an appropriate time and in view of another adult (i.e. early morning, late night or whilst they should be at school is not appropriate).

For example you could meet with a young person in a one to one situation

- At the end of a youth group event whilst others are clearing up
- During a youth group session, in a side room with the door open and others knowing that the meeting is taking place
- At a coffee shop after school

Always make sure that another adult is aware that the meeting is taking place and do not allow it to run into a time when the building is then empty.

If one to one working is to be a pattern of a worker's job then additional strict guidelines will need to be written that include Trustee recognition of this area of work, accountability, supervision, confidentiality, and venue.

## Transporting Children and young people

Vulnerable situations can be created when workers offer lifts to children and young people, either to take them to or from church activities or to take them on planned outings.

The following practices should be followed to reduce the safeguarding risks involved:

- Although it is often impractical, wherever possible two adults should be present in a car with children and young people
- Parents should give permission for their child to be given transport and should be informed at what time to expect their child home. If ongoing or for an organised activity written permission should be obtained from the child or young person's parent or guardian
- Where possible workers should avoid giving regular lifts to children or young people on their own to and from church activities
- If the same group of children are regularly given lifts, consideration should be given to picking them up and dropping them off in a different order each week so that the same child is not always the first or the last to be picked up or dropped off
- If a child or young person is travelling alone in the car with a worker, the child or young person should be asked to sit in the back seat of the car
- Workers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a vehicle with a child or young person – long conversations in the car outside church premises or home, or unnecessary diversions should be avoided
- Workers should avoid being alone in a car with a child or young person who is particularly vulnerable: for example, a child with a crush on a leader, or a child whose behaviour is difficult to manage

If a worker is giving lifts to children or young people as part of their 'church serving activity' they need to adhere to the practices detailed above and comply with the procedures set out below:

- The driver should understand and agree to the church's code of behaviour (see previous page), when transporting children or young people
- The driver should have fully comprehensive insurance which covers voluntary work (or in the case of a paid youth worker or children's worker, insurance that covers them for transporting others in the course of their employment)
- Seat belts should be worn and the proper child seats and child restraints should be used for young children in accordance with the law
- If a volunteer driver who has not been appointed as a children's or young person's worker is used to transport children and young people on church activities, the driver should be appointed following the procedures outlined under 'Safe Recruiting, Support and Supervision of Workers'

A person whose criminal record check shows driving offences that suggest that they may not be a safe driver will not be allowed to drive children and young people as part of their work with the church.

### *When a minibus or coach is used:*

Many hiring organisations now ask for the driver to have a MIDAS certificate.

The following must be complied with:

- Ensure that the mini-bus or coach is fitted with seat-belts on all of the seats and that seat belts are worn by everyone
- Ensure that the number of children and adults does not exceed the capacity of the coach or mini-bus so that all can have an allocated seat with a seat-belt

Parents who arrange to share lifts to and from church activities as a private/personal arrangement do not need to follow the churches Safeguarding Policy and do not need CRB checks.

If one of the leaders of the event is part of this arrangement they will need to comply with the 'code of behaviour' for transporting children and young people.

### **Physical contact with children and young people**

It is hard to conceive how you can be a nurturing, caring worker with children and young people without some physical contact happening at least occasionally! For example, if a child or young person is distressed it is natural to put an arm round their shoulder. It could even be thought of as abusive not to respond by touching a child in such circumstances. However we must be conscious that what, to most people, is an innocent touch may have another, more sinister meaning for children who have experienced abuse. We must acknowledge that some people use the opportunity of physical contact to satisfy their own cravings.

The following guidelines should be applied when working with children and young people:

- Ask: for whose benefit is this taking place? Is it for the sake of the child or young person or is it for your own benefit?
- If no-one else is present it is always advisable to avoid physical contact
- Use physical contact in a way that conveys appropriate concern but in a way that is least likely to be misconstrued. For example, an arm around the shoulder standing by the side of a child or young person may be more appropriate than a full 'hug'
- Remember that not all express friendship or affection in the same way and some people (children included) find excessive touching an infringement of their personal space
- If you find that the child or young person is cringing or responding in a negative way to being touched, then stop immediately and find an alternative, non-tactile way to convey your concern
- Workers should be prepared to be accountable to fellow workers for their use of touch and physical contact and should listen to the concerns of others if it is felt that boundaries are being crossed

### **Abuse of trust**

Relationships between children and young people and their leaders take many different forms, but all of them can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The leader is someone in whom the child or young person has placed a degree of trust.

It is important for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and thus the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.

The following must be adhered to:

- It is always wrong for a leader to enter into a sexual relationship with a young person. Whilst young people aged 16 or 17 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, they may still be emotionally immature. The imbalance of power makes it an abuse of trust and therefore wrong
- It is not acceptable for a leader to form a romantic relationship with a young person with whom they have a relationship of trust. The leader will always be in a position of power, intentionally or not.

Any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the individual or individuals in their care should be avoided and any sexual relationship within a relationship of trust is unacceptable so long as the relationship of trust continues. (This is Government-recommended good practice.)

To help reduce the opportunities for such relationships to develop it is recommended that young leaders are not appointed to lead in their own peer groups or the peer group directly below theirs. i.e. a 16 year old should not be placed in a leadership role with the 13-15 year olds. A 19 year old should not be given leadership responsibility for the 16-18 year old group but always with a younger group of children or young people.

### **Electronic communication**

Electronic communication has become enormously important and popular over the past ten years. It is an easy way to communicate with young people in particular. However, there are dangers associated with electronic communication that call for vigilance:

- Electronic communication is often an extremely informal mode of communication which can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood
- Because of the informal style of electronic communication, workers can easily cross appropriate boundaries in their relationships with children and young people
- Some adults who are intent on harming children and young people choose to use electronic communication as a way to meet and 'groom' children and young people

In order to maintain healthy and safe relationships between adults and children the following general principles should be followed by all church volunteers and paid workers with children and young people:

- Parents or carers and children and young people themselves have the right to decide if a worker is to have email addresses or mobile phone numbers etc
- Workers should only use electronic means of communication with those children and young people from whom appropriate consent has been given
- Workers should not put any pressure on children or young people to reveal their email address, mobile phone number etc.
- Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided
- Only workers\* who have signed an agreement to work within the church's agreed safeguarding procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of the church or one of the church's organisations
- Contact with children and young people by electronic communication should be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter
- Where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a worker:
  - significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and
  - a log kept of when they communicated and who was involved
- Workers should not share any personal information with children and young people, and should not request or respond to any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role
- Workers should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives
- Clear, unambiguous language should be used, avoiding the use of unnecessary abbreviations
- Electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8:00am and 10:00pm
- E-mails to young people should include a church header and footer showing this to be an official communication from the church

The use of electronic communication with groups within the church will be as follows:

**Remix** aged children: no electronic communication should be used between children in this group and the church

**Unity** aged children/young people: no electronic communication should be used between children in this group and the church unless requested specifically by a parent/guardian and written permission gained from both parent/guardian and young person. Preferably all electronic communication should be via the parent/carer.

**School years 12 &13** aged young people: This group can communicate via electronic communication but the church workers need to follow the guidelines set out above and below for the use of such forms of communication.

**Music Rehearsal/Band:** This group will follow the age specific guidelines above and the general guidelines surrounding electronic communication whenever communicating with young people who may be part of this group.

### *Mobile Phones*

- Mobile phone usage should be primarily about information-giving
- 'text language' should be avoided so that there is no misunderstanding of what is being communicated
- 'text conversations' should usually be avoided (that is a series of text messages/emails being sent to and fro between mobile phones)
- Use of the phone camera should comply with the church's policy on photos/videos (see pg 18)
- Workers should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phones
- Where a mobile phone number is needed to be given out as a contact number this should be for a church owned mobile phone not a leader's personal mobile phone. These phones will be for use by all children's and young people's groups

### *Instant Messaging Services (IMS)*

- The use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum
- Where a child or young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communication with a worker:
  - significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and
  - a log kept of when they communicated and who was involved

### *Social Networking sites*

- **School years 12 &13** will be the only children's and young peoples group that will communicate via a social networking site. A separate profile for this church group will be used
- Lower age limits of social networking sites should be adhered to (this varies for each site)
- Any workers who have signed an agreement to work within the church's agreed safeguarding procedures should keep their personal networking sites 'closed' so that they can only be accessed by personally invited individuals
- Consent from parents/guardians would need to be sort before accepting any young people as 'friends' onto any church worker's personal site
- Be aware of the content of photos that may be uploaded on to personal sites if able to be viewed by any young people
- Be aware that the children and young people could view photos and communications of other people linked to social networking sites
- All communication with young people should be kept within public domains
- Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Copies of communications should be retained and where possible other workers should be copied in on the communication

(\* Workers = any paid employee or any volunteer of the church who has cause within their job description to be in contact with individuals under the age of 18 years)

## Safe working practices

The 'Health and Safety culture' has grown up because in the past we have often been careless of risk. Schools, clubs and churches have organised activities without giving due care and attention to the potential hazards that might cause harm to children and young people – hazards that could have been foreseen.

We are not trying to create the illusion of a risk-free world for children and young people. Indeed that would be unhealthy for children's development. Some degree of risk in life is unavoidable. Part of a child's development is in learning to live in a world that can sometimes be threatening and harmful. However, we should seek to minimize the occasions for unnecessary risk. The law does not expect us to eliminate all risk, but under our duty of care churches are required to protect people as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

### Parental consent

A key component in developing safe practice with children and young people is to work in partnership with parents/carers. When children and young people are in the care of the church it is important:

- To have the consent of the parent/carer
- To have a point of contact in the event of an emergency
- To know key information about the child or young person that may impact on their well being
- To provide clear information to parents/carers about the organisation and activities the child or young person is involved in and the safeguarding policy of the church

All children and young people should be registered and parents/carers should be asked to complete the church's relevant consent forms (see Safeguarding Folder in church office for Remix, Unity, Music Rehearsal/Band consent forms). Ministry Leaders will be responsible for ensuring that these forms are kept up-to-date and stored in line with Data Protection Act 1998.

The church is required by law to have a 'Health and Safety' policy. The church's Health and Safety officer is Eileen Charlton. There will be a representative from both the children's work and the youth work teams who will work in partnership with the Health and Safety officer to ensure that the buildings are assessed from the point of view of a child and young person and the activities that they take part in, as well as an adult. Ministry Leaders will be responsible for the oversight of this role.

Children's representative:

Youth representative:

### Risk assessments

All Ministry Leaders of children's and young people's groups must assess the risks involved in the programme that they are planning.

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

All risk assessments will be completed using a straightforward method recommended by the Health and Safety Executive, using the following headings:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record your findings and implement them

- Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

This method is dependent on identifying potential 'hazards' and then assessing the 'risk' that those hazards could pose.

- A hazard is anything that could cause harm
- The risk is the likelihood (whether high or low) that someone will be harmed by the hazard

A general risk assessment should be done at the beginning of each term or set of sessions, considering the programme and the venue and reviewed if changes occur.

Specific risk assessments should be done for activities which are out of the ordinary, such as

- Whenever an activity may involve greater risk (eg. Cooking, woodwork)
- Always if an activity takes place away from the normal venue
- Always if an activity involves an overnight stay

Risk assessment forms can be found in the Safeguarding Folder in the church office. Once completed these should be stored in the Safeguarding Assessments and Reports Folder held in the church office.

### Child/young person to Adult ratios

An important aspect of any risk assessment is ensuring that you have a suitable ratio of staff to children and young people. A number of factors will come into play in assessing the ratio for any particular activity or group:

- The age of the children and young people
- Special needs
- Behaviour issues
- The venue
- Covering of emergencies
- Gender balance

The following chart represents the recommended **minimum** ratios of adults to children/young people:

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

All children's and youth work should maintain these ratios. The only exceptions should be:

- A one-off situation where a member of the leadership team is unavailable for one session and it is not possible to arrange alternative cover or cancel at short notice
- On a more permanent basis, where it is not possible to find sufficient volunteers to staff a group at the desired level

In the second situation it would be necessary to have followed all the recommendations on 'recruiting and supporting staff' and to have gained permission from the Trustees of the church to proceed with the activity programme as planned. These decisions would need to be documented in the risk assessment documentation. (see Safeguarding Folder in church office)

### **Overnight events**

For overnight events particular care needs to be taken, not least when it comes to making arrangements for sleeping accommodation.

The following areas must be complied with before an overnight activity can take place:

- Risk assessment
  - Venue
  - Fire exits and knowledge of by all leaders/workers
  - Emergency contact numbers (caretaker or other contact for building, local doctor or hospital and where to find it)
- Parental consent
  - Separate parental consent form must be obtained for each event for all under 18 year olds prior to or at the beginning of the event including a parent/carer night time contact number (see Safeguarding Folder in church office)
  - Parents/carers should be given the address of the overnight venue together with a contact phone number for making contact in the event of an emergency. Use the church's mobile phones for this use. Ensure good mobile signal before giving mobile number for emergency contact
  - Possible meeting with parents to explain arrangements for event prior to event date
- Sleeping arrangements
  - Males and females should sleep separately
  - If mixed group of both boys and girls, there must be a mix of male and female adult workers
  - Decide whether adults are to sleep in with children/young people or not, depending on ages and need of support, likelihood of bullying and the venue. An adult should never sleep alone in a room with children or young people

Refer to the Safe to Grow manual for a checklist that will help to identify a number of important issues that should be considered for the safety and well-being of the children and young people when planning residential events. (Safe to Grow manual sixth edition 2011 pg 72-73)

### **Welcoming Children into an all age community**

There will be a number of occasions when children and young people will be present on church premises as part of the all-age community of the church where careful consideration needs to be given to what it means to provide them with a safe environment:

- Before and after church activities
- Family or all age services including Messy Church
- Social events that are open to the whole church family
- Music rehearsals where under 18 year olds are present
- Rehearsals for productions that might include children, young people and adults
- Social action projects

All these situations give rise to circumstances where children and young people could be placed in a vulnerable situation should a bully or a potential abuser wish to take advantage. To minimise these risks the church needs to be clear about who has responsibility for the children and young people at the events it runs. The following procedures should help make this clear:

- The church must have, implement and regularly update a Safeguarding Children Policy that is owned and understood by the whole church of regular attendees
- The annual review of the policy should be used as an opportunity to educate the regular attendees of the church so that they all understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding
- It should be made clear when the church is taking responsibility for the welfare of children and young people and when children and young people on church premises are in the care of their parents/carers
- It must be remembered that the church still has a responsibility for health and safety regarding the premises even when not responsible for children and young people directly
- If the church is aware of hazards affecting the welfare and safety of children and young people in the context of church premises, it has a duty to take action to minimize the risks posed by those hazards

#### *Before and after church services*

The church needs to make sure that it clearly informs families when workers take responsibility for children and young people and when they hand responsibility back to parents/carers

- All children under two years old are the responsibility of their parents/carers at all times before, during and after services
- All Remix age children (aged 2 years – end of primary school) are only under the responsibility of the Remix team once they are signed in for a Remix session and before they are signed out again. Either side of this any children in this age group are the responsibility of their parents/carers
- All Unity aged children (school years 7-12) will be the responsibility of their parents until they leave the service and go into their groups. Unity leaders will have responsibility for these children until the end of the church service when responsibility will return to their parents/guardians. Children within this age group should either be in the main service or in the Unity small group with their leader
- All school years 12 & 13 aged young people and their parents will be reminded that this is a public place and that the people in church pose the same risks to them as those in any other public place. They will not be expected to have a parent/guardian with them at all times. Youth leaders/helpers will only be responsible for these young people when they are in the building attending an organised youth event

If a child or young person attends services without an adult there will need to be a clear transfer of responsibility both on behalf of the parent as well as the church. Parents/carers will personally need to arrange with another adult in the church to have responsibility for their child or young person outside of the churches organised child/young persons groups. The church has no facility at present for supervising unaccompanied young people. This will be reviewed as required.

#### *Mixed aged Music Rehearsal*

Young people who attend Music Rehearsal who are not accompanied by a parent/guardian will need to have a couple of designated people who have oversight of them during sessions and who will observe and report any causes for concern that might occur with interactions between other adult members and the young person/people.

### *All age services, Messy Church, Mixed age social events and Social action events*

Parents and Guardians will be responsible for their own children and young people at these services and events. The church will inform members and regular attenders about their responsibilities in this area. The church will follow the same guidance as above regarding any child or young person who attends these services without a responsible adult.

The above areas would need to be reviewed should a known sexual offender begin to attend the church. Details of that person's contact with children and young people on these types of occasions will need to be carefully detailed in their contract with the church and that person be closely monitored by specified adults on such occasions (see pg 19 for more details).

### **Photography**

It is not illegal to take photographs or video of children, however when taking photographs or video footage we must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The following guidelines should be complied with:

- Signed consent should be obtained from parents/carers for photographs to be taken at church activities. (see consent forms in Safeguarding Folder in church office)
- Photographing children and young people should be conducted with sensitivity and courtesy. Consent of the child or young person is just as important as parental permission (verbal at time of taking)
- When photos are displayed children and young people should not be identified by name, nor should it be possible to infer the identity of individual children and young people from the photograph
- Photographic material should only be stored on the church's computer network
- Leaders should not store images of children and young people on their mobile phones
- Any photographs sent to the press must not identify individual children or young people by name, nor should the names of individual children be able to be inferred from an accompanying caption or story
- Copies of photographs must not be distributed to other individuals without the permission of a parent/carer. This includes digital images

### **Other user groups**

Any outside hirers who are using the church building and who work with children or young people should have a safeguarding children policy and procedures in place, based on the Home Office recommendations 'Safe from Harm'. The church should include a clause to cover this in any official hiring agreement that we use (see Safeguarding Folder in church office). As evidence of this we would then be entitled to request to see a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document.

It is not the church's responsibility to ensure that an outside user's Safeguarding Policy is being properly implemented. This responsibility lies with the group itself and its trustees. However, if it came to light that a group using the premises was not following appropriate safeguarding procedures and that children or young people were being placed at risk, the church should seriously consider terminating the rental agreement.

'One off' private hirers (eg children's parties) would not be expected to have a Safeguarding Policy, but they would still be expected to show due care and attention.

## A Safe Community

Regular attendees of the church will be informed about their responsibilities surrounding the safeguarding of children. This will happen annually at the reading of the Policy statement. If issues arise between annual readings then reminders may need to be given. Children's and youth workers only have responsibility for the children and young people in their care during organised activity sessions. Parents/guardians or carers that parents/guardians have personally appointed, will have responsibility for the children in their care outside of these organised activities: i.e. before and after the start of an organised activity, all age services, Messy Church, social action projects, mixed age socials, parent and child groups, etc.

The church community is a group of mixed ages, backgrounds and experiences and parents/guardians/carers need to be aware/reminded of the implications and risks that this may pose.

Bullying will not be tolerated by any one person or group to any other one person or group. Ministry Leaders will be responsible for creating, agreeing and enforcing codes of behaviour for their ministries. These should be written with the help of the children and young people themselves.

If bullying is reported, suspected or observed it should be taken seriously. The Ministry Leader should be informed and details checked carefully before action taken. The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible. The parents of the bully and the bullied will be informed and an attempt made to help bullies change their behaviour. All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions taken. This will be filed in the church office. (Safeguarding Assessments and Reports Folder in the church office)

When a known sexual offender of children and or young people is present in our church community the protection of the children and young people in our community must be paramount.

If a person is identified as having convictions of this nature or who has faced a series of allegations about the sexual abuse of children or young people it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place between the individual and the church about what behaviour will be acceptable and what not. The contract should include details of how contact in an all age context can be supervised and managed to maintain the support of the individual and the safety of the children and young people in the community. The Designated Person for Safeguarding (**Simon Lace**) and the Safeguarding Trustee (Eileen Charlton) should be informed and involved in this process.

If such an individual is identified we will refer to the 'Safe to Grow' manual for further advice.