

Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures

August 2025

Ebenezer Baptist Church

Netherton

Dudley

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Definitions

Safeguarding Trustee

The Safeguarding Trustee is the person (or people) specifically set apart by Ebenezer Baptist Church to be responsible for the development, implementation and compliance of our Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures.

It is the Safeguarding Trustee's responsibility to

- ensure there is a proper process in place for writing and updating the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- monitor implementation
- ensure there is an annual review of the Policy and Procedures and to present a report to the trustees
- to receive reports from the Designated Person for Safeguarding (see below) regarding any safeguarding incidents in the life of the church and to be responsible for keeping the trustees informed as appropriate.
- coordinate the completion and renewal of DBS forms

Where possible this role will not be given to 'Minister' or person responsible for whole church pastoral care.

Designated Person for Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Trustee is the person (or people) specifically set apart by Ebenezer Baptist Church to be responsible for receiving, recording, assessing and referring information where there are concerns involving the safety of a child.

The Designated Person's role is to:

- receive and record information from anyone who has safeguarding concerns
- assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information when they need to
- consult with outside bodies where appropriate to discuss concerns
- make a formal referral to Social Services or the police if appropriate or as advised
- inform both the Safeguarding Trustee/Deacon and the minister of any referral
- make referrals as appropriate to the Independent Safeguarding Authority
- be the link between the church and the local Baptist Association for safeguarding matters
- ensure safeguarding is on the agenda at Leader's Meetings

Where possible this role will not be given to 'Minister' or person responsible for whole church pastoral care.

Children's Work Leader

A Children's Work Leader is any adult who has been given responsibility by the church to lead, or help lead, any group or activity put on by the church for children.

Church Leader (or Leader)

A Church Leader (or Leader) is any of the people who have been appointed by Ebenezer Baptist Church to be the leaders of the church.

Child Protection Policy Statement

Our responsibility

Ebenezer Baptist Church is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. We believe all children have the right to protection from abuse. We recognise our responsibility and duty to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

In fulfilling our purpose as a church, Ebenezer Baptist 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

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 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. The church will ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of voluntary workers are implemented consistently and equitably.

Safer 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 safer 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 **Edward Willetts** as the Safeguarding Trustee to:

- raise the profile of safeguarding within the church
- oversee and monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the church trustees.

The church has appointed **Cheryl Temple** 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.

The church has appointed **Cheryl Temple** as Deputy Safeguarding Trustee to act in support of and in absence of the Safeguarding Trustee.

The church has appointed **Edward Willetts** as Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding to act in support of and in absence of the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Darren Butkus and Luke Hamblett (Trustees) are also part of the Safeguarding Team, supporting where needed. Where possible the Safeguarding Team will work together is and when issues arise. However, each person has responsibility to report allegations of abuse as soon as they are raised.

The church has also appointed the Leadership Team as the Committee to annually review Safeguarding.

Policy and procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard at the entrance of the church.

Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be required to follow them. A full copy of the policy and procedures 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 annually and any necessary revisions will be adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures. This policy statement will be presented each year to a church meeting held in the month of **September** where progress in carrying it out will be monitored with a report on the outcome of the annual safeguarding review.

This statement was adopted at a church meeting held on _____

Signed: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____

Our Groups

Sunday School

Children aged 3 – 18 attend Sunday School which takes place in separate rooms to the church. Recommended ratios for the number of adults to children are followed as closely as possible. Other adults are available to be called on to support where it is deemed appropriate. All public health guidance will be adhered to carefully.

OFSTED recommended ratios

- For 3 to 8 years – one adult to every eight children (1:8)
- For over-8s – one for the first 8, then one for every additional 10 children.

Crèche

Alongside the Sunday School, a crèche is occasionally offered as and when required. Recommended ratios for the number of adults to children are followed as above. All public health guidance will be adhered to carefully.

Children and Youth Clubs

A Friday night club has previously been held for children aged 3-11 on a Friday evening but is not currently planned to begin again. This may begin again in the future. In such a case, recommended ratios for the number of adults to children will be followed as above. All public health guidance will be adhered to carefully.

Tiny Tots

A parent and toddler group is held weekly on a Wednesday morning. This is a stay and play group where adults stay with their child. All guidance is adhered to carefully and the adults responsible for organising the group are DBS checked and have signed self-disclosure forms.

Child Protection Policy Procedures

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of this section is to inform all those working with children or young people in the care of the church during the activities of the church about child protection, and to advise them of the right procedures if abuse is disclosed to them, or suspected by them. This will assist us in providing a secure environment for children.

Ebenezer Baptist Church is committed to the right of children to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Ebenezer Baptist Church has appointed a Safeguarding Trustee and Deputy Safeguarding Trustee to be responsible for implementing this Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures across the church, to review compliance with the Policy and suggest changes and improvements to our working practices and to further develop our Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures to ensure that they remain up to date with current best practice. Please see Appendix A for the details of the current Safeguarding Trustee and Deputy Safeguarding Trustee.

Points to note

- Ebenezer Baptist Church meets at St Andrew's St, Dudley, DY2 0QB on Sundays.
- During the morning meeting children will normally be invited to attend Sunday School midway through the service. During the evening services children will normally remain in the service.
- Whilst in the service, all children are the responsibility of the adult who has brought them to church
- Sunday School meets in the rooms adjoining the main meeting room.
- OFSTED ratios are followed as closely as possible and other adults are available to be called upon to support if necessary
- Other occasional activities for children organised by Ebenezer Baptist Church shall also fall within the boundaries of this Policy.
- Outside of these organised activities children attending the meetings and functions of the church remain in the sole care of their parents or carers and Ebenezer Baptist Church does not take responsibility of care for them.
- However under the terms of this policy the Leaders and Children's Work Leaders undertake to be vigilant with regard to the behaviour of members of the congregation at all times and to take seriously and respond appropriately to any concerns raised.

Section 2: The appointment of Children's Group Leaders

The church is committed to ensuring that everyone working with children or young people:

- Holds a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check from within the 3 years and is found to have no relevant convictions.
- Is under informal supervision.
- Understands and follows our child protection procedures and systems.

Anybody whose DBS form discloses cautions or convictions will be interviewed by the church's Safeguarding Trustee(s) and Designated Person for Safeguarding who will make a recommendation to the Leaders concerning their involvement in youth and children's work.

The Children's Worker responsible for a certain group is responsible for finding volunteers for their group, with the approval of the Leaders

Typically, a personal approach will be made to suitable people when looking for volunteers. In such cases it will be the responsibility of the Children's Worker responsible for a certain group to identify who should be approached.

In some instances it may, however, be appropriate for a broader announcement to be made in a Church Meeting inviting applications to posts.

The Children's Worker responsible, with the support of the Safeguarding Committee and Leadership Team, will make rigorous enquiries into the background of history of anyone approached to work with children. A record will be kept of this communication using the form shown below.

Discussion will be held with the individual as their background and their reasons why they wish to work with children and young people. The informal interview with the volunteer will particularly cover

- the candidate's gifts and abilities and their motivation for working with children and young people
- the candidate's past experience of working with children and young people
- their experience with the particular age group they will be working with
- their reasons for moving on from previous work with children and young people
- anything in the application form (their employment record, gaps in their history, their church involvement etc) that gives rise to question or concern
- their awareness of the importance of safeguarding policies and practice
- whether or not the candidate has ever been suspected of harming children or young people in any context or had children removed from their care.

The interview should also provide the opportunity to:

- to assess any training and support needs the candidate may have
- to allow the candidate to ask any questions they may have about the work.

DBS checks will be obtained by **Darren Butkus/Edward Willetts**

Any person appointed will be taken through an informal induction process whereby the Church's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are shared and then agreed to in writing.

There will be an extended period of 'probation' forming part of this extended formal interview where the volunteer will work with children only with the ongoing support of a previously appointed children's worker.

When making the appointment of a volunteer to lead and be responsible for a children's group this will be formally approved by the Leaders and a Church Meeting.

After a period of time the appointment will be reviewed informally by the Leaders, the Designated Person for Safeguarding and any other Children's Work Leader responsible for supervising the work of the appointed person.

The checklist below may be used to support any appointment

Checklist for Appointing Volunteers		
Post:		
Name of Candidate:		
	By Whom:	Date:
Informal interview covering all the topics outlined in safeguarding procedures	1.	
	2.	
Enquiries made for an informal character reference	1.	
	2.	
DBS enhanced disclosure		
Induction training completed		
Probationary period completed		

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 the young helpers is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience.

A young helper must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children.

When considering ratios of staff to children the young helper needs to be counted as a child, not a leader.

The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to a young helper just as it does to any other person.

The permission of parents or carers needs to be sought for the young helper just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age

If the young helper accompanies a group on a residential activity ideally they should have separate sleeping accommodation to both the adult leadership team and the children they are working with.

Young helpers should not be given leadership responsibility for a group immediately below their own age, to leave a gap of at least two years.

Section 3: Types of abuse and a summary of signs and indicators

What is a child?

Any person under the age of 18 years. Phrases such as ‘toddlers’, ‘children’ or ‘young people’ might be used instead to emphasise the age range.

What is abuse?

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

Type	Definition	Additional Information
<i>Physical</i>	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.	Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after. Physical abuse shapes and influences the child's behaviour, and their emotional and educational development. It may vary in degree of injury, whether directly or indirectly, from physical injuries, neurological damage, disability or even death.
<i>Emotional</i>	Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.	It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse significantly harms a child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be particularly damaging in infancy.
<i>Sexual</i>	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.	The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children who have been or who are currently being sexually abused may display a wide range of behaviours, including inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual knowledge inappropriate to age. A child's ability to cope with the aftermath of a discovery or disclosure of sexual abuse is strengthened by the support of a non-abusing adult who believes the child. The reactions of other adults who interact with a child during this time can also have an impact on the child's ability to cope with what is happening.

<i>Neglect</i>	Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.	Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Long term neglect is likely to cause far more developmental delay and impairment than any other form of abuse. In extreme cases severe neglect can lead to the death of a child. A distinction must be made between neglect caused by financial poverty which can be alleviated by financial help and that caused by emotional poverty. These may co-exist, but relief of the former does not lead to relief of the latter.
	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.	'Spiritual abuse' is increasingly being used to describe those situations where an abuse of power takes place in the context of a faith community. The following is a widely used definition of spiritual abuse: <i>"Spiritual abuse occurs when someone uses their power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice to satisfy their own needs at the expense of others."</i> However, the term is sometimes used more loosely to refer to the ways in which children can suffer harm through the beliefs and practices of a Christian church or other faith community. It is questionable whether it is helpful to categorise this separately as 'spiritual abuse'. It could be argued that religious belief and practice are being used to justify and condone the physical and emotional harming of children. There are a number of ways in which practice in churches can lead to the abuse or neglect of children: - a belief in demon possession resulting in the labelling and naming of a child as 'evil' or a 'witch' - placing pressure on children to make decisions that are not appropriate to their age or developmental stage - creating an environment in which children are discouraged from asking questions or holding alternative views

Additional Definitions	
<i>Financial</i>	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.
<i>Discrimination</i>	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.
<i>Institutional</i>	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, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.
<i>Domestic Abuse</i>	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 their 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.
<i>Online Abuse</i>	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, introduces new rules for internet search engines and firms who host user-generated content, i.e. those which allow users to post their own content online or interact with each other. Those platforms which 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.
<i>Self-harm</i>	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.
<i>Mate crime</i>	'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.
<i>Cuckooing</i>	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.
<i>Modern Slavery</i>	Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. It is illegal in every country of the world.
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	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.
<i>Radicalisation</i>	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.

<i>Honour / Forced Marriage</i>	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.
<i>Female Genital Mutilation</i>	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.
<i>Peer-on-Peer Abuse</i>	Peer-on-peer abuse is where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.
<i>Child on Child Abuse</i>	Child on Child abuse is when a child abuses another child of any age or stage of development
<i>Historic Abuse</i>	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 the different types of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- Unexplained injuries
- Injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to injury
- An injury that has not been treated/ received medical attention
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Changes in behaviour or mood (eg becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Signs of neglect, such as undernourishment, untreated illnesses, inadequate care or inappropriate clothing for the weather or time of year.
- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Nervousness/watchfulness.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Changed or inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.
- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them or where differing explanations have been received.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters, and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why any of the above are occurring – it is not the job of a Children's Work Leader to investigate or decide if something is abuse, only to report on what is observed.

All adults working with children will receive training on indicators of abuse.

Who abuses children?

- Very rarely a stranger.
- Often someone close to a child e.g. parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative or friend of the family.
- Sometimes paedophiles and others who set out to join organisations to obtain access to children.

IT usage

Viewing, storing and sharing of any pornographic material is not appropriate behaviour within the church premises or acceptable use of IT equipment belonging to the church. Sharing or viewing such material with a child would also constitute sexual abuse. Similarly, material showing abuse of children is also entirely unacceptable.

Section 4: What to do if abuse is suspected

General Guidance

All Leaders should be aware that any allegations or suspicions are covered by pastoral confidentiality, and that therefore church members have no right to this information. The sharing of information is therefore limited to those who need to know. This will protect the interests of all concerned. Should you be unsure of how best to proceed with any concerns we advise you to speak with the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Trustee or, in the absence of these persons, a Church Leader.

Everyone has their part to play in helping to safeguard children 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

Whilst the Children's Work Leaders will normally consult with the Designated Person for Safeguarding or Safeguarding Trustee before reporting incidents/suspensions of child abuse to Social Services, the absence of such persons should not delay referral. Should there be any disagreement between the Children's Work Leader Designated Person for Safeguarding, Safeguarding Trustee (or Church Leader) as to the appropriateness of such a referral; the Children's Work Leader, or any other adult with concerns, retains the right as a member of the public to report serious matters to Social Services.

If you have a concern of possible abuse:	If a child brings an allegation to you:	If another person brings an allegation to you about a child:
- Do not speak to anyone else who might be involved. - Speak to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Trustee or a Church Leader for help and advice and to pass on your concerns. - If a child is in immediate danger contact the Police and Social Services directly with your concerns (Contact details can be found in Appendix A). - Where emergency medical attention is necessary this should be sought immediately, informing the doctor of any suspicions you may have.	- Do not speak to the parent or anyone else who might be involved. - Do speak to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Trustee or, if unavailable, a Church Leader for help and advice and to pass on your concerns. - The fact that you may feel the child's story is unlikely must not prevent appropriate action being taken. For example, a child may say that they have been abused by an older young person. In reality the perpetrator could be a parent or close relative, but naming another person may be the only way in which this child can seek help. - It is the responsibility of the Designated Person to pass on the possibility of abuse to Social Services. The role of the Designated Person is to accurately pass on details of the allegation to Social Services, whose task it is to investigate.	- Do not speak to the parent or anyone else who might be involved. - Speak to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Trustee or, if unavailable, a Church Leader for help and advice and to pass on your concerns. - If a child is in immediate danger contact the Police and Social Services directly with your concerns (Contact details can be found in Appendix A).

Section 5: Procedures for responding to concerns about abuse/neglect

How should we react if a child tells us they have been abused?

Children's Work Leaders are in a unique position and your relationship with the children in your group cannot be underestimated. Your group may provide a safe haven, and perhaps be the only place where a child feels comfortable and able to talk to adults. It is therefore possible that a child may approach you to talk about abuse.

Do	Don't
✓ Do listen and acknowledge what is being said <i>Accept what the child says</i> <i>Keep calm and do not appear to be shocked</i> <i>Look at the child directly</i>	✗ Don't minimise <i>"I can't believe it."</i> <i>"Are you sure this is true?"</i>
✓ Do give support <i>"I believe you"</i> <i>"I am glad you have told me."</i> <i>"It's not your fault."</i> <i>Even when a child has broken a rule they are not to blame for the abuse</i>	✗ Don't show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval <i>"I'm shocked, don't tell anyone else"</i> <i>"Why didn't you tell someone before now?"</i> ✗ Don't promise confidentiality
✓ Do explain what happens next and try to give a timescale <i>"I will try to help you."</i> <i>Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that you believe them</i> <i>Let the child know that you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality.</i> <i>Tell the child know you will try to let them know what happens</i>	✗ Don't ask probing questions or push for information <i>Why? How? When? Who? Where?</i>
✓ Do take action <i>Make notes as soon as possible. Write down exactly what the child said, including the child's name, age, relevant family information, and details of the situation and the activity that preceded disclosure. Do not paraphrase what the child has said but record word for word.</i> <i>Immediately refer to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or Safeguarding Trustee if this person is unavailable).</i>	✗ Don't offer false-reassurance ✗ Don't delay in contacting the Designated Person for Safeguarding ✗ Don't pass on information to those who don't need to know; not even for prayer ministry ✗ Don't contact the alleged abuser

Procedures for Responding to all Concerns

If you have a concern of possible abuse:

If a child brings an allegation to you:

If another person brings an allegation to you about a child:

Stage 1

- A Children's Worker or other person has a concern about a child/young person or the behaviour of an adult
- The Person who has the concern has the duty to **recognise, respond and record**.
- 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 within 24 hours. If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.
- The written record should be linked to the 4 W's: 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).

Stage 2

- The Designated Person receives the report of concern
- The Designated Person has the duty to **review and report**
- The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report. **If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.**

Stage 3

- After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken the Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and, where involved, the Church Leaders 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.

STAGE 1 – RECOGNISE, RESPOND AND RECORD

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to **RECORD** their concerns in writing and to **REPORT** their concerns to the Designated Person. If he/she is not contactable reports should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee.

The report to the Designated Person should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised.

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'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 (a body map may also be used to support this)
- include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words
- 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 Designated Person for Safeguarding and others responsible for safeguarding

If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to one of the Safeguarding Team, one of the should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's group, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group leader. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Designated Person.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and report their concerns to the Designated Person.

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 report the concern to the Designated Person.

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REPORT

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that has been reported and to REFER the concern on to the appropriate people.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Safeguarding Team:

- should take account of their own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children
- must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- may speak with others in the church (including the Minister) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be 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 Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred on to.

They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children in question asking for continued observation
- refer to the adult about whom the concern has been raised
- This may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children's workers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Designated Person should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the police or Social Services. To do so may place the child at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child may be intimidated.
- Make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department

All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

The Local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact should be made aware of any referrals to the statutory authorities.

STAGE 3 – SUPPORT AND REPORT

Responsibilities in stage 3 of the process are shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

The duty to REPORT

Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services the Designated Person should

- report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- report the referral to the Minister
- report the referral to the Regional Minister of the local Association

In certain circumstances the Safeguarding Trustee acting on behalf of the trustees may also need to make further reports for example to Charity Commission and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). 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 a worker has an allegation made against them they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated.

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 and young people there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

If a worker in the church has been accused of causing harm to children or young people this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission in the annual return by those

churches that are registered with the Charity Commission.

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy.

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. 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.

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 Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact 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 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. 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 new church DPS 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 local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact 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 Designated Person

Any safeguarding concerns involving the DPS or Safeguarding Trustee should be raised with the Minister, they in turn should consult the regional Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact. Do not tell the Designated Person for Safeguarding / Safeguarding Trustee that a concern has been raised about them.

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, 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. 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 are investigated by the statutory authorities in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would 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.
4. Make sure there is pastoral support in place for the child or adult at risk throughout the process involved.

Section 6: Practicalities and guidance for mutual protection of leaders and children involved in children's work

Safer Behaviour

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Use age and ability appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual child or young person.
- Listen well to everyone. 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. In order to help children we need to develop healthy relationships by listening to them and respecting them.
- 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 engage in any of the following:
 - o invading the privacy of children or young people when they are using the toilet or showering
 - o rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child or young person
 - o sexually provocative games
 - o making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in 'fun '
 - o scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person.
- 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.
- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed and the parent is unavailable.
- Consider 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.
- Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Be wise with your relationship with the children - do not have favourites or be over friendly with some at the expense of others.
- Be particularly careful in your speech and behaviour around young adults and teens.
- We must think of the safety of the children at all times and in all circumstances.
- Children should not be taken on trips or away from the premises without written permission from parents and at least one of the Church Leaders being aware.
- Keep a log book; If any significant incidents take place a record should be kept in the Church Incident Book. Enter the names of both children and adults present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made by young people, incidences where a child is asked to leave. All workers who witnessed, heard or responded in any way should record details, and sign and date the entry.

Avoiding being alone with Children and Young People

Workers should not plan to be alone with children and young people. Avoid being on your own with any child.

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 together 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.
- Should a child wish to speak to you in private always choose a place where other adults are present such as a quiet corner of a room where other adults are present
- Avoid taking a child home on your own, other than for short journey where necessary – transportation is the parent or guardian's responsibility. In emergency or unforeseen circumstances preferably have another helper with you, or else ensure that the last two children are dropped off together. Ensure that if transporting children that you have the correct insurance cover for passengers. When possible, ensure you have parental permission.
- Only invite young people to your home, or on trips, in groups, and always make sure another adult is present. The Designated Person should be notified of any trips for children which take place in the name of Ebenezer Baptist Church. Parental permission must always be sought for such an event.

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. 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.

Boundaries:

- Toileting and personal care is the responsibility of the parent or carer. If a child needs help or assistance the parent/carers should be notified. Nappies will not be changed by volunteers.
- Parents/carers can give written permission to leaders which allows them, only when necessary, to enter the toilet if the child requests help. Wherever possible, it is wise to ensure another adult is in the vicinity.
- Workers should treat all children with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- Respect the privacy of children; avoid questionable activity (e.g. rough/sexually provocative games or comments).
- It is not appropriate to share sleeping accommodation with children if a group is taken away

Abuse of Trust

Relationships between children and their leaders/helpers can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The leader is someone in whom the child has placed a degree of trust, this may be because the leader has an educational role, is a provider of leisure activities, or even is a significant adult friend.

It is also not acceptable for a leader/helper to form a romantic relationship with a child 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.

Confidentiality

No children's Leader is permitted to divulge any information concerning a child, or their family, or anything a child may tell them to anyone other than the designated people previously mentioned. This is in order to protect the interests of the child. This confidentiality is a continuing requirement at all times and is required when workers are "off duty" or no longer involved in the work.

If you find yourself in any circumstance advised against or that you are uncomfortable with always record the information in written form and pass on to the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

A policy based upon the following guidelines should be agreed upon by each different section of youth work if and when necessary. It should reflect the age group and general activities of the children.

Children should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling. Discipline is about our relationship with children and not our mastery of them.

Good discipline is built on respect between leaders and children. (This does not imply equality but does have an implication for leaders' attitudes towards children).

Minor incidents/offences should be dealt with immediately on the spot. This prevents escalation and enables major offences to be seen as major.

Ways of dealing with discipline:

- Chastise the individual/group – criticise the behaviour not the person
- Move the offender to a less volatile situation - change the group activity
- Remove the child to a calm space away from others. Stay with them until they have cooled down, but keep the time out short.

Communication between Leaders

- Anyone who sees another leader act in a way which could be misinterpreted should speak to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or the Safeguarding Trustee if this person is unavailable) about the concern.
- If departure from guidelines becomes necessary, inform another leader before if at all possible. Also write down a clear record of the situation and the reasons for departing from the guidelines. Speak to Designated Person for Safeguarding (or the Safeguarding Trustee if this person is unavailable) as soon as possible after the event. This provides protection to the individual and draws attention to any shortcomings or problem areas that should be addressed.
- At planned Leaders meetings records should be kept of all items relating to Child Protection and distributed to Leaders, bearing in mind confidentiality.

Section 7: Digital Communication

Modern Technologies and 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 digital 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 pressurised otherwise.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with children aged 11 years and younger. For more information on cyber 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 their website.

Email

Email should be limited to sharing generic information, for example, to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used, workers will ensure that they are accountable by copying each message to a designated email address. It is important 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 take care 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.

Social Networking

- Workers should have a site that is used solely for children's / youth work communications and is totally separate from their own personal site. This is to ensure that all communication with children and young people is kept within public domains.
- Workers should not send private messages to children on social networks. 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 site, 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 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 a crowd is not necessary.
- Many uses of photographs are not covered by the Data Protection Act 1998, including all photographs and video recordings made for personal use, such as a parent/carer taking photographs at school sports days or videoing a church nativity play.
- 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

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 and appropriate consent will be sought from those who participate in the service, or who may be visible to the camera.

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](#).

Section 8: Outings and Overnight Events

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 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 how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

Section 9: Safe Practise and Safe Premises

Ratios

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. A married couple or other directly related people should be counted as one adult for the purposes of the recommended ratios rather than two workers.

Parental Consent

Written parental consent will be obtained for any activities or groups where children or young people are left on the church premises in the care of Children's Work Leaders without their parent or carer. Specific consent will also be obtained for occasional activities including taking children or young people away from the church premises without their parent or carer.

All children and young people should be registered and parents/carers should be asked for the following details of their child:

- Full name
- Address
- Home telephone number and alternative contact number(s) in case of an emergency
- Date of birth
- Details of any medical conditions the church should be aware of, or of any food or drug allergies etc.
- Details of any behavioural issues or other matters that might be relevant
- For children up to the age of 7 who is entitled to collect the child from a group
- Consent for photographs to be taken with an explanation of how these are likely to be used

Parental consent will be updated on an annual basis for such activities or groups.

Children with Special Needs

Children and young people who have a disability can be at greater risk of abuse. They will often 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. It is good practice to speak with the parents/carers of children/young people with special needs and find out from them how best to assist the child or young person.

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 Trustees.

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 (eg. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Give the child a consent form and explain it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.

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 who it is with.
- Mentoring meetings should only be held in agreed 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 in regard to times and demand, ie 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.

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.

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 worker's.
- 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 which 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.

Risk Assessment

The Church's Health and Safety Policy will be conducted and reviewed with support from the Safeguarding Trustee to ensure risks are assessed with reference to safety of children.

All children's groups or activities will complete a general risk assessment before regular activity and generally reviewed at the beginning of each academic year. Specific risk assessments will be completed as appropriate.

Safe Premises

All leaders and helpers are responsible for being observant for any health and safety issues which may affect their group, for example:

- Access to the building should be safe and well lit.
- Fire exits should be clearly marked
- There should be adequate heating and lighting in the venue.
- Ensure there is enough space and appropriate activities for all children.
- Have a First Aid kit and phone available.
- Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc).
- Check equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- No smoking should be permitted.
- Fire drills should be carried out at least annually.
- Any food should be prepared carefully and hygienically.

These concerns will be considered as described above in the Health and Safety Policy for the Church.

Public health safety concerns have and will continue to be addressed and updated through separate risk assessments.

Section 10: A Safer 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.

The Government defines bullying as:

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

Bullying can take many forms including:

- name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking
- kicking, hitting, pushing, intimidating
- unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature or sexually abusive comments
- taking belongings
- inappropriate text-messaging and emailing
- sending offensive or degrading images by phone or over the internet
- gossiping, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- excluding people from groups
- ‘unofficial’ activities such as initiation ceremonies or practical jokes which may cause physical or emotional harm

To ensure a safe community for all children we will ensure:

- children and young people know they can report any incidents of bullying to Children’s Work Leaders
- all allegations of bullying will be treated seriously
- details will be checked carefully before action is taken
- the bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible
- the parents of the bully and of the bullied will be informed
- an attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour
- all allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with actions that are taken.

Managing incidents or claims of bullying is the responsibility of the Group Leader and the Designated Officer for Safeguarding.

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.

Working with Alleged or Known Offender

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of sexually abusing children or young people is attending the 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 a series of allegations about the sexual abuse of children and young people but has never 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 that they should be aware of.
- An open discussion will be held with the person concerned in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract will be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person will be required to sign the contract and it will be monitored and enforced. The contract:
 - will identify the meetings the person may attend
 - will specify that they will always sit apart from children and young people
 - may ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises
 - will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children or young people are present
 - will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children or young people
 - will state that the person will never be alone with children or young people while attending church functions
 - will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children or young people meet.
- The contract should be monitored and enforced. Those who offend against children and young people can often be manipulative. If the contract is broken certain sanctions will be discussed and considered with the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

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.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

It is impossible in a policy such as this to cover every scenario and 'what if'.

Further guidance will be taken by the Safeguarding Team from Safe to grow (BU guidelines on Safeguarding), this is available from Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee for anyone to read if they so desire.

The Safeguarding Team will take further advice and guidance from the Baptist Union, and other agencies if and when necessary.

Appendix A – Incident Reporting and Cause for Concern Form

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	
Phone Number	
Email	
Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them?	Yes ☐ No ☐
	If no, please explain why:

IF THE PERSON YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT IS UNDER 18, INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE PARENTS CARER:	
Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Email	
Relationship to the child/young person	
Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them?	Yes ☐ No ☐
	If no, please explain why:

DETAILS OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (IF RELEVANT)		
Name		
Address		
Phone Number		
Email		
Relationship to the child/young person		
Are the an adult or a child (under 18)?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Does the child / adult at risk live with the alleged perpetrator?	Yes ☐	No ☐

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 another sheet if necessary

HAVE YOU CONTACTED ANYONE ELSE (SOCIAL SERVICES, POLICE, LADO, REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING LEAD, MINISTER)?		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. here there is an immediate risk of harm, please call the DPS straight away and use this form to follow up on that call. Remember if they are not available call the police or social services, do not wait for the DPS to be available. <i>Remember: Treat this information confidentially. Do not discuss the contents of this form with anyone other than the DPS, not even for prayer purposes.</i>
IF SO, PLEASE GIVE DETAILS		
Name of contact		
Date of contact		

Signed

Date

Appendix B - Contact Details

Ebenezer Baptist Church

St Andrew's St, Dudley, DY2 0QB

Designated Person for Safeguarding (and Deputy Safeguarding Trustee)

Cheryl Temple

Telephone: 07847 967 597

Email: cheryltemp66@hotmail.com

Safeguarding Trustee (and Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding)

Edward Willetts

Telephone: 07850 439 559

Email: edwilletts@hotmail.co.uk

Dudley Safeguarding

Call the children's services referral and advice service on 0300 555 0050 during office hours (9am - 5pm).

Out of office hours contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0300 555 8574 or in an emergency call 999.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01384 813 861 or 813 110

Alternatively you can call ChildLine on 0800 1111 or email them by visiting www.childline.org.uk