



Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children in Erdington Six Ways Baptist Church (“the church”)

approved at the Church Members’ Meeting on 22nd June 2013

- we welcome children into the life of our community
- have a programme of events for children
- make our premises available to organisations working with children

1.1 As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

Children and young people are an integral part of the church today. We shall value them. They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in worship, learning and community we will seek to establish a culture of mutual respect and enable them to have the space to be children.

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all young people under the age of 18 (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 safekeeping of all 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.

1.2 Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children, and the duty of each church member to respond to concerns about the well-being of children 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.

1.3 Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or volunteer. All workers will be



provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children.

1.4 Respecting children

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

1.5 Safe working practices

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

1.6 A safe community

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children. 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.

1.7 Internet responsible use

Erdington Six Ways Baptist Church (ESWBC) makes the internet available to agreed users. They are expected to behave responsibly at all times when using the system and report any problems or issues arising from its use. ESWBC has taken what it considers reasonable steps to safeguard people using the system, however, it recognises that it cannot control all abuse of the internet. It is the responsibility of all users to ensure that they comply with all appropriate laws and guidelines, including ESWBC's Safeguarding Policy. Users **MUST NOT** share passwords with other people who have not been agreed with the appropriate church officer, ie Minister, Secretary or Treasurer."

1.8 Policy and Procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the notice boards in the entrance and in the church halls.

Each person appointed to work with children will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be asked to sign that they are willing to follow them. A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of, or other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually.

The policy statement will be read annually at the church meeting in June/July or at the AGM, together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.



2.1 **Erdington Six Ways Baptist Church Safeguarding Team**

Whilst we are all responsible for safeguarding, the church has appointed:

2.2 **Isabel Goshawk, Designated Person for Safeguarding (07582495051)**

She will advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected

2.3 **Joyce Fraser, Safeguarding Trustee (07787031204)**

of the policy and

procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees. When possible, the Safeguarding Team will work together if and when issues arise.

(further definitions of these roles can also be found in Safe To Grow 2011)

2.4 **Definitions**

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE TERM 'CHILDREN' REFERS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

2.4.1 **Physical Abuse** Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

2.4.2 **Emotional Abuse** The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.

2.4.3 **Sexual Abuse** Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

2.4.4 **Neglect** Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

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

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



2.4.5 **Bullying** “Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Allegations and incidents of bullying should be reported to Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

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 most of the above are occurring.

3 Responding to Concerns

3.1 What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed?

Everyone has his or her part to play in ensuring the safeguarding of children within the church.

If the behaviour of a child gives any cause for concern –

If an allegation is made in any context about a child being harmed –

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children causes you concern –

Do not dismiss your concerns

Do not normally confront the adult about whose behaviour you have concerns

Do not take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is actually taking place

Do not investigate allegations

Do not act alone

Do not take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have

Do follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns.

Do

- ✓ Do listen and clarify
- ✓ Do give support

Don't

- X Don't minimise what is said
- X Don't show shock, alarm or disapproval



- ✓ Do explain what happens next
- ✓ Do take action
- X Don't question or push for information
- X Don't offer false reassurance

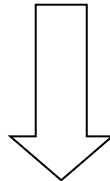
Where there are concerns, 3 stage process outlined in sections 3.2-3.5 needs to be followed.

3.2 **REPORTING PROCESS**

STAGE 1 RECORD AND REPORT

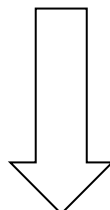
A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child or the behaviour of an adult

*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 within 24 hours*



STAGE 2 REVIEW AND REFER

*The Designated Person receives the report of concern then has a duty to **REVIEW AND REFER**
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.*





STAGE 3 SUPPORT AND REPORT

*After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister, 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 and the Charity Commission.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made.

If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not available, any reports or concerns **immediately to the police or Social Services** and the matter should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

3.3

The following outlines in more detail the 3 stage approach to responding to concerns:-

3.3.1 STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

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 duty to RECORD & REPORT as soon as possible after a child tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

The record should:

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately (if 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
- 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 Safeguarding Team; the church minister (as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved); representatives of the professional agencies.

- If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to one of the Safeguarding Team, one of the team 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.

3.3.2 **STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER**

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 REFER

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred onto.

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.

3.3.3 **STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT**

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 Baptist 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

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.

3.4 **Church Workers** (voluntary or paid)

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.

3.5 **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.; Child, Other Family Members, Church Worker/Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Ministers/Leadership Team etc

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services.

4. **Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers**

The Church will ensure that the following selection procedures have been followed:

1. A written role description for each post
2. All volunteers (both current and new) should complete an application form.
3. Prospective volunteers may be interviewed
4. Two references may be taken up (at least one should be from outside of the church)
5. DBS will be applied for as required by current central guidelines
6. The worker will be appointed for a probationary period of 6 months after which their position will be reviewed.
7. The volunteer should sign an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures
8. Induction into the relevant procedures and ways of working will be undertaken (to include safeguarding training)



9. Administration of this process will be overseen by the Designated Person, but may be carried out by others.
10. Until this procedure is completed workers must be supervised.
 - All leaders and helpers should have a calling to work with children, which should, in turn, be recognised by the Church Leadership Team and have the agreement of existing children's leaders and helpers.
 - The first priority of leaders and helpers should be their own spiritual welfare, and, therefore, they should receive teaching and be part of a worship service or house group regularly.
 - All leaders and helpers should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.
 - Meetings for leaders and helpers will be held approximately once per term, for support and planning.

5. **Young leaders under 18 years of age**

5.1 In law young leaders 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 leader is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience.

A young leader 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 leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader.

The Safeguarding Policy & procedures applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.

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

If the young leader 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 Leaders should not be given leadership responsibility for a group immediately below their own age, it is advised to have a gap of at least two years.



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

6. Good Practice Guidelines

6.1 The following are guidelines for a code of behaviour.

- ✓ Treat all children with respect and dignity. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and invading a person's personal space. Be aware of the effect you are having on the individual child.
- ✓ Listen well to children. Be careful not to assume you know what a child 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.

6.2 Do not engage in any of the following:

- invading the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering
- rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child
- sexually provocative games
- making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in 'fun'
- scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child.
- 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, on church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.
- On occasions when one to one work with a child is required this should take place with appropriate supervision and accountability structures in place.
- 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 The Baptist Church. Parental permission must always be sought for such an event.
- Do not give lifts to young people on their own, other than for short journeys. Ensure that if transporting children that you have the correct



insurance cover for passengers. When possible, ensure you have parental permission.

- Do not share sleeping accommodation with young children if you take a group away.
- Be aware of any physical contact they may have with young people and record it when necessary. For instance, if they need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to a child who is distressed, remove a child from danger, or protect themselves or others from attack.

6.3 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.

6.4 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.

6.5 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.

6.6 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.

7. Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Electronic Communication

7.1 Whilst highly beneficial, 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 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.

7.2 These guidelines are written to try to maintain healthy and safe relationships between adults and children:

- Electronic communication must never become a substitute for face to face contact with 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.
- Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided
- Only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed 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 generally be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter
- 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 and the use of unnecessary abbreviations should be avoided
- Electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 am and 10.00 pm
- Official church e-mails to young people should be sent out with a church header and footer indicating to the young people that this is an official communication, this should also be copied to the church e-mail address.
- Any photos or video taken on personal mobile phones should not be uploaded to social networking sites without parental permission
- Do not retain images of children and young people on mobile phones.

7.3 **Instant Messaging Services (IMS)**

The use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum.



Where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a volunteer/worker:

- significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and
- a log kept of who and when they communicated.

7.2 Social Networking sites

If adults are intending to add young people to their social networking sites they must first have the permission of the parents of the young person.

Adults should not normally make 'friend requests' of young people.

It should not become expected behaviour that adults say yes to young person when a friend request is received.

It is the adult's responsibility to ensure that all of the content on their site is appropriate for young people to see (including contents of photos uploaded)

7.4 All communication with young people should be kept within public domains

All communications with young people should be transparent and open to scrutiny

Remember – **never alone and unseen** is the basic rule of thumb in safeguarding young people.

8. Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

8.1 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 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.

8.2 Ways of dealing with discipline:

- 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.



- 8.3 If the above mentioned procedures fail to bring about the desired result, refer the issue to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee
- 8.4 Whilst physical punishment is not to be used when controlling or disciplining children, a situation may arise where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.

9. **Good Practice Guidelines with Colleagues**

If you see another member of staff acting in ways, which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to one of the Safeguarding Team about your concerns.

Leaders & helpers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

10. **Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety**

10.1 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.
- 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.

10.2 **Risk Assessments**

A generic written risk assessment will be carried out by or on behalf of the Safeguarding Team at the beginning of each academic year. This will cover the general week to week Sunday morning activities. A specific risk assessment will be carried out by the leaders concerned, for any other one off youth activities which may take place throughout the year.



10. **Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Ratios**

When working with young people the following *recommended minimum ratios* apply:

10.1 **INDOOR activities**

- ✓ 0 – 2 years 1: 3 (minimum 2)
- ✓ 3 years 1:4 (minimum 2)
- ✓ 4 – 7 years 1:8 (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

10.2 **OUTDOOR activities**

- ✓ 0 – 2 years - 1: 3 (minimum 2)
- ✓ 3 years - 1:4 (minimum 2)
- ✓ 4 – 7 years - 1: 6 (minimum 2)
- ✓ 8 – 12 years - 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 ratio.

In calculating the ratios of workers to children young leaders who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the leaders/helpers.



12. **When a known offender is present**

12.1 When a known offender is present the church should be a community that is welcoming and open to all. It is a place for people who have failed and for people in need. Those who have abused children in the past are to be included in this welcome. However, the gospel imperative to welcome the sinner needs to be set alongside the gospel imperative that the protection

of children must be paramount.

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused. This might also state that the abuser or alleged abuser (until such time as the allegation has been cleared or proven) must decline offers of hospitality from church members where there are children present in the home.

Where necessary this will include working with other agencies such as Baptist Association, Baptist Union, Probation Service and so on.

12.2 **A contract would consider the following:**

- will identify the meetings the person will attend
- will specify that they will always sit apart from children
- 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 are present
- will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children
- will state that the person will never be alone with children while attending church functions
- will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children meet.



- Guidance will be sought on who within the church can and should be notified if an offender joins the congregation.
- 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 BU, and other agencies if and when necessary.