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Langley Free Church Policy	Safeguarding Children and young people Policy and procedure
Primary Responsibility:	Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) <i>Lynsey Sharkey</i>

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1. Introduction and definition

We all have the same rights and expectations to independence, respect, choice, fulfilment of ambitions, to be heard, included and to have privacy and confidentiality. These expectations are central to the way in which we interact with each other. Safeguarding is the actions required to promote individual's fundamental rights to be safe. This includes the maintaining of safe environments for all and having processes to follow if things go wrong.

The mission statement of Langley Free Baptist Church (LFC) is:

'To love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength; To love our neighbours as ourselves and to follow the Manifesto of Jesus' Luke 4:18-19

In fulfilling this statement, we:

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

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'child' refers to anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday and also includes unborn children. The terms children and young people (YP) are used interchangeably. These guidelines are in no way intended to paralyse good work with the young people in our church or to stop anyone from doing what they are good at – engaging and working with children and young people.



2. Policy Statement

Our safeguarding responsibilities:

LFC recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability, as set out in *The Children Act 1989 & 2004*, *Safe from Harm 1994* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 & 2023* and *Keeping Children Safe 2022*

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

This policy and the following procedures apply to all activities organised and run by LFC. Outside organisations that run groups or activities involving children must have their own Safeguarding policy and procedures in place.

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 the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and to report any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. LFC will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

Safer recruitment, support and supervision of workers

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

Safer working practices

LFC is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being. Those appointed to the role of working with children will be expected to demonstrate both respect and dignity towards the child/children as well as using appropriate language and behaviour as part of their work ethic and respond to any concerns in a timely manner.

A safer community

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



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Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding children within the church is everyone's responsibility. However, LFC has appointed a safeguarding team and they will work together to achieve best practice in safeguarding children within the church.

LFC has appointed **Lynsey Sharkey** as Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) to:

- Receive reports of disclosures, abuse or concerns and maintain confidential records
- Take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected
- Keep the safeguarding policy up to date
- Advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding

LFC has appointed **Wendy Williams & Heidi Johnston** as Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding (DDPS) to:

- Assist the DPS on any matters related to the safeguarding
- Support the DPS in taking appropriate action when required

The church has appointed **Jenna Kralyic** as the Safeguarding Trustee to:

- Raise the profile of safeguarding within the church
- Oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's trustees.

Putting our policy into practice

- A copy of the safeguarding policy summary will be displayed permanently on the church noticeboard and a hard copy of the policy is available in the church office on request from any member of, or other person associated with, the church, and a version is available on our church website.
- Each worker with children, whether paid or voluntary, will be given access to the safeguarding policy and procedures.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually. Any necessary changes adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures needs to be highlighted to any member of, or other person associated with the church.
- The policy summary will be read annually at the Church AGM and agreed by all present.



3. Types of abuse

What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a range of settings, most abuse (90%) is carried out by someone known to the child, rather than a stranger. This may be a member of the family or someone trusted by the child and their family. There is no certain way of identifying a would-be-abuser.

It is often hard to admit that abuse may be taking place in our community. We need to be aware so that we can do the right thing as well as protect ourselves; this is why these guidelines have been set up so we can know what to do.

How do children suffer abuse?

There are several categories of abuse. The most common are physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and child on child abuse.

Physical Abuse: *Where children's bodies are hurt or injured non-accidentally and with force, normally by someone who has authority over the child. This includes the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) and other traditional harmful practices. It is an offence to perform or assist someone in performing FGM on a girl, including taking a girl abroad for such a procedure. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.*

Emotional Abuse: *Where children do not receive love and affection, may be frightened by threats and taunts, or are given responsibility beyond their years. This can also include 'spiritual abuse' where children can suffer harm through practices of a faith community. This could include labelling a child as 'evil' or placing pressure on children to make decisions that are not appropriate to their age. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.*

Sexual Abuse: *Where adults use children to satisfy sexual desires from a position of power, or where children are involved by an adult in sexual activities inappropriate to their age. (Children can also abuse others, normally those over whom they have some power or influence). Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.*

Neglect: *Where adults persistently and severely fail to care for children and protect them from danger, leading to serious impairment of the child's health and development. A variety of circumstances cause adults to abuse children. Children do usually know the person who abuses them and this person is normally in a position of trust or authority towards the child. Abuse happens in all parts of society and is not gender specific.*

Child on Child: *This occurs when a child is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by another child who are the same or similar age and is under the age of 18. This can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim. This could include Bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), Intimate personal relationships (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse'), Physical abuse, Sexual violence and sexual assault and Sexual harassment (including 'sexting' & the practice of 'upskirting')*

A variety of circumstances cause others to abuse or maltreat children. Abuse happens in all parts of society and is not gender specific. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a range of settings, by those known to them and in a position of trust or authority towards the child or, more rarely, by a stranger.

For more forms of abuse please see Appendix 1.



4. Procedure

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 the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. LFC will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

a) Responding to disclosure

Everyone has a part to play in helping to safeguard children within the life of 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 individual towards children causes concern

WHAT TO DO	WHAT NOT TO DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to and acknowledge what is being said.• Try to be reassuring, supportive & remain calm.• Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next.• Be supportive.• Tell them that: They were right to tell you, You are taking what they have said seriously; It was not their fault; That you would like to pass this information on to the appropriate people, with their permission. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be open and honest.• Give contact details of the DPS for them to report any further details or ask any questions that may arise.• Take action – don't ignore the situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not promise confidentiality.• Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval.• Do not minimise what is being said.• Do not ask probing or leading questions or push for more information.• Do not offer false reassurance.• Do not delay in contacting the DPS.• Do not contact the alleged abuser.• Do not investigate the incident any further.• Do not pass on information to those who do not need to know; not even for prayer ministry.• Never leave a child waiting to hear from someone without any idea of when or where that may be.

The key thing to do if a child discloses something is to listen to what they are saying (by avoiding asking questions and allowing them the space to say what they need to), record it as soon as possible before information is forgotten and pass it on to a member of the Safeguarding team.



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b) Report procedure

Stage 1:

A member of the church community has a concern about the welfare and or safety of an adult at risk, or the behaviour of an individual.

The person who has the concern has a duty to:

RESPOND AND RECORD

A written/typed record must be made of the concern/s, if you have one, use a standard incident report form, if not write your notes on any paper or device available to you. These notes should be linked to the 4 W's and once completed should be passed to the DPS **within 24 hours**. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have an incident form available.

The written record should:

- be made as soon as possible after the event; be legible;
 - include the name & date of birth and address of the child;
 - include the nature of any concerns and description of any bruising or injuries that have been noticed on the body map provided;
 - include an exact record of what the 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).

If you think that anyone is in imminent danger of harm:

A report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999, but also inform the DPS this has been done when you pass on your report

If the DPS is not available, or is implicated in the situation:

Any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of LFC Safeguarding Team.

Stage 2:

The DPS receives the report of concern and then has a duty to:

REVIEW AND REFER

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

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

Stage 3:

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken, the DPS, 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. this could be the church as a whole, but more specifically victims; alleged perpetrators; children; adults at risk; other family members; church workers; the DPS; Minister; members of the leadership team.

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



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Allegations Against Workers

If you see another worker acting in ways which concern 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 LFC.

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
- 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 regarding 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, DDPS, Safeguarding Trustee) 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 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 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/Pastor

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister/Pastor should always be reported immediately to the Southern Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact in addition to following the church's usual procedures.

Do not tell the Minister/Pastor that a concern has been raised about them.

When concerns are expressed about the church DPS / Safeguarding Trustee

Any safeguarding concerns involving anyone in LFC safeguarding team should be raised with the Minister/Pastor.

Do not tell the person it is concerning that a concern has been raised about them.

Abuse of Trust

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

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.



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While by no means restricted to young helpers, 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.

Allegations Made Against Children

Children are by nature curious about 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.

When an allegation is made against a child 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 young person on a Safeguarding Contract or equivalent (*see Safer Community / Working with Alleged or Known Offenders*)
- 4) Make sure there is pastoral support in place for the child throughout the process involved.

Pastoral Care

Following an allegation / suspicion

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

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

Supporting those who have experienced abuse

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

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

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



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c. 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.

Recruitment Guidelines

- 1) We will develop a clear role profile, person specification and application form;
- 2) When advertising a role which involves working with children we will make it clear that any appointment may be subject to a DBS check at the appropriate level;
- 3) All applicants will be asked to complete an application form and include the names of two referees (Formal written references will be requested, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference. **References should not be sought from family members.**);
- 4) Shortlisting of applicants will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader directly overseeing the role being recruited for;
- 5) Interviews will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader;
- 6) References, a Self-Disclosure Form and an enhanced DBS check must be completed satisfactorily before the appointed person starts in their role.

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

Additional checks for paid workers

In addition to the above checks which should be completed for both paid and volunteer church workers, an applicant's UK residency status and/ or right to work in the UK will be checked when recruiting for a paid role. Paid workers will also have an assigned supervisor with whom they will meet regularly to discuss work and address any issues or areas of concern. There will be a probationary period of six months in the role before any paid appointment is confirmed.

Appointment and Supervision

The church's safeguarding policy and procedures will be discussed with the applicant, and they will be required to sign their agreement to adhere to them. All workers will have a role description and clear lines of accountability to a leader and the leadership team. There will also be regular team meetings to review procedures, share concerns and identify other matters that may need clarification and guidance.

Training

It is important that all workers understand our church's agreed safeguarding procedures and attend Safeguarding training at least once every four years. Where a worker is successfully recruited but has not yet been able to attend the training, they should be given a copy of the Baptist Union's **Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding** booklet and asked to complete the relevant sections.



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Young Helpers under 18 years of age

In law, young helpers under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that they are helped to develop and hone their skills, attitudes and experience. Young helpers must always be closely supervised by an adult leader and never given sole responsibility for a group of children. When considering ratios of staff to children, young helpers need to be counted as children, not leaders.

The safeguarding procedures apply to a young helper just as they do to any other person. Parent / carer permission needs to be sought for young helpers to attend an event or help with a children's group just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age.



d. Respecting children

LFC 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 following points are guidelines for working with children or young people and are aimed at helping develop best practice:

- Treat children with dignity and respect whatever their age, culture, race, background or ability.
- Use age and ability appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on the child and be aware that children don't always understand sarcasm.
- Keep the parents (or guardian) of the child informed, especially about the child's whereabouts, e.g. if you are planning to leave the church premises.
- Don't leave the child you are looking after with other adults without permission from the parents.
- Listen well to everyone. Be careful not to assume you know what a child is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is being spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the individual's body language to better understand what is being said.
- Be aware of any physical contact you may have with a child 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. Keep a record of any significant incidents or concerns on a Safeguarding Incident Form (see Appendix 3). Enter the names of all those present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made, etc. All workers who witnessed the incident or responded in any way should be recorded and sign and date on the form.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in 'fun'.
- Do not scapegoat, belittle, ridicule or reject a child.
- Try not to be on your own with a child unless necessary & make sure you never lead a group on your own and keep doors open.
- Be aware when making travel arrangements, avoid giving children a lift on their own.
- If you are talking confidentially with a child, privacy is important; try to ensure that another adult is in the building and that the child is aware of this.
- Do not invade the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering, the level of assistance with personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Avoid rough games involving physical contact between a worker and a child or sexually provocative games.
- When it is necessary to discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. There may, however, on the rare occasion be circumstances where a child needs to be restrained to protect them or a third person. This needs to be recorded and an incident form filled out.

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

The only adults allowed to participate in children's 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.



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Electronic Safety

Electronic communication can be a great tool but has to be considered carefully. These are our good practice guidelines which should be followed:

- Direct electronic communication with children is inappropriate
- Where a young person in need or at point of crisis uses this way of communication with a worker a record should be kept.
- If using social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) be aware of what the young person can access. If they can see your profile and photos, consider whether there any posts or images which are inappropriate. If in any doubt avoid using social networking sites.
- 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'.
- Workers should have the parent/ careers' permission to take a picture, and that they approve with the intended use of the pictures. When taking group pictures, workers should remember to get permission from **everyone** who will be photographed. If a leader has photos or video footages of activities these should not be shared publicly online and should not store such photos on personal phones.
- Leaders should be aware of the issues of e-bullying and 'sexting' (sending indecent images or video footage). Concerns about these issues should be taken seriously and details referred to the DPS where appropriate.
- 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.



e. Safe working practices

LFC is in an amazing position in society, with the opportunity to minister to individuals from the whole community, from the very young to the very old. These best practice guidelines are in place to help those working on behalf of the church to providing a safe environment for activities with children and adopt ways of working with children that promote their safety and well-being.

Parental Consent

Parental Consent must be sought for all children attending onsite and offsite events where their parents or guardians are not present and at least two contact details obtained.

Ratios

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

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:6 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:8 (minimum 2)
13 years and over	1:10 (minimum 2)	1:10 (minimum 2)

This does not consider special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratios. Where possible it should be a mix of genders of the leaders within the group 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 workers. 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

Children with Additional Support 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., and may have limited understanding and behave in a non-age-appropriate way. It is good practice to speak with the parents/carers of children with Additional Support needs and find out from them how best to assist the child. Older children will have their own views of how they can be best supported.

Visiting Children at Home

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



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Children with no adult supervision

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

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

Peer Led 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.

Group activities or sessions when parent/carers are present:

It can be an easy mistake to think that, because parents and carers are present when you hold a group or an activity, safeguarding is not necessary as the child's primary caregiver is present. However, it is important to note that workers will still have a position of trust with both the child and adults present. It is our responsibility to provide a safe place for our families to meet, where children should not knowingly be put at risk of significant harm.

There are some important things to keep in mind during these sessions:

- Be prepared to challenge unsafe practice or inappropriate behaviour by adults.
- Record your concerns and share them with relevant people as soon as you can.
- You may need to act/respond within a short timescale – think about whether a child may be at risk of immediate harm.
- Have a list of contact names and numbers for people to report any concerns to.
- Trust your judgment. If something doesn't seem right, then act appropriately.
(safeguarding, messy church website)

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 and 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 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 around 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.



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Digital Communication with Young People

Safe Communication

A worker's role description will set out the church's expectations about how they are to communicate with young people and how this will be monitored. For example should the worker be contacting children and young people directly or through parents; Are they allowed to email/text/ call a young person; How will this contact be recorded. It should also include the expectations of the church in relation to their use. On the general consent form, parents/carers sign to agree that the young person can receive such communications. Young people also need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to electronic communications. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their contact details and should not be pressurised otherwise.

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

Mobile Phones

Workers need to be cautious and careful in using mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- Mobile phone use should primarily be for the purposes of information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language and should not use abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Paid workers will be issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- Workers should not take photos of children or young people unless permission is sought in advance and should not store such photos on personal phones.

Where the youth and children's work are primarily delivered by volunteers the church should consider having a central mobile phone used for communication. This should be held centrally and not by one individual.

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. Instant messaging should not be the primary means of communication between workers and those they are supporting. They should only be used to announce to a wider group about events taking place. Special care should be taken that no numbers are shared with others, both workers and careers.



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Social Media

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

Taking Videos and Photographs of Children

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

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage 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.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including email, postal address or telephone number.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.

Consideration of safeguarding when live streaming church services and events

Where children and young people are participating in services or events, we will ensure that appropriate parent or guardian consent is in place. Where children and young people are unable to be shown on camera consideration will be given to how else they can participate in the service. This is in line with the guidance as set out in the Baptist Union of Great Britain guide: [Recording and Livestreaming Services: Safeguarding Guidelines for Churches](#).



f. Health and Safety

All activities for children will comply with the church's current health and safety policy. Whenever possible, at all events involving food preparation, at least one worker will hold a valid Basic Food Hygiene Certificate. The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 state that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations. It therefore follows that those with responsibility for food will need to possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc.). Buildings being used for children's groups will be properly maintained.

Consent forms

It is essential that we have important information about all children and young people involved in any activities at the church, which is recorded on our consent forms. The first week someone attends workers must record their name, medical emergency information and two contact names and numbers. Then they must bring their completed form back with them. Whenever someone is asked to participate in a service which is to be livestreamed or recorded and shown at a later date written consent for them to be on screen will need to be acquired in line with the guidance set out in the BUGB Guide: [Recording and Live Streaming Services and Events: Safeguarding Guidance](#).

Fire

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

First Aid

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

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

Supervision of Groups

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

Risk Assessment

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

Transport

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children on behalf of LFC. They do not apply to private arrangements, for example, transport arrangements made between friends.

- All drivers will have read the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Drivers will be aged 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that the vehicle being used is road worthy.
- All hired minibuses will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.



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

Outings and Overnight Events involving Children

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

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements and give time to answer any questions they might have.
- 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. It may not be appropriate to speak to the part (for fear of possible harm to the YP), 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 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 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 DPS 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.



f. A safe community

When children become a part of the life of the church, they become part of a far wider community. This wider community life of LFC has the potential to enrich their development and growth, but it also brings with it additional risks that need to be addressed. The safeguarding of children must be paramount.

Bullying

Bullying is another form of abuse, and it can be verbal or physical. There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as a repeated pattern of behaviour intended to cause emotional or physical harm to another person or exert power over them. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically, regardless of their age, ability or status.

It is important to recognise that bullying happens within churches. Anyone in LFC can be a victim of bullying, just as anyone in LFC can be the bully, including those in leadership.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Being verbally or physically abusive towards another person, i.e. name-calling, making false accusations, teasing, personal insults, mocking or physically through kicking, hitting, intimidating, taking belongings from them or unwanted physical contact
- Isolating or deliberately ignoring someone, or excluding them from group activities
- Spreading rumours and malicious untruths about another person in the church
- Use of email, phone or social media to publicly challenge or undermine someone or inappropriate text messaging such as sending abusive messages or degrading images via phone, email or social media
- Cyberbullying (or online bullying) which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets which could include harassment, cyber stalking, impersonation, denigration, flaming or exclusion

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

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

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

In order to prevent bullying, it is good practice to involve children in agreeing a code of behaviour for their group. Children should also know how to report bullying and it will be treated seriously, and details will be carefully checked before action is taken. If bullying behaviour occurs parents of both parties (bullied and bully) should be informed, and an attempt should be made to modify behaviour. All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions that are taken.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviour, such as respectfully challenging or disagreeing with someone else's beliefs or behaviours.



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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.

It is also important to note that children should be 13 or over to access the internet unsupervised, this is due to data protection laws which state that Online services are not allowed to collect or store children’s personal information if they are under the age of 13. Data protection laws also say that only children aged 13 and over can sign up to online services without parental permission. There should also be appropriate filtering and monitoring system in place to protect those using provided Wi-Fi.

Working with Alleged or Known Offenders

A church community should be welcoming and open to all, this includes those convicted of abuse (sexual or otherwise), but special rules will apply. When it is known that a person who has been convicted of abusing children, young people or adults is attending our church, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced allegations of abuse but hasn’t been convicted. In determining the details of the contract:

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



g) Covid impact

The impact and experience of the COVID-19 outbreak has been different for everyone, as has how we have reacted, but there's no doubt it's been a really difficult time for us all. It is important to remember that many of the children and young people that come into our building have missed almost 2 years of education which has had a large impact not only on their educational attainment but also their mental wellbeing. There has been an increase in anxiety, depression, stress and OCD tendencies due to various situations they have been through due to Covid. It is also important to note that a person may be suffering from the effects of long Covid such as feelings of fatigue or even cognitive impairment. This could increase the likelihood of abuse or exploitation and we as a church should be mindful of this and follow the report procedure if you feel it is necessary to do so.

There has also, sadly, been an increase in domestic abuse report during lockdown, and many have seen an escalation in abuse which could be linked to the frustration that was caused by the family having to stay in the house during periods of isolation. This could also be impacted by families living in cramped conditions. Many victims of domestic abuse reported that the level of fear for themselves and their children had increased over this period as well as a greater fear of being locked in with their perpetrator due to isolation rules. Many perpetrators were also using the rules of Covid 19 and lockdown as part of their abuse through enforcing it. It is important to note that the children may not be direct victims of this type of abuse but witnessing or hearing DV can have a negative effect on a child and or their behaviour. And for those children who were already experiencing abuse or neglect by a household member/s, the lockdown period increased the exposure to potential harm and many parents were overburdened due to their own difficulties and stresses leading to a fall in supervision standards especially with online presence. In many cases the children would have lost access to possible adults of trust with the closure of schools and colleges which has been shown through research to increase a child's vulnerability to abuse or exploitation.

During Covid, lock-down periods and possible family isolation due to positive cases led to children completing schoolwork online. This also meant that a lot of children were given access to devices and the ability to connect to the internet. This has led to a higher proportion of children viewing material that may not be suitable for their age as many of the devices may not have child safety blockers. Many children also had a greater access to social media which increased the risk of grooming, cyber bullying or other online harm.

For more help on this matter please see the BUGB guide to Cyber safety.



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h. Responsible people

Role	Responsibilities	How
Designated Person for Safeguarding	A recognised person for receiving disclosures or reports of disclosures of abuse.	Displaying name and contact information, preferably with photo, so church members know who to contact.
	Liaising with the Association Safeguarding Contact and external agencies where necessary.	Creating a list of contact numbers and having blank copies of the Safeguarding Incident Form ready for use.
	Keep the safeguarding policy relevant and up to date.	Annually review and update if necessary.
	Advocating and facilitating safe church practices.	Promoting a culture of best practice throughout the church life.
	Report to the church meeting on safeguarding issues.	Make sure safeguarding is on the church meeting agenda.
DBS Verifier	Making sure that all relevant persons working with children have an up to date DBS check in place at all times.	Coordinating the completion and renewal of DBS forms, and liaising with the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding on the outcomes when required.
Safeguarding Advisor (Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding)	Advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of adults at risk	Working with the safeguarding team to give advice on best practice and review policies and procedures
	Support the Designated Person in taking appropriate action when required	Working with the safeguarding team to discuss concerns and supporting the decisions taken.
Church Meeting	Adopt the safeguarding policy	Discussing and agreeing the policy
Safeguarding Trustee	Taking the lead on safeguarding matters on behalf of the trustees.	Regular communication and reporting from the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding and ensuring safeguarding is on the agenda at trustee meetings.
Trustees	Responsible for safeguarding best practice within the church	Make sure that all necessary safeguarding measures are in place (including policy, procedures, training, safe recruiting, etc.).



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Leaders of Children's or Youth Groups

All leaders of groups need to know the following: how to go about appointing new staff following the appropriate procedures and how to contact the Designated Person

They are responsible for: ensuring their workers have appropriate supervision and informing the DPS of any concerns about children raised by their workers. They should also have a commitment that under no circumstance should any staff member or volunteer inflict physical or psychological harm on a child. The assault of a child is against the law and if any adult causes physical or psychological injury or mistreats a child they could be prosecuted for a criminal offence.

All leaders need to ensure they are protecting the safety of their group at all times, this includes low-level concerns. For example: inadvertent and thoughtless behaviour, behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances or behaviour which is intended to enable abuse. This is making sure you don't 'turn a blind eye' or ignore the 'bad' feeling you may have about a colleague. It is your responsibility to report these concerns to the safeguarding team.

Workers with Children and Young People

All of those who work with children should take personal responsibility for implementing the Safeguarding policy. They should each:

- Know and implement the guidelines for good practice
- Follow the agreed code of behaviour
- Be aware of the ways in which children are harmed
- Know what to do if a child discloses abuse
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about another adult
- Know who to speak to if they have any suspicions or concerns



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APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or a child or children. There are many ways in which children can suffer abuse, and in most cases multiple issues will overlap with each other. The list below is, sadly, not exhaustive.

Type of abuse	Child
<i>Physical</i>	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.
<i>Emotional</i>	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.
<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. 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.
<i>Neglect</i>	Ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. This can put children and YPs in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing. This can include physical neglect (basic needs such as food clothing or shelter), Educational (being held back or not being given an education), Emotional (doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need i.e. ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them) & Medical (isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations).
<i>Material Poverty</i>	More than 1 in 4 children are living in poverty and families are still struggling to afford food, heating and electricity. Poverty can cause children's mental and physical health to worsen, and they are more likely to be exposed to crime and violence. It can also increase the risk of experiencing neglect.
<i>Child on child</i>	When a child is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by another child/children who are the under the age of 18. This abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim
<i>Peer on Peer</i>	Peer-on-peer abuse is where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.
<i>Spiritual</i>	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.



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<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>Online Abuse (former Cyber Abuse)</i>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<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>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>	<p>Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces (HM Government, 2011).</p> <p>However, all organisations that work with children and young people have a responsibility to protect children from harm. This includes becoming radicalised and/or being exposed to extreme views through the Prevent duty.</p>
<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.



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<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 and must be reported to the police .
<i>Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</i>	When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is linked to grooming as they may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person or to encourage them to coerce others in joining them.
<i>Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) & Gangs</i>	Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing (which can include moving drugs over county lines) and violent crime.
<i>Domestic Abuse</i>	Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship or being witnesses of said abuse. It can take place both inside and outside of the home and may even continue after the relationship has ended. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It has also been noted that the impact of domestic abuse including the potential short-term and long-term detrimental impact on children's health, wellbeing, and ability to learn if they are experiencing domestic abuse at home or within their own intimate relationships. <i>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021</i>
<i>Parental Conflict</i>	Parental conflict is a term used to describe disagreements between parents or co-parents, whether they are separated or together. It can include: arguing, bickering, frustration, micro-managing, lack of positive communication, name-calling, and point-scoring. <i>This differs from DA as neither parent feels fearful of the other.</i> Frequent, intense, and poorly resolved parental conflict can negatively impact children's mental health and long-term life chances. Children may feel upset, confused, or angry, and may have difficulty resolving relationship problems in the future.
<i>Grooming</i>	Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. They can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked. Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race and it can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.



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Abuse of trust

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children, this now includes faith group leaders. It's against the law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over). This can also include giving a child preferential treatment, spending time outside their role with the child alone, giving them gifts or making suggestive remarks or being over affectionate with the child.

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

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- a child or young person discloses behaviour that is harmful to them
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- have poor attention or concentration
- struggle with their emotions, mental health or behaviour, including social difficulties with their peers
- inappropriate sexual awareness in children
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators 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.



APPENDIX 2 – DETAILED GUIDANCE ON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

STAGE 1 – THE WORKER

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

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

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

The record should:

- ❖ be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- ❖ be legible and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- ❖ include the child's name, 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 their own words where possible
- ❖ include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- ❖ include any action taken because of the concerns
- ❖ be signed and dated
- ❖ be kept secure and confidential and made available only to the church Safeguarding Team (including the church Minister/Pastor), representatives of any statutory authorities involved and the local Baptist association.

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

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



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STAGE 2 – THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)

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

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received, the DPS:

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

The duty to REPORT

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

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation.
- refer the concern to others who work with the child in question, asking for continued observation where appropriate.
- Inform parents / carers under certain circumstances, where doing so would not present any further risk of harm.
- Make a formal referral to the police or local Social Services team.
- If an allegation is made against someone who works with children* the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or equivalent. The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are 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 by the statutory authorities. It may also be appropriate to put a Safeguarding Contract in place; this should be discussed with the local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact.*

- Whenever a formal referral is made to the police, Social Services or LADO, the DPS should report the referral to:
 - The Safeguarding Trustee
 - The Minister/Pastor
 - The local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact

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

STAGE 3 – THE NEXT STEPS

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

The duty to SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, LFC continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected, including: victims, alleged perpetrators, children, other family members, church workers, church safeguarding team, Minister/Pastor or leadership team.

The duty to REPORT

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

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



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Appendix 3- CHILDREN AND YOUTH WORK VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

LFC is committed to the care and nurture of children. We aim to offer a welcome to all children, witness to them in a way appropriate for their age and enable them to worship God together. To this end the church appoints specific people as volunteers to work with children.

Responsibilities Volunteers will usually be assigned to a specific group and responsible for the children who attend their group. They will be responsible for helping to ensure the smooth running of their group including helping with setting up, clearing up, preparation before sessions and attending leaders' meetings.

The leadership of most groups works on a rota basis and volunteers will be expected to ensure they attend when they are on the rota or contact the group leader if there is an issue. All volunteers are accountable to the leader of their group. Group leaders are accountable to the Minister/Pastor.

Child Protection

As part of this role volunteers will be required to apply for an DBS Disclosure, complete an application form and provide references. They will be expected to work within the church's Safeguarding Policy.

Their specific responsibilities are to:

- Know and implement the guidelines for good practice
- Be mindful of behaviour and make sure it is appropriate to the group they are working with
- Be aware of the ways in which children are harmed
- Know what to do if a child discloses abuse
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about another adult
- Know who to speak to if they have any suspicions or concerns

To this end volunteers will be required to attend Safeguarding training when available.

Support

The church is committed to providing volunteers with prayer, resources and training. If you have any concerns, please speak to your group leader or one of the Ministry team.



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APPENDIX 3 – SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM

DETAILS OF INCIDENT OR CONCERN:

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

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

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

Please give details of who and when below:

Organisation:

Name of contact:

Date of contact:

This Incident Form should be passed to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) within 24 hours of any incident or concern arising. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have all the information requested in this form. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, please 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.

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

Signed Date

Telephone: 01753 540771 Email: safeguarding@langleyfree.org.uk
Langley Free Church 100 Trelawney Ave, Langley, Slough SL3 8RW, United Kingdom

Safeguarding Incident form

PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT OR CONCERN:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

Role in Church:

DETAILS OF CHILD / ADULT AT RISK YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:

Name:

Date of Birth / Approximate Age:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them?

If not, please explain why:

IF UNDER 18 PLEASE INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE PARENT OR CARER:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

Relationship to the child/ young person:

Do they know that you have concerns that you are sharing?

If not, please explain why:

DETAILS OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (IF RELEVANT)

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Are they an adult or a child (under 18):

Relationship to the child/adult at risk:

Does the child / adult at risk live with the alleged perpetrator?

Telephone: 01753 540771 Email: safeguarding@langleyfree.org.uk
Langley Free Church 100 Trelawney Ave, Langley, Slough SL3 8RW, United Kingdom



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APPENDIX 4: USEFUL CONTACTS:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

Mobile Number: 07927 681858

Email Address: LADO@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

(Referral form can be found on slough children first, see below)

Police:

Non-emergency Number: 101

Emergency Number: 999

Web address for local police: <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk>

Contact Crimestoppers to anonymously report a crime or suspicious behaviour:

Phone Number: 0800 555 111

Web address: crimestoppers-uk.org

Children's Social Services:

general enquiries: 01753 477321

concerns/emergencies (9am to 5pm): 01753 875362

Email Address for general enquiries: emailus@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Email for concerns: sloughchildren.referrals@sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk

Web address: <https://www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk/>

Child line:

Web address: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Phone Number: 0800 1111

NSPCC:

Web address: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Phone Number: 0808 800 5000

Email Address: help@nspcc.org.uk

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection against sexual abuse and grooming):

Web address: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact:

Mel Pike

Mobile Number: 07712 508779

Email address: safeguarding@scba.org.uk

Regional Minister Lead:

Revd Clare Hooper

Mobile Number: 07840 378788

Email Address: c.hooper@scba.org.uk

Revd Hayley Young

07738 203689

h.young@scba.org.uk