



Shipley Baptist Church

(Version 2022)

Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults

Policy & Procedures

*A set of agreed policies and procedures
for ensuring a safe environment for
children, young people and vulnerable adults
within the care of our church,
in response to the Children's Act 1989
and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.*

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE TERM ‘CHILDREN’ REFERS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS

Core Definition of Vulnerable Adult from the 1997 Consultation “Who Decides” issued by the Lord Chancellor’s Department

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE TERM ‘VULNERABLE ADULT’ IS A PERSON “WHO IS OR MAY BE IN NEED OF COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES BY REASON OF DISABILITY, AGE OR ILLNESS; AND IS OR MAY BE UNABLE TO TAKE CARE OF, UNABLE TO PROTECT HIM OR HERSELF AGAINST SIGNIFICANT HARM OR EXPLOITATION”

THIS DEFINITION OF AN ADULT COVERS ALL PEOPLE OVER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Contents

- 3. Church Policy Statement
- 4. Safeguarding Team

Procedures

- 5. Definitions of Abuse
- 6. What to do if...
- 6. Procedure for Responding to Concerns
- 11. Safe Recruitment of Staff

Good Practice Guidance

- 13. Respecting Children/Vulnerable Adults
- 14. Abuse of Trust/Photography
- 15. Electronic Communication
- 17. Discipline of Children
 - Working with Colleagues
- 18. Ratios
 - Health & Safety
- 19. Safe Premises
- 20. Working with Offenders
- 21. Helpful Numbers

Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Church

Shipley Baptist Church

(referred to as “the church” in the Policy Statement)

The vision statement of the church is “Win, build, send”

In fulfilling this vision, we:

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

Our safeguarding responsibilities

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

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

- Prevention and reporting of abuse

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

- Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

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

- Respecting children and adults at risk

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

- Safe working practices

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

- A safe community

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying. The church will seek to ensure

that the behaviour of any individuals who may pose a risk to children, young people and adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately

The Church Safeguarding Team

The church has appointed:

Alex Jones as Designated Persons for Safeguarding and Caroline Whitehouse as Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding

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

Iain Buglass as Safeguarding Trustee

He will oversee and monitor the implementation 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.

Policy and Procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the entrance hall and church office.

Each worker with children and vulnerable adults will be given a 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 at the November Deacons meeting.

The policy statement will be presented annually at the church Annual General Meeting together with a report on the outcome of the annual review of the policy and procedures.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

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.

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 no-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.

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 (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)

inappropriate sexual awareness

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.

Responding to Concerns

What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed?

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

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

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

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children/vulnerable adults 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 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 | Don't |
|-----------|--------------|
| | |

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Listen and clarify | Minimise what is said |
| Give support | Show shock, alarm or disapproval |
| Explain what happens next | Question or push for information |
| Take action | Offer false reassurance |

Procedure for Responding to Concerns

Stage 1

A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult 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 the safeguarding incident report book and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.

(The safeguarding incident report book is kept in the safe in the church office)

Procedures for Responding to Concerns

STAGE 1

A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult 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 the safeguarding incident report book and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.

(Safeguarding Incident Report Book is kept in the safe in the church office)

If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the



STAGE 2

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

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

If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not available, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

If a child/vulnerable adult is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the Police or Social Services (see page 21 for relevant numbers.)

STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult 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/vulnerable adult 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 (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- include the child's/vulnerable adult'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/vulnerable adult has said using their own 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/vulnerable adult 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 them 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.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the Police or Social Services (see page 21 for relevant numbers.)

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 or vulnerable adults
- 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 on to. They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child/vulnerable adult is being harmed. asking for appropriate continued observation
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children/vulnerable adult 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. This may also refer to vulnerable adults.

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.

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 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.

Allegations with regard to vulnerable adults should also be reported to the appropriate Social Services team.

If a worker has an allegation made against them they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated.

If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children and young people there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

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

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

The duty to SUPPORT

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

Child, Vulnerable Adult, Other Family Members, Church Worker/Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Ministers/ Leadership Team

Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

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

Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers

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

Prospective volunteers to be interviewed informally as appropriate

DBS check will be done

Appointments will be reviewed on a regular basis

The volunteer should sign an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures

Induction into the relevant procedures and ways of working will be undertaken (to include safeguarding training)

Administration of this process will be overseen by the Designated Person, but may be carried out by others.

Until this procedure is completed workers must be supervised.

All leaders and helpers should have a calling to work with children or vulnerable adults, which should, in turn, be recognised by the Church Leadership Team and have the agreement of existing children's/vulnerable adults' 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 life 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 as required, for support and planning.

However anyone may raise any concerns or suggestions regarding the ministry amongst children or vulnerable adults with any of the Safeguarding Team or Leadership Team at any time.

Young leaders under 18 years of age

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 Children Policy 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, to leave a gap of at least two years.

When concerns are expressed about the Minister

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister should always be reported immediately to the Regional Minister of our local Baptist Association in addition to following the church's normal procedures.

When concerns are expressed about the Designated Person

Any safeguarding concerns involving the Designated Person for safeguarding, the concern should be raised with the Safeguarding Trustee & or the Minister

Respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults

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

Respecting children/vulnerable adults

The following are guidelines for a code of behaviour.

Leaders and Helpers should:

Treat all children and vulnerable adults 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.

Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual child/vulnerable adult.

Listen well to children/vulnerable adults. Be careful not to assume you know what a child/vulnerable adult is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said.

Do not engage in any of the following:

- invading 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.

When it is necessary to control and discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. (A situation may, however, arise where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.)

Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed. 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.

Leaders and Helpers of vulnerable adults should also show the same respect, privacy and appropriate behaviour towards those in their care.

Leaders and Helpers should:

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 church. Parental permission must always be sought for such an event.

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.

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.

Not use physical punishment when controlling or disciplining children.

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.

Abuse of Trust

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

It is also not acceptable for a leader/helper to form a romantic relationship with a child with whom they have a relationship of trust.

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

Photography

Any still or moving images of children may only be taken/used with parents' written permission.

Any still or moving images of vulnerable adults may only be taken/used with the permission of the vulnerable adult or their parent/carer.

Electronic Communication

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

electronic communication is often an extremely informal mode of communication which can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood

because of the informal style of electronic communication workers can easily cross appropriate boundaries in their relationships with 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.

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

Workers should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phone.

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 worker:

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

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 a 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)

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, what does this mean for your activity with electronic communication?

Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

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

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

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

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

Ways of dealing with discipline:

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

If the above mentioned procedures fail to bring about the desired result, refer the issue to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

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 the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee

Any discipline required for vulnerable adults should also be built on mutual respect.

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

Ratios

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

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

This does not take into account any 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.

Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety

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/vulnerable adults.
- 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.

Risk Assessments

A generic written risk assessment will be carried out by the Deacon responsible for children and young people 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 appropriate leader for any other one off youth activities which may take place throughout the year.

Risk assessments will be made available to the Leadership Team.

A safe community

Safe Premises

The church takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the premises are safe for all who use them. The following checklist identifies guidelines to ensure the safety of all, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- All doorways and passages to be kept clear at all times
- Emergency Exits to be clearly shown at all times
- The kitchen is out of bounds to children and young people unless supervised by a parent or carer
- A First Aid kit will be kept in the kitchen with a Report Book for all usage
- Special care with safety will be taken when the baptistry is open
- Any hazards noticed should be notified to the trustees for action to be taken

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.

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 the 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.

Helpful Numbers

Children

Children’s Social Care Services

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 8.45am—5pm | 01274 437500 |
| Out of hours | 01274 431010 |

| | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| Police | 101 |
| | 01274 376600 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Yorkshire Baptist Association | 0113 278 4954 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|

Vulnerable Adults

Local Authority Safeguarding Team **01274 431077**

Community Learning Disability Team
Access Point
Out of Hours **01274 435400**
 01274 431010

*Versio Reviewed by the Diaconate
January 2022*