



Sawbridgeworth Evangelical Congregational Church

Safeguarding Policy

Date of revision: May 2026

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Section 1

Details of the place of worship / organisation

Sawbridgeworth Evangelical Congregational Church

Address: ***London Road, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, CM21 9EH***

Tel No: 07907 163882

General Email address: office@secchurch.org.uk

Minister's Name: ***Gary Hanson***

Email: minister@secchurch.org.uk

Named Trustee for Safeguarding: Dian Sapsford.

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinator Name: Frances Smith

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator: Hanna Dixon

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

Membership of Denomination/Organisation: ***Independent – Member of Evangelical Alliance.***

Charity Number: **1201704**

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

We are a church providing children's activities and a crèche during our service on Sunday morning. We also run midweek groups for children, including a youth group on Friday night, groups for young people on Sunday evenings which may meet in a member's home and a parent/carer and toddler group. The church runs occasional community events for families and children. During the school holidays the "Make Lunch" initiative is run weekly for families living on a low income who need that support. In February 2021, in response to the hardship in part caused by the pandemic, the church opened a "Community Food Hub" formerly known as the "Pop Up Shop" where donated goods are offered free to anyone who needs them.

There are a number of other regular activities for adults including services at other locations and groups which meet in homes for prayer and Bible study.

Section 2: Introduction

Good governance helps an organisation prevent abuse and means it can respond quickly and with integrity when concerns arise. Central to this, is the Governance Board or Board of Trustees

The governance board is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for how an organisation or charity and have a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (ICSA The Governance Institute, 2017)

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022 it is illegal (England and Wales)(Northern Ireland) for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures
- with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day to day actions and behaviours of its people
- and there is open communication

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without

distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child." As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

A model safeguarding statement for display can be found in APPENDIX 1.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight (thirtyoneeight.org/ten-standards)

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- check that the missionary organisations/missionaries supported by the church also adhere to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Section 3

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution, or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

For the purposes of this policy, a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old. An adult at risk of harm will be defined in this policy as someone over the age of 18 who needs care and support for their daily living. The church may encounter these adults with care and support needs through both regular services and other activities including pastoral visitation.

To safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

- 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post.
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form.
- Those short listed have been interviewed.
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview.
- Written references have been obtained and followed up where appropriate.
- A self-declaration form and the relevant Disclosure and Barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme as appropriate, is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead undertaking advanced safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the governance board/board of trustees which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

This information can be found in Appendices 2 and 3 at the end of this document.

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we will be completing and adding specific good practice guidelines for each activity in which we are involved and these will be found in Appendix 4.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

This is reviewed annually with the Safeguarding Policy.

Section 4 Partnership Working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Section 5

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- **Documenting a concern**

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Frances Smith (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator")

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the event of an allegation or concern, please email in the first instance leaving a contact telephone number should you wish to discuss the matter further.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: Hanna Dixon (hereafter the "Deputy")

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

- In the absence of both Safeguarding lead and deputy please contact the Named Trustee for Safeguarding: **Dian Sapsford**

Email: safeguarding@secchurch.org.uk

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

If the suspicions implicate either or both the Safeguarding Coordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Coordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

- **Name of local authority: *Hertfordshire***

Children's Social Services: *Hertfordshire Children, Schools and Families* Tel: *0300 123 4043*

Out of hours Tel: as above

Website Address: *Hertfordshire.gov.uk*

Adult Social Services: *Hertfordshire Adult Social Services* Tel: *0300 123 4042*

Out of hours Tel: as above

Website Address: *Hertfordshire.gov.uk*

Essex Social Services Direct: Tel for reporting abuse of children is *0345 603 7627* and adults is *0345 603 7630* - out of hours *0845 606 1212*

Website Address: *essex.gov.uk*

Police Protection Team Telephone is 101 or if immediate harm is likely call 999

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern
 - Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.

- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay taking advice from thirtyone:eight who will decide if a referral to Social Services or the Police is required.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a “need to know” basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight. However, the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship/organisation will, in the first instance, use the above procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern is *not* satisfied that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct (refer to page 8 of this document). We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children’s Social Services (or Thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children’s Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.

- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the Survivor i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

Section 6 Pastoral Care

Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering wellbeing support/pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing/pastoral care *but* in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually in: August 2026

Signed by: 

Position: Minister

Date: 7th May 2026

A copy of this policy is also lodged with: thirtyone:eight.



Appendix 1

**Safeguarding Statement
Model Policy Statement on Safeguarding to be displayed
in a prominent place.**

Safeguarding statement
Model Policy Statement on Safeguarding
To be displayed in a prominent place

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS POLICY STATEMENT

Name of Place of worship: Sawbridgeworth Evangelical Congregational Church

The following statement was agreed by the leadership on: 2. 09. 24.

- This place of worship is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or Abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.

- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as a place of worship/organisation all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014. *(Please amend this list for appropriate legislation in N. Ireland and Scotland)*
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.

- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting all in the place of worship/organisation affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this place of worship/organisation.

Frances Smith. Safeguarding Co-Ordinator
Hanna Dixon Deputy Safeguarding Co-Ordinator

A copy of this policy can be accessed via the Church office.

Signed by leadership

Signed 

Date 7th May 2026



Appendix 2

Four Definitions of Abuse together with signs and indicators

Further definitions for children together with signs and indicators

Further definitions for adults together with signs and indicators

How to respond to causes of concern and disclosures

1. Abuse is a single or repeated act, or lack of action, that happens within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to another person or violates their human or civil rights.

It is the misuse of power and control and can be perpetrated by a wide range of people, including those who are close to the person or those who have no previous connection to them.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate use of physical force by one person against another to cause harm.

It may result in physical harm or injury to the other person or it may not, and may be a one-off act or ongoing.

Physical abuse can include:

- Hitting, slapping, biting or pinching.
- Rough handling, shaking, pushing, or throwing.
- Burning or scalding.
- Drowning, or suffocating
- Poisoning, misuse of medication or the denial of treatment.
- Intentional exposure to extreme heat or cold, or force feeding.
- Misuse or illegal restraint, inappropriate physical punishment, or depriving someone of their liberty.

Physical harm may also be caused when a child's Parent/Carer fakes the symptoms of, or deliberately causes illness or ill health in a child.

Injuries caused by accidents such as trips and falls are not uncommon, especially in children, but these usually occur on bony or prominent areas such as knees, shins and elbows.

Abusive injuries tend to involve softer areas that are harder to damage accidentally e.g. upper arms, forearms, chest, back, abdomen and thighs.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Visible injuries and bruising.
- Unexplained cuts, marks or scars.
- Injuries that don't match the explanation given.
- Getting injured often
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour
- Changes in weight, being excessively under or overweight or malnourished.
- Insufficient clothing or being inadequately dressed for the season.
- Failing to get medical treatment or changing Doctors often.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse (or Psychological abuse) involves harming a person emotionally and includes any persistent emotional ill-treatment that causes severe and long-lasting adverse effects on a person's emotional development.

Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of abuse and ill treatment of one person by another, but it can also occur on its own.

Emotional abuse can include:

- Consistently telling someone that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate.
- Using intimidation, coercion, and harassment.

- Having inappropriate expectations for a person's age or development.
- Seeing or hearing another person being mistreated, such as in domestic abuse.
- Not giving someone opportunity to express their views or to take part in normal social interaction.
- Bullying, including online bullying.
- Causing someone to frequently feel frightened or in danger.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Signs of distress, tearfulness or anger
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person

Neglect

Neglect (or acts of omission) is the failure to meet a person's basic physical or emotional needs which is likely to have a serious negative impact on their health or development.

It happens when a person deliberately withholds or fails to provide an appropriate level of care and support which is needed by another person.

It can involve a Parent/Carer and can also happen during pregnancy e.g. as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Neglect may happen because of a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action whether deliberate or not.

In its extreme form, neglect can be a significant risk as it can lead to serious long-term effects and even be life-threatening.

Neglect is the most common form of child abuse in the UK.

Neglect can include:

- Not providing adequate food, clothing, or assistance with personal hygiene.
- Not providing adequate shelter and heating.
- Failing to protect someone from harm or danger.
- Not ensuring appropriate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Failing to give prescribed medication or provide access to appropriate health care or treatment.
- Failing to provide access to educational services.
- Ignoring a person's basic emotional needs.
- Failing to take action when a person is taking unnecessary risk (especially when the person lacks capacity to properly assess risk).

Possible signs and indicators:

- Poor appearance or hygiene e.g. being smelly or dirty
- Living in an unsuitable home environment e.g. having no heating
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- Signs of malnutrition or not being given enough food
- Having frequent and untreated medical issues or an accumulation of untaken medication.
- Body issues such as sores, skin complaints, poor muscle tone or prominent joints.
- Poor language or social skills
- Being left alone for a long time
- Being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- Tiredness or finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- Self-soothing behaviours drug or alcohol misuse and self-harm.
- Poor school attendance or performance

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse (or Sexual violence) is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding.

The abuse may involve physical contact and touching or non-contact activities.

Sexual abuse is found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation. It can be perpetrated by family or non-family members, women, men and other children.

Children and young people

The sexual abuse of children or young people - also called **Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)** - is involving [a child or young person](#) in an activity for the sexual gratification or gain of another person, whether or not it is claimed they have consented or agreed.

Sexual abuse of a child can include:

- Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, whether they aware of what is happening or not.
- Including children in looking at adult sexual content or activities, or having their photo taken or being filmed for the production of indecent images.
- Using sexual language towards a child or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse, either in person or online.

[Child sexual exploitation](#) is a form of child sexual abuse where a child is sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Sexual abuse may awaken premature sexual feelings in a child that they find hard to deal with and feel guilty about and they may need reassurance that they are not to blame for the abuse.

Penetrative sex with a child under 13 years by an adult or another child is classed as rape.

One of the ongoing effects of childhood sexual abuse may be that adult survivors experience difficulties forming meaningful relationships with other adults.

Sexual abuse of Adults

The sexual abuse of adults involves sexual acts to which the person has not consented or has been pressured into consenting to.

Sexual abuse of a adults can include:

- Penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts, whether they aware of what is happening or not eg. sexual assault, oral sex, rape, attempted rape, and date rape.
- Indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, groping, sexual teasing or innuendo,
- Being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities.
- Stalking and grooming.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Physical injuries and bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks, upper arms and neck.
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area or when walking or sitting.
- Sexually transmitted diseases or infections.
- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sex.
- Uncharacteristic or age-inappropriate use of sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude.
- Self-harming.
- Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance.
- Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships or being alone with a particular person.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse (or Domestic Violence) is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse by one person against another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members.

It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life-partner, or by an extended family member, and happens across all sections of society, regardless of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, financial background or sexual orientation.

Both men and women can be victims, although a greater number of women experience all forms of domestic violence. Children and Young People can suffer this form of abuse directly or be impacted by the effects of witnessing or living in a household where domestic abuse is happening.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour by one person over another that is usually frequent and persistent. It can happen inside and outside the home and can continue even after a relationship has ended.

Coercive control

Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse used to harm, punish, or frighten another person. It is designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Domestic abuse can include:

- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, and 'honour crimes'.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Signs of distress, tearfulness or anger
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person
- Visible injuries and bruising.
- Injuries that don't match the explanation given.
- Unexplained falls
- Subdued or changed behaviour
- Changes in weight, being excessively under or overweight or malnourished.
- Signs of coercive control
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not
- Isolation – not seeing friends and family
- Limited access to money

Financial abuse

Financial abuse (or Material abuse) is the attempted or actual misappropriation or misuse of a person's money, property, benefits, or other assets, by means of intimidation, coercion, deception, or other ways to which the person does not or can not consent to.

Financial abuse includes having money or other property stolen, being defrauded or put under pressure in relation to money or other property, and having money or other property misused.

Financial abuse can include:

- Theft, burglary, or fraud (including internet scamming).
- Exploitation and embezzlement.
- Coercion or being put under pressure concerning a person's finances (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions).
- Misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Withholding pension or other benefits.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Unusual financial activity such as making an unexpected change to a will, a sudden sale or transfer of a property, or unusual activity in a bank account.
- Sudden inclusion of additional names on a bank account or where a signature does not resemble the person's normal signature.
- Reluctance or anxiety by a person when discussing their finances.
- A substantial gift to a carer or other third party.
- A sudden interest by a relative or other third party in the welfare of the person.
- Bills remaining unpaid.
- Complaints that personal property is missing.
- Signs of coercive control or neglect.

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is when an adult lives in a way that puts their own health, safety or well-being at risk.

It is an extreme lack of self-care that is often related to deteriorating health and ability in older age, poor mental health, or other issues such as addictions, however not everyone who self-neglects needs to be safeguarded.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. People who self-neglect will often decline help from others.

There are limitations to what help can be offered if the adult has mental capacity to make their own decisions about how they live, even if they may suffer significant harm or death as a result of their own action or inaction.

Any action taken should seek to minimise any risks while respecting the person's choices, trying to engage with the person to offer as much support as possible without causing distress.

It is important to all efforts to engage with and support the person are clearly recorded.

Self-neglect can include:

- Neglecting to care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings to the extent that it threatens personal health and safety.
- Inability to avoid self-harm
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs
- Behaviours such as hoarding.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Very poor personal hygiene
- Unkempt appearance
- Lack of essential food, clothing or shelter
- Malnutrition and/or dehydration
- Living in squalid or unsanitary conditions
- Neglecting household maintenance
- Hoarding
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions
- Non-compliance with health or care services
- Inability or unwillingness to take medication or treat illness or injury

Modern slavery

Modern slavery (or Human Trafficking) is the recruitment, movement, and holding of a person by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploitation or abuse.

Victims of human trafficking can be male or female, children or adults, and may come from migrant or indigenous communities.

Modern slavery is different from illegal immigration as people who are trafficked are tricked, coerced, lured or forced by criminals to work for them or others in their criminal networks around the world.

People are forced into and held by threats of violence and intimidation against them or their family, fear, debt bondage, isolation and the removal of identification or travel documents, or imprisonment and torture.

Children living in the UK can also be targeted and trafficked internally.

Modern slavery can include:

- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation such as prostitution and pornography
- Bonded labour (forcing someone to pay a debt that can't be paid).
- Criminal activity
- [Private fostering](#)
- [Forced marriage](#)

Possible signs and indicators:

- Signs of physical abuse or emotional abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Isolation from the community
- Seeming under the control or influence of others
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is when a person is treated unfairly, bullied, or abused because of a particular characteristic.

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

These are called protected characteristics.

Discriminatory abuse links to other forms of abuse and may have similar effects e.g. Physical abuse motivated by racism would be classified as Discriminatory abuse.

Discriminatory abuse can include:

- Unequal treatment
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Physical abuse and emotional abuse
- Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader
- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic
- Substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic

Hate crime

Hate crime is any incident which constitutes a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hate towards a person's actual or perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion or gender identity.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Signs of distress, tearfulness, anger or anxiety
- The person appears withdrawn and isolated
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic

Organisational abuse

Organisational abuse (or Institutional abuse) is when a person is abused or mistreated within an institution such as a care home or hospital, or by an organisation providing care in the person's own home.

It can include one-off incidents or long-term mistreatment, and can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of inadequate resources, structures, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

The abuse may happen because of a culture that denies or restricts privacy, dignity, choice and independence, and involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services, and to ensure that the necessary preventative and protective measures are in place.

Organisational abuse can include:

- A run-down or overcrowded environment
- Insufficient staff or high staff turnover resulting in poor quality care
- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Not offering choice or promoting independence.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Signs of neglect
- Inadequate staffing levels
- Poor standards of care
- Lack of adequate procedures
- Absence of visitors
- Few social, recreational and educational activities
- Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet
- Lack of management overview and support
- Signs of physical or emotional abuse

1. How to respond to causes of concern and disclosures

Part 1: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare
 (for use by any staff/volunteers– This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)^{1, 2, 3}

Child/Adult's name (subject of concern):	Date of birth/age: Child/Adult:	Address:
Date & time of incident:	Date & time (of writing):	
Your Name (print): Role/Job title:		
Signature:		
Other members of the household ⁴ :		

Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>	
How did the concern come to light?	
What is the child/adult saying about what has happened ⁴ ?	
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc.	
Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Co-ordinator ⁵ : _____	

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your Safeguarding Coordinator without delay

Guidance notes for Form 1 (volunteers/staff only):

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form:

1. As a registered body the church/charitable organisation is required to ensure that its duty of care towards its beneficiaries is carried out in line with the principles enshrined within the Working together to safeguard children and young people, 2018 and the Care Act, 2014. (Refer to your own church's/organisation's safeguarding policy at this point too).
2. Essential principles of recording the information received/disclosed/observed:
 - a. Remember: do not investigate or ask any leading questions

- b. make notes within the first one hour of receiving the disclosure or observing the incident
 - c. be clear and factual in your recording of the incident or disclosure
 - d. avoid giving your opinion or feelings on the matter
 - e. aim to record using the 4 W's and 1 H: When, where, what, why and how
 - f. do not share this information with anyone else except your safeguarding co-ordinator in the first instance and they will advise on who else will need to be informed, how and when.
 - g. make use of the additional information section to add any other relevant information regarding the child/adult/ family that you may be aware of. This can include any historic concerns or observations.
3. ***What constitutes a safeguarding concern?*** – any incident that has caused or likely to cause significant harm to a child can be classed as a safeguarding concern. Abuse is classified under four different categories (with regards to children) as already stated within the safeguarding policy (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). With regards to adults there are 6 further categorisations. Whilst it may be helpful to record a specific category in the above form, if possible, this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is important to seek advice from your safeguarding co-ordinator or thirtyone:eight at this stage.
4. ***Why do you need information regarding 'other household members'?*** – It has been demonstrated as important to include information about significant adults in the household especially when concerns relate to children as this has been a recurrent risk factor in several serious case reviews.
5. ***Why is the view of the child/adult significant?*** It is important to give whatever detail is available of the child or adult's explanation (or verbatim) of the matter to help ascertain if it is plausible and to help offer a context to the concern identified.
6. ***Passing information to the Safeguarding co-ordinator*** – Your safeguarding co-ordinator holds ultimate responsibility in responding to any safeguarding concerns within the church/organisation and therefore it is important that they have oversight of the actions being taken and make relevant and appropriate contact with statutory agencies if required. They will remain the most appropriate link between the organisation and external agencies.



Appendix 3

Signposting for further help and support

List of Helpline phone numbers and websites.

ChildLine If you are concerned about yourself or a child in your family you can call for confidential, free support. **Tel:** 0800 1111

NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/nspcc-helpline/> 0800 800 5000

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline confidential, free helpline for anyone affected by domestic abuse, Mon-Fri 9am-9pm, Weekends 9am-4pm. **Tel:** 08 088 088 088
<https://www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org/>

Families First offer support to the whole family through a variety of organisations. **Web:** www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst

HPFT Single Point of Access (SPA) take referrals for NHS mental health services **Tel:** 0300 777 0707 (8am-7pm)

Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre- Beacon. Staffed by professionals from both Hertfordshire Constabulary and Catch-22, an independent organization commissioned to support victims of crime in Hertfordshire. **Tel:** 03000 11 55 55 email: info@hertfordshirebeacon.org

For a comprehensive list of other support organisations see:
www.hpft.nhs.uk/spot-the-signs
<https://eastherts.hertsfrontline.org.uk/library>



Appendix 4

Online Safety Policy Acceptable use Policy

Model Safety Policy

Model Supplementary Online Safety Policy for churches/places of worship/Christian organisations including an Acceptable Use Policy.

(To be read in conjunction with the Thirtyone:eight Online Safety Help Leaflet and incorporated within the main church/organisation safeguarding policy. Where churches have specific social media groups set up we advise that you tailor the relevant section to include the name/s of the group and named administrators. Any relevant policies should be attached to the acceptable use policy.)

When responding to concerns of abuse please refer to our 'Online Safety Flowchart' which can be downloaded separately.

Thirtyone:eight Online Safety definition:

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information and Communications Technology. An online safety policy should be adopted and adapted to reflect all communications between church/organisation's workers and children (those under 18 years of age).

Policy guidelines for Church Workers/Volunteers

- Generally, maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal.
- Be warm and friendly, but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share; don't abbreviate or short-cut your communications.
- Be circumspect in your communications with children to avoid any possible misinterpretation of your motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- Do not share any personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.
- Only give personal contact details to children that are within the public domain of the church / organisation, including your mobile telephone number.
- If children want you to have their mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses or similar, and communicate with them this way, make sure that their parents know and have agreed.
- Only make contact with children for reasons related to the work of the church/organisation and maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.

- Where possible only use equipment provided by the church/organisation to communicate with children.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.

- Ensure your church/organisation domain name/logo appears with every Internet post made by a church computer user. Any user may thus be viewed as a representative of your church/organisation while conducting business on the Internet.
- Email should only be used to communicate specific information. (e.g. times and dates of events). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Email History should be kept and dated.
- When using email/internet for communication with children, it is advised that it should take place between the hours of 9am-5pm. Where working with children outside normal office hours workers should seek advice from their leader but there should be no email communication after 9pm.
- Use of skype and any other web camera or visual communication via the internet is generally not permitted.
- Workers should refrain from using such methods on a one to one basis as they cannot be recorded. (It can be used for conference calls and is considered appropriate if a project or group uses a web camera/Skype in a group environment for project purposes, and has clear aims and objectives for its use).

Social Media Policy

- All social media interaction between workers, paid or voluntary, and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administrated groups.
- Text and any other media posted shall be subject to the acceptable use policy
- All interaction on social media groups shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Any private messages shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media shall be referred onto the safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit i.e. 13 for Facebook
- Workers should ensure their privacy setting ensure the highest levels of security in order to restrict children being able to see any more than what is relevant to communication within the group
- All social media groups should provide links to statutory authorities such as CEOP, to enable children to report online abuse.

Consent for photographic images and videos online

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will endeavour to prevent children from being easily identified.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Permission will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and images will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought for and how the image will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.

- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved permission should be sought in line with the photographic guidelines.

Acceptable Use Policy (This can be included with consent/registration forms for children and young people with a request for acknowledgement by both parent and child)

- Where access to the internet is provided on our organisation devices or devices owned by an individual via WiFi, we will exercise our right to monitor usage which includes access to websites, interception and deletion of inappropriate or criminal material or unlawfully copied text, video, images or sound.
- WiFi Access will be via a secure password that will be changed quarterly.
- Social media groups must be used in compliance with **(insert church name)'s** policy on social media.

Children and Workers should not:

- Search for or download pornographic, racist or hate motivated content.
- Illegally copy or play copyrighted content where permission has not been given.
- Send, request or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Harass, insult or bully others.
- Access the internet using another person's login details.
- Access, download, send or receive any data (including images), which **(insert church name)** considers offensive in any way, including sexually explicit, discriminatory, defamatory or libellous material.

Sanctions for violating the acceptable use policy in the opinion of **(insert church name) may result in:**

- A temporary or permanent ban on internet use.
- Additional disciplinary action in line with existing practice on inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.

Parent Carer Agreement

As the parent/guardian of _____ I declare that I have read and understood the Online Safety acceptable use policy for **(insert church name)** and that my child will be held accountable for their own actions. I understand that it is my responsibility to set standards for my child when selecting, sharing and exploring online information and media.

Child/YP Agreement

I understand the importance of safety online and the church guidelines on acceptable use.

I will share any concerns, where I or another person may be at risk of harm with the safeguarding coordinator or a trusted adult.

Child Name (Please print)	Child Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian (Please print)	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date