

# **Hope Church Lytham Safeguarding Policy**

**Last updated July 2024**

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# **Hope Church Lytham**

## **Safeguarding Policy**

Persons responsible for this policy:

Ruth Filmer, Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Pastor, Hope Church Lytham.

Gill Buckle, Safeguarding Deputy, Hope Church Lytham.

**Date Reviewed: June 2024**

**Next Review: June 2025**

### **Literature base:**

Thirtyone:eight Model Safeguarding Policy - thirtyone:eight 2019. (formerly CCPAS)

## Section 1 - Details of our Organisation

Name of Place of Worship:	Hope Church Lytham
Address:	10 Preston Road Lytham Lancashire FY8 5AA
Email address:	hello@hopechurchlytham.com
Senior Leader:	John Filmer
Contact Telephone:	07841 644482
Email:	john@hopechurchlytham.com
Safeguarding Coordinator:	Ruth Filmer
Contact Telephone:	07792 583364
Email:	ruth@hopechurchlytham.com
Membership of Organisation:	Assemblies of God
Charity Number:	1051831

We are a small family-oriented church with a children's ministry, youth ministry and adult discipleship. We meet on Sunday mornings which includes Sunday School and youth provision and have weekly meetings such as life group, Alpha meetings, coffee morning, and have previously had a youth group and baby & toddler group. We have a community outreach to those most in need of furniture and beds etc in our community (Forget-Me-Notts Fylde). And more recently a Sing-a-long group for Dementia patients and their carers and a mental health course for young people (Kardia Course). See appendix 1.I for more information.

### 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 to 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 building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

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.
- 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 2 - Prevention**

### **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

We all have a part to play in preventing abuse and maltreatment or responding appropriately to it when it comes to our attention.

Hope Church Lytham will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all children, young people and adults at risk by:

- Supporting any child, young person or adult at risk who has been abused by cooperating with other professionals
- Never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination
- We will ensure that our staffing ratios are adequate at all times (Appendix 1d)

### **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.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy. (See Section 4 and Appendix 2 & 3)

### **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:

- Providing a written job description / person specification for the post (employed workers)
- Discussing safeguarding at interview and once employment commences (employed workers)
- Checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by following guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (all workers)
- Formulating an induction policy for new staff and volunteers, including receiving a copy of the safeguarding policy (all workers)

### **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 (through SHAPE application / interview and continued support in new role) and undertake safeguarding training.

The leaders of Hope Church Lytham will:

- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator has undergone suitable training and that it is refreshed every 2 years.
- Arrange Safeguarding training (every 2 years – level 1) and an annual refresher for all staff and volunteers.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding issues and equip children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe (Safeguarding Sunday).

### **Section 3 – Practice Guidelines**

As a 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 accusations.

We have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in, and these can be found in Appendix 1. All workers should read these carefully.

#### **Duty of Care**

The Children Act 2004 (England) places a duty on organisations involved in providing services for children and young people to safeguard and promote their well-being. This means all workers should treat those they are caring for with respect and dignity as well as demonstrate competence and integrity.

The duty of care is in part exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships but also by workers taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those they have responsibility for, particularly in relation to sexual, physical and emotional abuse.

In addition, under Health and Safety at Work legislation, organisations have a duty of care towards the well-being of all workers and to ensure they are treated fairly.

#### **Positions of Trust**

All adults working with children, young people and adults at risk are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital workers ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately.

Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child (under the age of 18) is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, this should be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The trusting relationship between worker and child, young person or adult at risk means the worker should never:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

#### **Anti-bullying Practice**

Hope Church Lytham operates a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

Whilst the child or adult being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour.

Some common forms of bullying can be:

- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails, text messaging
- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual: sexually abusive comments or gestures
- Racial: any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences
- Homophobic: any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended
- Online bullying (or Cyber-Bullying) is an increasing issue with the growth in the use of the Internet and social media by children

### **Working in Partnership**

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 in regard 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, as part of the letting agreement, 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.

### **Whistleblowing policy**

As a place of worship, we will follow the principles contained in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Therefore, we expect that all employees (paid or voluntary) will report improper actions and omissions. Whilst all malpractice and acts of discrimination will be investigated, it is especially important that suspicions of abuse are immediately reported to the safeguarding co-ordinator.



## **Section 4 – Responding to Allegations of Abuse**

### **Four Important points**

1. Make sure you know who to report to. In the first instance this is Ruth Filmer, Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
2. Understand the importance of timescales for reporting. The most urgent situations are when a person has been injured (or indicates they have been injured) or if they are frightened to return to the family home. All reports should be made on the same day as the allegation.
3. Understand confidentiality and know who not to tell. Even if the allegation is difficult to believe or is about someone with a good reputation, parents, family members - those who are implicated in the allegation **MUST NOT** be contacted at this stage.
4. Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

### **Documenting a Concern**

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

- **Matters concerning a child under 18 years of age:**

If a child discloses an allegation or incident of abuse, use a pink form and fill in the details immediately (Appendix 4).

If a pink form is not available, write down as much detail as you can using the child's own words. Well-kept records are essential, they should state who was present at the time of the alleged abuse, time, date and place. They should use the child's words whenever possible and be factual. This should be completed in pen. Do not share the information with anyone other than the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. There are more guidelines in Appendix 3.

Immediately report the concern to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

- **Matters concerning an adult at risk or disclosure from an adult:**

Report the concern to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. There are any number of possible situations that could be being reported so it is best to seek advice from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator on how to move forward. If you cannot get hold of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or deputy then call thirtyone:eight for advice.

If the adult is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

Remember – it is not the job of an organisation such as a church or charity to undertake investigations in order to decide whether the information shared is correct. Our job is to gather it, and record it with as much clarity as is reasonably possible (i.e. ascertaining basic facts) and to share it with statutory agencies such as the police or Children's/Adults services. The legal responsibility for undertaking investigations relating to safeguarding concerns rests with the statutory agencies.

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

**Name: Ruth Filmer** (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

**Tel: 07792 583364**

**Email: [ruth@hopechurchlytham.com](mailto:ruth@hopechurchlytham.com) or [safeguarding@hopechurchlytham.com](mailto:safeguarding@hopechurchlytham.com)**

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 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: John Filmer** (Deputy)

**Tel: 07841 644482**

**Email: [john@hopechurchlytham.com](mailto:john@hopechurchlytham.com)**

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.

[helpline@thirtyoneeight.org](mailto:helpline@thirtyoneeight.org)

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.

Name of local authority: Lancashire County Council

Children's Social Services

Tel: 0300 123 6720

Out of hours Tel: 0300 123 6722

Website Address:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/>

Adult Social Services

Tel: 0300 123 6721

Out of hours Tel: 0300 123 6722

Website Address:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/safeguarding-adults/>

**If urgent, call the Police on 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.

Suspensions 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 referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy in their roles 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, although the Leadership hope that members of Hope Church Lytham will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrates 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 directly 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 Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team directly. 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:**

**Suspensions 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 the 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, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim 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 regards to the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to a designated officer or 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 to 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 5 – Pastoral Care

### Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of Hope Church Lytham.

### Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending Hope Church Lytham is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer 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 an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

**Reviews:** This policy was amended on behalf of the Leadership as follows:

Date	Reviewed by	Amendments made
01/05/2019	L Roberts	Review of policy and team trained. Updates to DSL information and contact numbers following Mr Shaw's departure from office.
19/10/2020	RE Filmer	Move from 'vulnerable' to 'adults at risk.' Policy checked against thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.
06/10/2021	RE Filmer	Policy reviewed – whistleblowing policy added on recommendation of thirtyone:eight
20/06/2022	RE Filmer	Policy reviewed – definition of 'grooming' added to appendix 2.
14/07/2023	RE Filmer	Policy reviewed – clarity around training (section 2) and child: adult ratios (Appendix 1d) added.
02/07/2024	RE Filmer	<b>Safeguarding Co-ordinator training (31.8) – 23/01/2024 (Ruth)</b> <b>Safeguarding for Trustees training (31.8) – 13/01/2024 (John)</b> <b>Volunteer training – 23/05/2024</b> <b>Policy reviewed – 02/07/2024</b> Pg 4 – Added Kardia and Dementia sing-along group Pg 10 – Email addresses added for safeguarding and 31.8 Pg 30 – New section added for Hope Church Ministries Pg 32 – Definition of spiritual abuse added

**This policy was agreed on behalf of the Leadership and Trustee's by:**

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **Appendix 1 – Practice Guidelines**

### **a) Registration and Consent**

Groups and trips should not be organised without the express permission of the Church Leaders.

All children and young people should fill in a registration form before joining a group (Ask Ruth if you require registration forms). Consent forms should be given to children before taking part in activities and trips with the appropriate advice for parents/carers included in its information.

Information should be sought as to any allergies, medical information and special requirements the child may have (See Consent Form on next page).

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations have to be extra vigilant should they wish to take photographs or film footage of people and must take care as to how those images are used. Certain legal protocols must be followed to safeguard children and young people:

- Permission must be obtained in writing before a photograph is taken or film footage is recorded.
- When using photographs of young people use group pictures and never identify them by name or give other personal details.
- Written permission from a parent/carers must be obtained before using images on any publicity whether it be online or on publications.



**Example Consent Form** ( [\\*edit for use](#))

Event\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Time\_\_\_\_\_

Venue\_\_\_\_\_

Full name of child\_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian full name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact number\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

Does your child suffer from any illness or have any special needs which we need to be aware of including allergies and ongoing medication?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact name\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child\_\_\_\_\_

Contact number\_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor\_\_\_\_\_

Doctors Surgery number\_\_\_\_\_

**In the event of an emergency, if I cannot be contacted, if to delay is against medical advice and permission to treat is required I hereby *authorise the designated leader to act on my behalf.***

Signature of parent/ carer\_\_\_\_\_

Print name\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**b) Transportation**

Drivers and vehicles must comply with all aspects of the applicable sections of the current Road Traffic Act. Drivers must have an appropriate driving licence and insurance and comply with the law in relation to seat belts, child seats and booster seats. Further information can be found here: [www.gov.uk/highway-code](http://www.gov.uk/highway-code)

Transporting children, young people or adults at risk on behalf of the church is a regulated activity and DBS registration is required. Drivers should also complete an Approved Driver Form.

When transporting children there should always be two adults present (preferably a male and a female leader) and a minimum of 2 children. Written consent from a parent/carer must be obtained (see next page for example form). Workers should not drive young people or children home alone and the child/ young person should sit in the rear of the vehicle with appropriate safety harness.

**Example Form for Transport.** (\*edit for use)

Child's Full Name

Date of Birth

Address

Contact numbers of parent/carer

I give permission for my child to be transported via minibus or car  
to/from \_\_\_\_\_

---

I am aware that s/he will be required to wear a seatbelt and that s/he will need to follow the acceptable behaviour rules of the group at all times.

All drivers will hold a current driving licence and are insured to drive. All adults hold a current DBS check and will be chaperoned.

I acknowledge that there must be a parent/carer present at the drop off point at the designated time: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:

Date:

**c) Unaccompanied Children and young people under 18**

On occasions children playing or passing by organised church activities without an adult may want to take part in church activities. If this occurs the following steps should be taken:

On arrival the child should be welcomed by the Leader however, due to Health and Safety requirements the child should be made aware that s/he will be unable to attend the group until the appropriate forms have been filled in and signed by a parent/carer.

The visiting child should be given registration forms with a leaflet/ information about the activities with contact numbers to pass on to their parent/carer enabling them to contact the Leader.

The child should then be sent home and encouraged to pass on the information, should the child live locally they may return the forms and join in the activity on the same day. A courtesy call should be made to the parents to introduce yourself to them.

The child's name should be added to the register only when all forms are completed and they are attending the activity.

The child should be introduced to other children and made aware of acceptable behaviour rules for the group/activity.

#### **d) Adult to Child Ratios**

NSPCC Guidance -

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors. We've put together some best practice guidance to help other organisations work out how many adults are needed to supervise children safely.

We recommend having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- 0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
- 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
- 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
- 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
- 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children

Depending on the needs and abilities of the children, and the nature of the activity, you may need to have more adults than the minimum.

We recommend having at least two adults present, even with smaller groups.

If young people are helping to supervise younger children only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children#article-top> Accessed 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023

At Hope Church Lytham we will adhere to the ratios, however we can be more relaxed when parents are on site, as long as the children's leader feels able to manage. If numbers become consistently high, we will change the way we do Sunday children's groups.

**e) Working with Children, Young People and Adults with Special Needs**

Some children, young people and adults will need extra help to feel fully included in the life of the church, group or activity.

The registration form that is filled out by all children prior to taking part in any group or activity will help to identify any additional/special needs a child may have. Workers should be aware that any child or young person attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need additional help in areas such as communication, mobility, or personal care. Children may have developmental delay or may be suffering from conditions or syndromes, or sensitivity disorders which will require individual plans to be put into place to allow the child to participate as fully as possible whilst maintaining independence and dignity.

Once a special need has been identified the Team Leader should approach the parent/carer for a discussion around any support that could be put into place for the child/young person. This should be noted on a Health Care Plan ensuring all workers involved with the child or young person are fully aware of what is expected of them. Ensure that a worker of the same gender is able to assist with toileting should they need this.

The Team Leader along with the designated Health and Safety officer and Senior Leadership will identify how to make the meeting place of the group accessible and safe (e.g. ramps, hearing loop, toilet access). They will also identify and arrange appropriate training where possible for staff.

**f) Personal Care**

Every child and adult at risk is entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity. The level of personal care must be appropriate to and related to the age of the child or adult whilst also acknowledging that some children and adults have additional special needs.

**For young children:**

One children's worker should accompany a minimum of 2 children to the toilet and should wait outside the toilet room. Whilst children are inside, the children should be encouraged to close but not lock the cubicle door.

If a child is unable to manage a zip, button or belt the children's worker can assist with the child's permission but this should be done outside of the cubicle space with the toilet room door open and with at least one other child in the room.

Workers/volunteers under the age of 16 years or any occasional volunteer without a DBS check in place should not accompany a child to the toilet.

If the child is unable to go to the toilet unassisted then it is the parent's responsibility to take the child to the toilet. The parent/carer should be called upon if this happens during a session/activity.

If the baby/toddler is still in nappies then the parent should be called upon to change the nappy: leaders/workers should not change nappies.

**For children, young people and adults with Additional Needs:**

We recognise that all children, young people and adults at risk should have the opportunity to be included as much as possible in all sessions and activities. Should they have a toileting issue or need additional support when changing, a separate Health Care Plan should be put into place and agreed upon by Senior Leadership with the parent/carer. This will need to be recorded on a written form.

**g) First Aid Form**

If First Aid is required, please complete a copy of the form below. First Aid should ideally be given by a trained First Aider.

Name of Injured Person:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Type of injury:

Area of body:

Treatment used:

First Aider name:

First Aider signature:

Witnessed by:

Parent/guardian signature if required:

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Follow up:

Hospital visit? Yes/ No

Details:

Leadership informed? Yes/No

Details:



### **h) Guidelines for Discipline**

Working with children and young people is a rewarding ministry. We want all our workers to enjoy the time they spend in our children's and youth ministry, and we want our children and young people to develop a Christian faith which will mature into adulthood.

However, working in this field does present its challenges. These guidelines offer assistance in how to respond to such challenges.

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement.

Discipline brings security, produces character and prepares for life. It is evidence of love and is God's heart.

#### **The Do's and Don'ts of discipline in children's and youth work and in working with adults at risk:**

- **Never** smack or hit a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Discipline out of love never anger, call on the support of another children's worker if you feel you may deal with the situation reactively rather than responsively.
- Do not shout or put down a young person.
- Lay down ground rules, have a code of conduct and make it clear.
- Make sure children and young people are aware of the consequences of not following the rules.
- Never reject a child, just the behaviour that is causing the offence, for example say, "The behaviour you have displayed is unacceptable." "You made a wrong choice, but I know you can turn this around."
- Ask yourself why! Why is the child behaving this way? Is there a situation, circumstance, or additional need?
- Work on each individual child, young person or adult's positives, catch them being good and praise them for that - encourage and build them up.

#### **Responding to inappropriate behaviour:**

1. A quiet word with the individual to encourage them to make the right choice.
2. Verbal warning to change the way they are behaving.
3. Separate any children, young people or adults who are being disruptive or encouraging the offensive behaviour.
4. Praise others for doing the right thing.
5. Time out - ask the individual to take a minute or two away from the activity to calm down and think about their behaviour - this should be at the side of the room, in sight of the team and only for up to 5 minutes for children.
6. If the behaviour continues, tell the child or young person that you are referring them to the Team Leader who will then speak to the parent/carer.
7. If regular inappropriate behaviour occurs or a serious breach of discipline has taken place then the Team Leader should contact parents/ carers as soon as possible and discuss the way forward with them, regular behavioural issues from the same child should be noted as a cause for concern on an Incident Form.
8. Removal of the child or young person from the group for the day/session.

**\*Periods of exclusion or permanent exclusion with parental/ carer knowledge should only be used when all other options have been exhausted and only after discussions with Senior Leadership.**

### **i) Communication**

Social Media and Electronic communication:

Social media and electronic communication covers networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter (X), and messaging applications including email, WhatsApp, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime and Snapchat. This list is not exhaustive and new forms of electronic communication are added daily.

The overriding priority is that the leader remains accountable in every communication sent to young people:

Twitter (X) / Instagram: These are open forums and should not be used for contacting young people or posting information about an event specifically aimed at children and/or young people.

Facebook: Young people under the age of 13 years old should not have a Facebook account. If you discover an under 13 who has, you should challenge the parents, not the young person. You can also report the account anonymously via Facebook. Any contact with a young person via Facebook should be via a group page and another leader should be linked into the conversation.

Friend requests must not be sent to young people; if a request is sent to you, you should consult the young person's parent/carer for permission and talk to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator before accepting it.

Inbox messaging should not be done on an individual one to one basis; always copy another leader into your messages or use a group page.

As Christian leaders we have a constant responsibility to ensure that posts on our profile are never those which would bring the Christian Faith, the Church or ourselves into disrepute. This is regardless of whether it is visible to the young people in our care or not. This includes pages we 'like' and the comments and photographs/videos we post. If 'friends' post inappropriate items which appear on your timeline or that you are tagged in they should be hidden and deleted as soon as possible.

Email: Email should only be used to communicate details of an event or activity and not for one-to-one conversations. Send to the whole group and copy another leader into the mail. Similarly, if you receive a personal email, always copy another leader into the reply.

Chat and Personal Messaging apps (eg WhatsApp): Like email these should not be used for personal chat. If a young person sends you a personal message, you should forward it to another leader and copy them into the reply. All messaging should be given in a group context and good boundaries need to be in place such as only messaging between certain times of the day.

One-to-one messaging: Only those trained in pastoral care should have one-to-one communication with young people or adults at risk and only after this has been approved by the Senior Leadership.

**j) Guidance on Touch**

Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.

Touch should be related to the child, young person or vulnerable adult's needs, not the worker's needs.

Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, young person or vulnerable adult, rather than the worker.

Avoid any physical activity that may be sexually stimulating.

All children, young people and vulnerable adults are entitled to personal privacy and the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in circumstances such as a medical emergency.

When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc.), encourage the child, young person or vulnerable adult to do what they can themselves but, in their best interests giving appropriate help where necessary.

Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

**k) Giving Gifts**

It is recognised that there are occasions when gifts or rewards will be given to young people for example Christmas, birthdays or to reward particularly good effort or behaviour. The overriding principle is that these gifts are given on behalf of the church via the particular group and not from the individual leader. This is particularly important when the gift is given to an individual young person rather than to the whole group and such presentations must always be made in public or group settings. The following guidelines apply when choosing the item to give:

- The item should be one which encourages or supports the Christian Faith of the recipient.
- The item should be age appropriate.
- The item will not contain language or imagery which is or could be interpreted as attitudes which are contrary to a Christian lifestyle.

## **I) Hope Church Ministries**

It is recognised that there are three groups that run under the banner of Hope Church Lytham where good safeguarding practice is essential. These are the Dementia Sing-along group, the Forget-Me-Notts Fylde Coast project and the Kardia mental health course. There are specific notes on each of these below:

### **Dementia Sing-along group**

The Dementia sing-along group is run by volunteers who undergo safeguarding training bi-annually at the same time as other church teams. The volunteers must never be left alone with dementia patients. The carers also attend the group so it is the carers who hold responsibility for those suffering the effects of dementia. However, we recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and the group volunteers must know what to look for in terms of abuse and how to get in contact with the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator if they have any concerns.

### **Forget-Me-Notts Fylde Coast**

The FMN team go into the houses of vulnerable people to deliver furniture, specifically into bedrooms. The FMN volunteers are always met at the house by a social worker who is on site at all times. FMN volunteers should never be in a room alone with a resident. There should be at least two volunteers on every referral and at least one of these must be DBS checked. All team members must undergo bi-annual safeguarding training at the same time as other church teams. If there are any safeguarding issues at a person's home, these will be discussed with the social worker on site and do not need to be referred to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator at Hope Church.

### **Kardia Course**

The Kardia course accepts young people through referral forms only, which acts as a consent form from the parent or guardian giving permission to attend the course. There are always two adults present, one of these will be the facilitator. Facilitators are DBS checked. The volunteer helper should also be DBS checked but if this is in progress, they will not be left alone with the young people at any time.

If abuse is disclosed to the facilitator or helper, they will follow the guidelines already laid out in this policy by writing down as much detail as possible in the victim's own words and passing the information on to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator.

## **Appendix 2 – Definitions of Abuse**

The following guidance is based on the categories of abuse in the Care Act 2014:

Abuse and neglect can take many forms. Organisations and individuals should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect and should always consider the circumstances of the individual case.

Abuse includes:

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Sexual abuse – including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Modern Slavery – Modern slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal/ commercial gain and involves victims being trapped in servitude they were deceived or coerced into. Human Trafficking involves men, women and children being brought into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will. People can be trafficked for many different forms of exploitation such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced begging, forced criminality, domestic servitude, forced marriage, and forced organ removal. When children are trafficked, no violence, deception or coercion needs to be involved: simply bringing them into exploitative conditions constitutes trafficking.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, exploitation, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-Neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or environment and includes behaviour such as hoarding. It is important to consider capacity when self-neglect is suspected. Also consider how it may impact on other family members and whether this gives rise to a safeguarding concern.

Domestic Violence – It is abuse if a partner, ex-partner or a family member:

- Threatens/frightens an individual
- Shoves or pushes an individual
- Makes an individual fear for their physical safety
- Puts an individual down, or attempts to undermine their self-esteem
- Controls an individual, for example by stopping them seeing friends and family
- Is jealous and possessive, such as being suspicious of friendships and conversations

Discriminatory abuse – including discrimination on grounds of race, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting like a hospital or care home, e.g. this may range from isolated incidents to continuing ill-treatment.

**Source:** <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>

Grooming – when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.

Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

[www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/) - accessed 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Spiritual abuse –

'Spiritual abuse would appear to be at least in part, adequately addressed by the range of categories of abuse that already exist in both safeguarding adults and children. It is also important to be clear to state that where abuse of any kind takes place, it will always have an emotional or psychological element to it.

Spiritual abuse is characterised by an ongoing, systematic pattern of coercive control within a religious context (Oakley, 2017). Key elements of this experience are manipulation, exploitation, control through the misuse and abuse of scripture and divine position, censorship of decision-making, pressure to conform, enforced accountability, requirement of obedience, and isolation (Oakley 2009, Oakley and Kinmond 2013).'

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/media/4upcux21/spiritual-abuse-position-statement.pdf> - accessed 20th May 2024



### **Appendix 3 – Extra Guidance for Reporting Disclosure of Abuse**

#### **Confidentiality:**

Never guarantee confidentiality to a child or adult at risk who discloses information to you, some kinds of information will need to be shared to keep them safe. Let the child or adult at risk know that you will keep them safe but may need to tell others who can help them:

*‘There are some secrets I can’t keep but I promise that if someone is hurting you or frightening you, I will help to keep you safe. I cannot do that on my own and will need to talk to ... about it.’*

#### **Talking and listening to children or adults at risk:**

If a person chooses to disclose, **you SHOULD:**

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at their pace.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell.
- Tell them you **MUST** pass the information on.
- Make a careful record of **EXACTLY** what was said in their own words.

#### **You should NEVER:**

- Take photographs or examine an injury.
- Investigate or probe, aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse - never ask leading questions.
- Make promises to children or adults at risk about confidentiality.
- Assume someone else will take the action.
- Confront a person or accuse anyone.
- Jump to conclusions or react with shock, threat or horror.
- Forget to record what you have been told.
- Ask a child or adult at risk to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

## Appendix 4 – Disclosure Form

\*This should be printed on pink paper\*

### Disclosure Form

#### 1. You (adult)

Your name.....

Date.....

#### 2. The Child

Name of Child .....

DOB .....

Parent/carer.....

#### 3. The Alleged Perpetrator

If the child has named or described the alleged perpetrator, note the details here:

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#### 4. The Disclosure

Record of conversation (use continuation sheet if necessary):

- Record what was said by the child and by you
- Use the exact words and phrases used by the child
- Clearly distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the child

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Did the child name witnesses? If so, note them here:

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Was anyone else present during the disclosure? If so, note them here:

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## 5. Consent to Share

Did the child provide consent for the information to be shared (please circle)?    Yes    No

If yes, what did the child say? Note the exact words used by the child

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If no, did you explain that you would have to share this information with the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator and who else might receive this information and why (please circle)?    Yes    No

If yes, what did the child say? Note the exact words used by the child

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## 6. Additional Information

Any other comments

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Signed

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Time and date .....

This form and any notes taken must be passed to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator (Ruth or John Filmer) as soon as possible and in any event no later than the end of the day.