

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

Church Details

Name of the church	Goodwood Evangelical Church (hereafter, "The Church")
Location	Gamel Rd, Leicester, LE5 6TB
Date of policy:	2015
Date of last review:	January 2023

1. Areas Of Policy

The Church Leaders have adopted the policy contained in this document, (hereafter "the policy"). The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- Responding to allegations of abuse of children and vulnerable adults, including those made against leaders or members of the church
- Appointing children's/youth workers
- Supervision of children's activities and practice issues

This policy has been discussed with all those who are involved in children's/youth work in the church.

Contact numbers

- The Leicester City Social Services office telephone number is 0116 454 1004 (24 hour service) (see online).
- The Leicestershire First Response Children's Duty Team can be contacted on 0116 305 0005 (see online).

2. Definitions of Child Abuse

2.1 Abuse and Neglect

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

2.2 Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy*.

2.3 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

2.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

2.5 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

2.6 Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

*Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy

The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry defines Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy as: *"A form of child abuse in which the parents, or carers, give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children."*

3. Recognising And Responding To Child Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

3.1 PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

3.2 INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

3.3 EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

4. What To Do If You Suspect That Child Abuse May Have Occurred

- 4.1 You must report concerns as soon as possible to the Social Services Dept (see the phone number in section 1). Knowledge of an allegation or suspicion of child abuse confers a responsibility on the part of any worker, whatever their role, to ensure that action is taken to investigate that allegation.
- 4.2 The church leaders expect to be informed of any suspicions of child abuse and certainly of any referral to social services, etc. They would be happy to discuss with you whether or not to make a referral before you do so.
- 4.3 Apart from informing the church leaders and social services, you should treat the matter as confidential and not discuss it with others in the church who do not need to know about it.

5. Allegations Of Child Physical Injury Or Neglect

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, you should

- 5.1 Contact Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury or where concerned about the child's safety. You do not have to ask permission from a child's parents to do this.
- 5.2 Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately. You should inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
- 5.3 In other circumstances speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child. The doctor, (or health visitor) will then initiate further action, if necessary
- 5.4 If appropriate the parent/carer will be encouraged to seek help from the Social Services Department.
- 5.5 Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, you could offer to go with them. If they still fail to act, you should, in cases of real concern, contact Social Services for advice.
- 5.6 Where you are unsure whether or not to refer a case to the Social Services, just phone them up and ask them if it's something they would be interested in.

6. Allegations Of Child Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the person in receipt of the allegations will:

- 6.1 Contact the Social Services duty social worker for children and families or Police Child Safeguarding Team directly. You do not have to ask the permission of the parents to do this.
- 6.2 Where you are unsure whether or not to refer a case to social services, it is a good idea to ring them and ask them if it's something they would be interested in.

- 6.3 Under no circumstances should you attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. Your role is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 6.4 The church leaders will support the individual in receipt of the allegations 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.

7. How To Respond To A Child Wanting To Talk About Abuse

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

7.1 GENERAL POINTS

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

7.2 HELPFUL THINGS YOU MAY SAY OR SHOW

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

7.3 DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"

7.4 CONCLUDING

- Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse)
- Contact the Church Leaders of your concerns or contact an agency such as CCPAS for advice or go directly to Social Services/Police/NSPCC
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed

7.5 Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you), writing down exactly what the child said and when s/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (eg a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

8. What To Do Once A Child Has Talked To You About Abuse:

The Procedure

- 8.1 Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down exactly what the child said, write what you said in reply to the child, when he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes securely, even if these have been typed subsequently. Use Form 10
- 8.2 Report your discussion as soon as possible to the Church Leaders. If any of the leaders are implicated it would not be advisable to talk to the individual(s) concerned.
- 8.3 Once a child has talked about abuse you should consider whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services and/or police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

9. Appointment Of Children Workers

In appointing Children's workers, the Church will be responsible for the following:

- 9.1 All prospective workers/volunteers will be given a copy of the Church's Safeguarding Policy, and will be asked to agree to adhere to the guidelines within it. They will also be asked to show a copy of their Disclosure and Barring Service form to the Safeguarding Protection coordinator (currently Stephen Taylor). If they do not possess one then, the church will show them how they can obtain one (for a small fee).

10. Arrangements For Supervision Of Group/Children's Activities

10.1 Introduction

Churches and groups often fail to provide guidelines in relation to and supervision of children and specific activity. It is easy to assume that everyone knows what is appropriate in the circumstances and is working to the same end. This is rarely the case when there is an absence of specific expectations. Clear guidance to protect children from abuse and workers from false accusation needs to be given to include matters dealt with in this section.

10.2 Child supervision: practical issues

- Ratio of adults to children. Number of adults who should be present for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. As a guide, it might be helpful to consider the ratios required in regulations governing day care for under 8's. The NSPCC publishes the following guidelines:
 - 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

Notes. These are suggested figures – you may not, in practice, be able to achieve the same standards as for registered activities, but we need to ensure sufficient adults for child supervision.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children#article-top> (accessed 4/1/23)

- If children/ young people of both sexes are present then it is preferable that male and female workers are present

- Where possible, ensure that a worker is not alone with a child, but be realistic in acknowledging circumstances when this might be necessary or helpful. Sometimes it might be advisable to leave doors open when seeing a child.
- Guidance on touch – eg physical contact between adults and children – can be quite healthy and acceptable in public places, but discouraged in circumstances where an adult/child is on his/her own.
- Workers should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- Respect the privacy of children, avoid questionable activity, eg rough/sexually provocative games and comments
- Arrangements for transporting children should be with the knowledge of the team/leadership and have parental approval.
- Parents should complete a registration form for each child attending a 'closed' church children's activity. This should include a clause explaining that the church has a Safeguarding Policy.

10.3 Safety matters for Children's activities

- Internal and external to the building, fixtures, fittings and equipment should meet adequate safety standards
- Outside play areas should be appropriately fenced with gates to prevent small children from straying from the premises and should meet safety requirement
- A First Aid kit is situated in a cupboard in the kitchen
- In an organised group activity one person should be nominated as responsible for First Aid. This means that they will make sure 999 is called if necessary and that any necessary First Aid is undertaken by them or others present.
- An Accident and Incident Book is located in the same place as the First Aid kit

10.4 Supporting/supervising children's workers

- It should be accepted that anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which could be misinterpreted should be able to speak to the individual or the supervisor about the concern
- Group leaders should regularly discuss any issues regarding the ongoing work.

11. Vulnerable Adults

As a church we come into contact with all kinds of people including adults who are vulnerable. We have a responsibility to recognise and report abuse to the appropriate authorities.

11.1 Who is an adult at risk of harm?

- An adult at risk of harm is defined as someone who may have needs for care and support, and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves.

11.2 What types of abuse are there?

There are several different types of abuse, including the following:

- Emotional abuse

This is when people say or do things to hurt other people's feelings, or shout at or threaten them. This could include name calling, bullying, swearing or treating someone like a child.

- **Physical abuse**
This is when someone hurts another person. This could include hitting, slapping, pushing or kicking someone, locking someone in a room or giving them the wrong medication.
- **Sexual abuse**
This is when someone touches another person's body or private parts in ways that they do not like or want, or makes them do sexual things that make them feel sad, angry or frightened.
- **Financial abuse**
This is when someone takes other people's money or belongings without asking them. This could include someone stealing or taking control of another person's money, making them pay for other people's things or taking other people's belongings.
- **Neglect**
This is when people who are there to help others do not look after them properly. This may result in them being hungry most of the time, not being kept safe, not getting the right medical help or not having clean clothes to wear. Some people may fail to look after themselves properly and this is known as self-neglect. This may include not taking care of their personal hygiene, health or surroundings and behaviours such as hoarding.
- **Discrimination**
This is when people treat others badly or unfairly because they are different to them. This could be harassment, insults or unfair treatment due to someone's race, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or age.
- **Organisational abuse**
This is where paid staff in organisations such as hospitals or care homes do not care for people properly or respect their rights. This can happen when people are shown a lack of dignity and respect and are denied choice. It can also happen when the organization does not have enough staff or resources and where there is a culture of bullying.
- **Domestic abuse**
This is where someone is abused by their partner or a member of their family. This could include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse or in some cases 'honour based' violence.
- **Modern slavery**
This is where someone is forced to work for people against their will. These people may also be cruel to them or abuse them, including human trafficking and forced labour.

11.3 Responding to abuse of vulnerable adults

The response is similar to that for child abuse (see section 4).

If you are worried about a vulnerable adult, you can contact:

Leicester City Social Services in one of these ways:

- Telephone: 0116 454 1004 (24 hr helpline)

Office address: Customer Services, 91 Granby Street, LE1 6FB

OR

Leicestershire Adult Social Care

- Telephone: 0116 305 0004 (Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm)

Emergency Duty Team

- Telephone: 0116 255 1606

(Evenings, weekends, Bank Holidays)

If a crime has taken place you can report to Leicestershire Police - via their website

www.leics.police.uk or - you can call 101

If it is an emergency, call 999

The church leaders expect to be informed of any suspicions of vulnerable adult abuse and certainly of any referral to social services, etc. They would be happy to discuss with you whether or not to make a referral before you do so.

Apart from informing the church leaders and social services, you should treat the matter as confidential and not discuss it with others in the church who do not need to know about it.

FORM 1 VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE FORM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

I have read the Church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to adhere to the guidelines within it.

Signed

Date

All those who seek to work with children are asked to complete this form (making a 'nil' return if appropriate), returning it in a separate sealed envelope to the Full-Time Elder, as below:

To: Stephen Taylor (name of 'Full-Time Elder)

Goodwood Evangelical Church
Gamel Road
Leicester

Voluntary Disclosure

I consent to a DBS check if I am to work with children in this church. I am aware that details of pending prosecutions, previous convictions, cautions, or bindovers against me will be disclosed along with any other relevant information which may be known to the police, Department of Health or the Department for Education.

Disclosures

Have you ever been charged with, cautioned or convicted in relation to any criminal offence; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations/pending prosecution?

- YES • NO (Please tick)

If YES please give details overleaf.

Signed: _____

Date

Print name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

FORM 10

Name of Church/Group _____

CONFIDENTIAL

**RESPONDING TO ABUSE –
WORKER’S ACTION SHEET**

Name of Child/Young Person/Vulnerable Adults:

Address _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____

Name of Person Reporting Event _____

Date ____/____/____ Time _____

Sequence of Events/Actual Words Used/Observations

Action Taken

Name of Person Contacted: _____

Date ____/____/____ Time _____

Notes:

