

# WALSWORTH ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH HITCHIN



## SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS:

#### Children and Young People

The term 'child or young person' refers to anyone under the age of 18 years.

#### Adult at Risk

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following simple definition taken from Thirtyone:eight (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service):

'Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation'.

#### Worker

The term "worker" refers to any paid staff or safely recruited volunteers who work with children or adults at risk.

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# SECTION 1 - SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT FOR WALSWORTH ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

## Our Mission

The mission statement of Walsworth Road Baptist Church is:

Sharing life together, showing love to all, because Jesus is good news today.

In fulfilling this mission, we:

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

## Our safeguarding responsibilities

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

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

- **Prevention and reporting of abuse**

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

- **Safer recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

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

- **Respecting children and adults at risk**

The church will adopt a Code of Conduct for all who are appointed to work with children and adults at risk so that all children and adults are shown the respect that is due to them (*This is available on the church website*).

- **Safer working practices**

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

- **A safer community**

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any individuals who may pose a risk to children, young people and adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

## Safeguarding contact points within our church

The church has appointed the following individuals to form part of the church safeguarding team:

### **AMANDA MAYLIN, Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)**

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

Phone number            07799 905997  
Email address            [safeguarding@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@wrbchitchin.org.uk)

### **HELEN BAINBRIDGE, Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding (DDPS)**

They will assist the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) in helping the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

Phone number            07754 836012  
Email address            [youthworker@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:youthworker@wrbchitchin.org.uk)

### **DIANA SELLER, Safeguarding Trustee**

They will raise the profile of safeguarding within the church and oversee and monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the church trustees.

Phone number            07793 056155  
Email address            [dianaseller@gmail.com](mailto:dianaseller@gmail.com)

Our Church Minister ([minister@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:minister@wrbchitchin.org.uk)) and Church Worker ([churchworker@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:churchworker@wrbchitchin.org.uk)) are also an important part of the Church Safeguarding Team. Where possible, the Church Safeguarding Team will work together if and when issues arise. However, each person has a responsibility to report allegations of abuse as soon as they are raised.

*Further definitions of these roles can be found in the BUGB publications 'Safe to Grow' (2011) & 'Safe to Belong' (2015), Model Safeguarding Policy & Procedures (Jan 2023) and BUGB Guide to role of DPS (2017 reviewed 2021).*

## Helpful numbers

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**  
**Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Team**  
01992 588757  
[admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**Police**  
Contact 101, or 999 in an emergency

**Adult Social Services**  
0300 123 4042 At anytime

**Children's Social Services**  
0300 123 4043 At anytime

**CBA Safeguarding Lead**  
**Gillian Jones**  
07729 688791  
[safeguarding@centralba.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@centralba.org.uk)

## Putting our policy into practice

- A copy of this safeguarding policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboards in the Richard Johnson Room, lower church hall and welcome area, and the full policy statement, procedures and best practice guidelines will be available on our church website and as a hard copy in the church office.
- Each worker with children and/or adults at risk will be given a copy of this safeguarding policy statement and relevant procedures/guidelines and will be asked to sign to confirm that they will follow them.
- The policy and procedures will follow the guidelines set out in BU 'Model Safeguarding Policy and Procedures' (Jan 2023).
- The policy, procedures and best practice guidelines will be monitored and reviewed annually, and any necessary revisions adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures.
- This policy will be reaffirmed annually at a church meeting (usually March), together with a report on the outcome of the annual safeguarding review.

## SECTION 2 - SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

These safeguarding procedures will set out how our safeguarding policy is implemented in all the services, groups and meetings that are part of the life of this church.

Each trustee, church leader and worker (paid or voluntary) needs to be familiar with these procedures, and it is strongly recommended that those in leadership roles complete both Level 2 and Level 3 BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training (delivered through the local Baptist association team) to ensure that they have the knowledge and confidence needed to deal with safeguarding issues as they arise.

## 2.1 PROCEDURE FOR RECOGNISING, RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ABUSE

### 2.1.1 What to do if Abuse is Suspected or Disclosed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a range of settings, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. There are many ways in which people suffer abuse. *(For more information, please see Appendix 1)*

Everyone has his or her part to play in helping to safeguard children and adults at risk within the life of the church:

- If the behaviour of a child or adult at risk gives any cause for concern
- If an allegation is made in any context about a child or adult at risk being harmed
- If the behaviour of any individual towards children or adults at risk causes concern

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

## 2.1.2 Responding to Concerns

When there are concerns that a child or adult is being abused, the following process must be followed. (More detailed information can be found in Appendix 2)

### STAGE 1 – The Worker

*A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child, adult at risk, or the behaviour of an individual.*

*The person who has the concern has a duty to:*

#### RECOGNISE, RESPOND AND RECORD

A record must be made of the concern, either handwritten or typed. If you have one, use a standard Record of Concern Report form (Appendix 3). If not write your report on any paper or device available to you. Either way pass your concerns to the church DPS within 24 hours. Do not delay because you do not have a record of concern report form available.

The written record should be linked to the 4W's: be made as soon as possible after the event; be legible; include the nature of any concerns and description of any bruising or injuries that have been noticed; include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible; include any action taken; be signed and dated; be kept secure and confidential (available only to the DPS and others responsible for safeguarding).

### STAGE 2 – The Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)

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

#### REVIEW AND REPORT

The report will be reviewed by the DPS with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. See Appendix 2 for examples of possible actions. Any formal referral to the police or Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report. The DPS will make the Regional Safeguarding Lead aware of any referrals to the statutory authorities.

### STAGE 3 – The Next Steps

*After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken, the DPS, Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister may have a duty to:*

#### SUPPORT AND REPORT

Pastoral support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns (this could be the church as a whole, but more specifically victims; alleged perpetrators; children; adults at risk; other family members; church workers; the DPS; Minister; members of the leadership team.

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

If the DPS is not available, or is implicated in the situation, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the church Safeguarding Team.

**If you think that anyone is in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999.**



### 2.1.3 Responding to Concerns Raised about Adults at Risk

When a concern is raised about an adult at risk it should be treated in the same way as a concern about a child ie the church worker should:

- 1) **Recognise** that abuse may be taking place
- 2) **Respond** to the concern
- 3) **Record** all the information they have received
- 4) **Report** the concern to the DPS who may, in turn, report it to the statutory authorities

It is not your role to decide whether someone has mental capacity and is therefore able to make decisions that impact on their safety and well-being. Decisions on mental capacity are best made by professionals with the relevant background information to hand. Always share your concerns with the DPS even if you do not have the consent of the adult to do so – in this instance, make sure the DPS knows that the person concerned has not given consent for the information to be passed on.

The Care Act 2014 provides helpful guidance on these situations:

*“If the adult has the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their safety and they do not want any action to be taken, this does not preclude the sharing of information with relevant professional colleagues. This is to enable professionals to assess the risk of harm and to be confident that the adult is not being unduly influenced, coerced or intimidated and is aware of all the options. This will also enable professionals to check the safety and validity of decisions made. It is good practice to inform the adult that this action is being taken unless doing so would increase the risk of harm”.*

The DPS will consider all the information to hand and decide whether it is appropriate for the information to be reported to the statutory authorities (*see Appendix 2 for further information*). If there are any concerns about an adult's mental capacity, the DPS will contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team for advice.

### 2.1.4 Allegations Against Workers

If you see another worker acting in ways which concern you or might be misconstrued, speak to the DPS about your concerns as soon as you can. This includes the actions or behaviours of those in leadership positions in the church.

Church workers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual accountability, holding each other to the highest standards of safeguarding practice. The following procedure should be followed:

- 1) When an allegation of abuse has been made do not approach the alleged perpetrator about it
- 2) Follow the usual safeguarding procedure: Recognise, Respond, Record, Report
- 3) Once the allegation has been reported to the DPS they can liaise with the relevant statutory authority
- 4) Whilst waiting for an outcome from the statutory authorities, the worker about whom concerns have been raised will be supervised as closely as possible, without raising suspicion
- 5) Once the statutory authorities are involved, the church will follow their advice with regard to the next steps to take (for example, suspension of worker, putting a contract in place)
- 6) A written record of all discussions with statutory authorities or other parties should be maintained by the DPS and stored securely and confidentially, where only those directly involved in safeguarding (DPS, Safeguarding Trustee, Minister) can access them.

7) No information about the allegation will be shared with people in the church other than those directly involved in safeguarding, not even for prayer purposes.

The suspension of a worker following an allegation is, by definition, a neutral act. Our priority as a church is to protect children and adults at risk from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator.

It may be necessary, for the sake of the child / adult at risk or to satisfy the needs of an investigation, for the alleged perpetrator to worship elsewhere. In such cases the new church DPS will be informed of the reasons for this happening.

### **When concerns are expressed about the Minister**

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

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

### **When concerns are expressed about the church DPS / Safeguarding Trustee**

Any safeguarding concerns involving the DPS or Safeguarding Trustee should be raised with the Minister. Do not tell the DPS / Safeguarding Trustee that a concern has been raised about them.

#### **2.1.5 Abuse of Trust**

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

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

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 expanded the list of roles which are legally considered to be positions of trust to include anyone who is in a teaching, coaching, instructing, training or supervising role within sport or religion. This means that since May 2022 if an adult of any age is in a role where they are working directly with young people aged 16 and 17 and forms a romantic or sexual relationship with them, they could be charged with criminal offences. If you have concerns about a relationship forming between an adult helper and a young person then you should notify the DPS.

#### **2.1.6 Allegations Made Against Children and Adults at Risk**

Children and young people are by nature curious about the opposite sex. However, where a child is in a position of power, has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abusive. Where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child, this is abusive. Such situations will be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

When such an instance occurs, they are investigated by the statutory authorities in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right, as they may have also been abused. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of this type of behaviour, as most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens or even younger.

Allegations against adults at risk will be investigated by the statutory authorities. If the alleged

perpetrator is unable to understand the significance of questions put to them or their replies, they can access support from an 'appropriate' adult whilst they are being questioned. This role can be filled by a range of people, such as a family member, carer, social worker, etc. In court, adults at risk may be allowed to be assisted by an intermediary or give evidence through a live link.

When an allegation is made against a child or adult at risk the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) Do not approach the person about whom the allegation has been made or their parents / carers
- 2) Follow the church's safeguarding procedure: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report**
- 3) Seek advice from the DPS, who will speak to the police or social services about when to inform a parent. The DPS will also seek advice about what steps need to be taken to ensure the needs of both the victim and alleged perpetrator are met; this may include placing the child or adult at risk on a Safeguarding Contract or equivalent (*see section 3.4: Safer Community / Working with Alleged or Known Offenders*)

Make sure there is pastoral support in place for the child or adult at risk throughout the process involved.

### 2.1.7 Pastoral Care

#### Following an allegation / suspicion

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

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

Where the perpetrator accepts some responsibility, they will be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be appropriate once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

#### Supporting those who have experienced abuse

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

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

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

It may be necessary to signpost individuals to specialist support. *The DPS can find relevant local information, contacts, and links to national specialist support services for anyone who may need it.*

## 2.2 SAFER RECRUITMENT

We will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, young people and adults at risk. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

### 2.2.1 Paid Church Workers

- 1) We will develop a clear role profile, person specification and application form.
- 2) All applicants will be required to complete an application form (which includes a self-disclosure form) and include the names of two referees, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference who have known the applicant for at least 3 years.
- 3) Shortlisting and interviewing of applicants will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader directly overseeing the role being recruited for.
- 4) Formal written references will be requested, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference. **References should not be sought from family members.**
- 5) An enhanced DBS check will be carried out after receiving satisfactory references.
- 6) An applicant's UK residency status and/or right to work in the UK will be checked.
- 7) An Induction will be delivered by the line manager or group leader. *(To include hard copies of WRBC Safeguarding Policy Statement, Code of Conduct, Procedure for Responding to Concerns, Record of Concern Report Form.)*

#### Notes:

- Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for anyone disqualified from working with children or adults at risk to knowingly apply, accept or offer to work with children or adults at risk. It is also a criminal offence to knowingly offer work with children or adults at risk to an individual who is so disqualified or to knowingly allow such an individual to continue to work with children or adults at risk.
- Stages 5, 6 and 7 must be completed satisfactorily before the appointed person starts in their role.

### 2.2.2 Volunteer Church Workers

- 1) All volunteers will be given a letter outlining the application process, a role description (IfV) and asked to complete an application form and a BUGB self-disclosure form.
- 2) Formal written references will be taken up by the DPS.
- 3) A DBS check will be carried out after receiving satisfactory references.
- 4) An Induction will be delivered by the Group Co-ordinator. *(To include hard copies of Safeguarding Policy Statement, Code of Conduct, Procedure for Responding to Concerns, Record of Concern Report Form.)*
- 5) All volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement which is an undertaking to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures.

### 2.2.3 Appointment and Supervision of workers

During the induction session the church's safeguarding policy and procedures will be discussed with all workers and they will be required to sign an agreement to adhere to them. All workers will have a role description and clear lines of accountability to a leader and the leadership team.

Paid workers will also have an assigned supervisor whom they will meet with regularly to discuss

work and address any issues or areas of concern. There will be a probationary period of six months in the role before any paid appointment is confirmed.

#### 2.2.4 Training

It is important that all workers understand our church's agreed safeguarding procedures and attend Level 2 BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training at least once every **four** years. Where a worker is successfully recruited but has not yet been able to attend the training, they will be given a copy of the Baptist Union of Great Britain's **Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding** booklet and asked to complete the relevant sections. Additional specialist training will also be arranged where needed, for example, in First Aid.

#### 2.2.5 Young helpers under 18 years of age

In law, young helpers under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that they are helped to develop and hone their skills, attitudes and experience. Young helpers must always be closely supervised by an adult leader and never given sole responsibility for a group of children. When considering ratios of workers to children, young helpers need to be counted as children, not leaders. The safeguarding procedures apply to a young helper just as they do to any other person. Parent / carer permission will be sought for young helpers just as we would for any other person under 18 years of age.

#### 2.2.6 DBS Checks

These will be carried out in accordance with the guidelines from the Baptist Union.

### 2.3 SAFER BEHAVIOUR

The church has a Behaviour Policy (*see Appendix 6*) which sets out our values relating to behaviour, and the way in which we will respond to both positive and negative behaviour, so that we can respond consistently. This policy includes a Code of Conduct (*available on the church website*) to ensure everyone is shown the respect that is due to them.

Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with a group and whether they should be male or female workers, or both. See section 3.1.1 for recommended ratios. Wherever possible, couples or immediate family adult members should work with separate groups. If they want / need to work together then a third person may need to be assigned to that group (for example where a group is working in an independent location). The only adults allowed to participate in children's and adult at risk activities are those safely appointed and appropriately trained. The leader of the activity should be aware of any other adults who are in the building whilst the activity is running.

## SECTION 3 - BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

At WRBC we are in an amazing position in society, with the opportunity to minister to individuals from the whole community, from the very young to the very old. These best practice guidelines are in place to help those working on behalf of the church to do it well, prioritising the safety and well-being of those they are working with. Whilst this section is divided into adults and children, some aspects of good practice will overlap.

### 3.1 WORKING WITH CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

The procedures and best practices for working with children and young people can be found on the church website.

#### 3.1.1 Computers

All church computers will have suitable parental controls and blocks put on. Although this is not failsafe, it will make using the computers for inappropriate behaviour more difficult, whilst also protecting any vulnerable users.

### 3.2 WORKING WITH ADULTS & ADULTS AT RISK

#### 3.2.1 Premises

The church building will be made as accessible as possible to all people. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, lighting or heating will be addressed wherever possible, and where necessary, aids and adaptations put in place.

#### 3.2.2 Insurance

The church will take reasonable steps to safeguard adults at risk and will follow any specific safeguarding requirements as laid out by our insurance company.

The procedures and best practices for working with adults and adults at risk can be found on the church website.

#### 3.2.3 Live Streaming Services

When a service or event is being live streamed or recorded to be shared online at a later date, we will ensure people are aware that they are being recorded and appropriate consent will be sought to those who participate in the service, or who may be visible to the camera.

This is in line with the guidance as set out in the Baptist Union of Great Britain guide: [Recording and Livestreaming Services: Safeguarding Guidelines for Churches](#).

### 3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY - Safe Practice and Safe Premises

#### 3.3.1 Consent forms

It is essential that we have important information about all children and young people involved in any activities at the church, which is recorded on our consent forms. The attendee must add locations of take a group registration form home and get a parent/guardian to complete it and they must bring their form back with them when they next attend. Similar details will be gathered for adults at risk.



Whenever someone is asked to participate in a service which is to be livestreamed or recorded and shown at a later date written consent for them to be on screen will need to be acquired in line with the guidance set out in the BUGB Guide: Recording and Live Streaming Services and Events: Safeguarding Guidance.

### **3.3.2 Health and Safety**

All activities for children and adults at risk will comply with the church's current Health and Safety Policy and will be conducted in accordance with Conditions for Use of the church premises for users of Walsworth Road Baptist Church, with particular attention paid to the sections on Fire Action, First Aid, PAT testing, Health and Safety and Kitchen and Food Hygiene.

Whenever possible, at all events involving food preparation, at least one worker will hold a valid Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Buildings being used for children's and adult at risk groups will be properly maintained. An annual health and safety review will be carried out in order to consider all aspects of safety for everyone involved in using the premises.

### **3.3.3 Fire**

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

### **3.3.4 First Aid**

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

There is a first aid kit as well as an accident report book in the downstairs kitchen, which must be completed in the event of any accidents, injuries, or incidents. Completed accident forms should be passed on to the nominated individual. There is also an additional first aid kit for off-site events in the Jam Club storage rooms by the Upper Halls. A nominated individual will ensure that the contents of the first aid kits are checked on a regular basis.

There is a defibrillator (AED) to be used in cases of cardiac arrest/ collapse which is located in the downstairs kitchen, and the list of those trained to use this is also displayed in the kitchen.

### **3.3.5 Supervision of Groups**

We will ensure that a register is kept for groups meeting on the premises.

### **3.3.6 Food Hygiene**

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 state that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations. It therefore follows that those with responsibility for food will need to possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc).

### **3.3.7 Risk Assessment**

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

### **3.3.8 Insurance**

Residential activity organisers will check that there is adequate insurance cover for any activities planned. If the trip is at a centre it is also important to establish that there is appropriate public liability insurance in place.

### 3.3.9 Transport

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children, young people and adults at risk on behalf of the church. They do not apply to private arrangements, for example, transport arrangements made between friends.

- Only those who have gone through the church safer recruitment procedures for workers will transport children and adults at risk (within the DBS eligibility criteria).
- All drivers will have read the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Drivers will be aged 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that the vehicle being used is road worthy. The vehicle must also have a first aid kit.
- All hired minibuses will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus. A second worker must accompany the driver of a minibus.

Guidelines specifically for transporting children is as follows:

- Parental consent will be given for all journeys. Consent may be verbal, but it is good practice to obtain written consent.
- All children and young people should be returned to an agreed drop off point. At collection or drop off points, children should never be left on their own; make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult.
- At least two workers, if possible, should be present when transporting children as part of a church role.
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with one young person. If a young person wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other young people have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it is not a suitable place to talk and arrange to meet with the young person at a suitable location and time. It is reasonable for a driver to be alone with a young person for short periods: e.g. dropping off the last young person. The driver should ensure that they have discussed with the activity leader who is the most suitable young person to be dropped off last and have planned the route accordingly. Drivers should discuss with the activity leader where it may be unwise for them to transport a child: e.g. where they have had a disagreement that evening or where the young person has a 'crush' on a driver. Alternative arrangements must be made.
- For longer journeys, drivers must strictly observe the maximum journey time of 10 hours in any 21 and a 30-minute break taken every 3 hours where the driver can obtain rest and refreshment. In addition, a break of 1 hour should be taken every 5 hours of driving. A weather forecast should be obtained to evaluate any potential hazard.
- Where there is more than one vehicle travelling, the activity leader should ensure that all drivers have clear directions to the destination, and the contact telephone numbers of the activity leader and the nominated contact. The nominated contact should have a list of names and emergency contacts of the people in each vehicle.



- Drivers must complete a WRBC Driver Self Declaration Form (see Appendix 10)

### 3.3.10 Outings and Overnight Events involving Children

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

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
- Consent forms will be obtained for the specific activities involved.
- There will be workers with first aid and food hygiene certificates with the group.

#### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Sleeping arrangements for overnight events will be carefully considered. It may be acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with children/young people in a large dormitory or on an activity such as youth hostelling, where it is customary practice and there is more than one worker per room. Workers will not share sleeping accommodation with fewer than three children. Arrangements will be age-appropriate, provide security for the child/young person and be safe for everyone involved. The event leader will ensure that parents understand what the arrangements will be and are happy with them.

It is not acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with young people. Instead, workers should be situated in close proximity and ensure that the young people know where to go if they need help. There should be at least two workers on duty until all young people are asleep.

Where a young person is questioning their gender identity or considering, progressing or has completed gender reassignment we will consult with them and their parents about arrangements for residential trips and sleepovers. If needed the DPS will seek advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

#### **Adventurous Activities**

No child will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The activity leader will ensure that the workers engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of workers to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, the activity leader needs to ensure that the premises are licensed.

#### **Fire Safety**

The event leader will have a fire safety procedure in place, which will include the following:

Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the overnight event is in a building, then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. If practical and feasible a fire drill will be practised on the first day of the event.

When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. The building will also need to comply with fire regulations.

In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

#### **Safety**

It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every child/young person participating in an overnight event, and this may include monitoring access on and off the site.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running around tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).

### **Swimming Trips**

There will be an increased adult to child ratio for swimming trips. Prior to the trip, workers will establish the swimming ability of the children attending and obtain specific consent. Workers should never change in front of the children.

### **Named person for safeguarding on the trip**

There will be a named person for safeguarding on all outings and residential trips. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding, but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

### **3.3.11 Outings and Overnight Events involving Adults at Risk**

As with outings and events for children, there are additional considerations for a group taking adults with additional needs, such as learning difficulties or mental health needs, on outings or overnight events:

#### **A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand**

Planning for the trip should take into account specific medical, physical and support needs of each group member, bearing in mind that there may be people in the group who have individual care needs that will have to be met (including personal care)

Adults at risk should be included in the planning of trips and events

Consideration should be given to the suitability and accessibility of the venue and accommodation, travel time and mode of transport, and the affordability of the event

Adults at risk should be given all the information about the trip beforehand so that they know where they are going, how long it will take to get there and what type of activities they will be taking part in.

There should be a minimum of two leaders with each group; the individual needs of those attending may determine the additional number of people required.

#### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Consideration should be given to the individual needs of those staying overnight. If there is a need for personal care or additional support during the night, it would be better that the person's usual caregiver also attends the event and therefore shares a room with them.

#### **Personal Care**

It is not appropriate for church workers to perform personal care for adults at risk unless this is their usual task (ie if they have come along to help generally, but also have a caring role for a member of the group, they can provide personal care for that person).

#### **Activities**

Leaders should consider the mobility needs of the group when deciding on activities or events. For example, if members of the group have difficulty walking, then including a walking tour around a town may be inaccessible to some who are attending. If you have members of the group who use wheelchairs, then consideration needs to be given as to whether you have sufficient workers to

support those who may need pushing.

## **Safety**

It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every person in the group; this may include monitoring access on and off the site. General safety rules will be applied as appropriate, and advice sought from the event organiser / venue about the fire evacuation procedures. A copy of the event / venue risk assessment should be included with the group leader's risk assessment.

## **Consent and Medical Information**

It is important to recognise that adults at risk are mostly able to give consent for their own involvement in activities, inclusion in photographs and medical treatment. However, in some situations the question of capacity may arise. The guidelines clearly state that an adult at risk should have a say in their care and any arrangements made for them, however, there may be occasions when you need to involve others in decision making. In these situations, seek advice from the DPS with regard to who should be involved.

An Activity Form should be completed by each member of the group and held by the leader. This will include any health concerns, emergency contact information and contact details for their GP surgery. This will allow emergency medical personnel to have access to information should the need arise.

## **Holding and Dispensing of Medication**

Church workers should never agree to hold or dispense medication for those on an event. If someone is unable to manage their own medication, then consideration should be given as to whether their usual carer could attend with them or whether they will not be able to attend the event.

### **3.3.12 Hiring of Church Premises**

The responsible adult for an activity held at Walsworth Road Baptist Church must contact the Lettings Administrator ([lettings@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:lettings@wrbchitchin.org.uk)) and complete forms as required.

## **3.4 SAFER COMMUNITY**

### **3.4.1 Bullying**

Bullying is another form of abuse, and it can be verbal or physical. Bullying doesn't just happen to children, often adults can be victims too. There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as a repeated pattern of behaviour intended to cause emotional or physical harm to another person or exert power over them. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically, regardless of their age, ability or status.

It is important to recognise that bullying happens within churches, and it is not isolated to the children and young people. Anyone in the church can be a victim of bullying, just as anyone in the church can be the bully, including those in leadership.

Some examples of bullying that could arise in the church context are:

- Being verbally or physically abusive towards another person
- Isolating or deliberately ignoring someone, or excluding them from group activities
- Spreading rumours and malicious untruths about another person in the church
- Use of email, phone or social media to publicly challenge or undermine someone

- Name calling and personal insults
- Making false accusations
- Sending abusive messages or degrading images via phone, email or social media

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

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

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

In order to help prevent bullying, the following procedures will be adopted within the church:

- The children and young people will be involved in discussing and agreeing a group code of conduct, which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable. Also see WRBC Behaviour Policy (*Appendix 6*).
- Everyone in the church, whether children or adults, should know how they can report any incidents of bullying.
- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously, investigated as quickly as possible and details will be carefully checked before action is taken.
- All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions that are taken.
- Where an allegation of bullying is made against a church or group leader, advice will be sought from the local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact as this should be addressed.
- Incidents of bullying may be reported to the statutory authorities in line with the church safeguarding procedures.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviour, such as respectfully challenging or disagreeing with someone else's beliefs or behaviours, setting reasonable expectations with regard to work deadlines and activities or taking legitimate disciplinary action.

**Online safety** –Bullying online and on social media is as serious as physical, in person bullying. In contrast to in person bullying there is often no escape from bullying online in a world where people, especially young people, are accessing their online world from wherever they are; there is no “safe space” and the emotional impact of online bullying can be significant as a result. With this in mind the same procedures apply to disclosures of online bullying as in person incidents.

### 3.4.2 Working with Alleged or Known Offenders

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, young people or adults at risk, or a serious allegation has been made, the church safeguarding team will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its commitment to protect vulnerable groups, will set boundaries for that person which they shall be expected to keep. These will be set out in a

## Safeguarding Contract.

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of abusing children, young people or adults is attending our church, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced allegations of abuse but hasn't been convicted.

In determining the details of the contract:

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

An open discussion will be held with the person concerned which will contribute to the risk assessment and in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of our church. A written contract will be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person will be required to sign the contract and it will be monitored and enforced. If the contract is broken certain sanctions will be discussed and considered with the local Regional Safeguarding Lead.

### **3.4.3 Alleged or known offenders who are themselves adults at risk**

A formal contract may be quite a daunting process for someone with learning difficulties or a young person yet having safeguards in place is still necessary. Therefore, we will consider as an alternative to arrange a meeting with the individual in question where they can be taken through the main elements of a formal contract in a way that is non-threatening and easy to understand. Notes would be taken, and the individual would need to verbally agree to the requirements laid out in the meeting. The individual is welcome to bring another adult/advocate with them to the meeting if they so wish.

Rather than signing a formal 'contract', the individual would instead sign to say that they agree with the minutes or meeting notes, and that they will stick to what has been agreed during the meeting. This will result in the same outcome as a contract but is a more informal and appropriate approach for an adult at risk. The agreed requirements will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure that the individual is complying, exactly as a formal contract would be.

## SECTION 4 - USEFUL CONTACTS

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**  
**Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Team**  
01992 588757  
[admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin.hscb@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**Police**  
Contact 101, or 999 in an emergency

**Adult Social Services**  
0300 1234042 At anytime

**Children's Social Services**  
0300 1234043 At anytime

**CBA Safeguarding Lead**  
**Gillian Jones**  
07729 688791  
[safeguarding@centralba.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@centralba.org.uk)

# APPENDIX 1

## Definitions of Abuse

### Understanding, Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or a child or children. There are many different ways in which people suffer abuse. The list below is, sadly, not exhaustive.

Type of abuse	Child	Adult at risk
<i>Physical</i>	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.	To inflict pain, physical injury or suffering to an adult at risk.
<i>Emotional</i>	The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.	The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.
<i>Sexual</i>	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.	Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour.  No one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.
<i>Neglect</i>	Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.	A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.



<i>Type of Abuse</i>	<b>Additional Definitions</b>
<i>Financial</i>	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.
<i>Spiritual</i>	The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g. minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.
<i>Discrimination</i>	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.
<i>Institutional</i>	The mistreatment or abuse of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.
<i>Domestic Abuse</i>	<p>Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between persons aged 16 or above who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of their age, gender, sexuality or social status.</p> <p>Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually there is a pattern of abusive, coercive and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 identifies children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims in their own right.</p>
<i>Cyber Abuse</i>	<p>The use of information technology (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, etc.) to repeatedly harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner.</p> <p>The Online Safety Bill, 2021, introduces new rules for internet search engines and firms who host user-generated content, i.e. those which allow users to post their own content online or interact with each other. Those platforms which fail to comply with the rules could face penalties of up to 10% of their revenue, and in the most serious cases some may even be barred from operating.</p>
<i>Self-harm</i>	Self-Harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An individual may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.
<i>Mate crime</i>	'Mate crime' is when people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.
<i>Cuckooing</i>	Cuckooing is the term used to describe occasions where the homes of adults at risk are taken over and used to distribute drugs or as a base for gang or criminal activities. The tenant may believe that the people who are in their home are their friends.



<i>Modern Slavery</i>	Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. It is illegal in every country of the world.
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.
<i>Radicalisation</i>	The radicalisation of individuals is the process by which people come to support any form of extremism and, in some cases, join terrorist groups. Some individuals are more vulnerable to the risk of being groomed into terrorism than others.

<i>Honour / Forced Marriage</i>	An honour marriage / forced marriage is when one or both of the spouses do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage. There may be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure exerted in order to make the marriage go ahead. The motivation may include the desire to control unwanted behaviour or sexuality.
<i>Female Genital Mutilation</i>	Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). FGM is a cultural practice common around the world and is largely performed on girls aged between 10 and 18. Performing acts of FGM is illegal in the UK as is arranging for a child to travel abroad for FGM to be carried out.
<i>Peer-on-Peer Abuse</i>	Peer-on-peer abuse is where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.
<i>Child on Child Abuse</i>	Child on Child abuse is when a child abuses another child of any age or stage of development
<i>Historic Abuse</i>	Historic abuse is the term used to describe disclosures of abuse that were perpetrated in the past. Many people who have experienced abuse don't tell anyone what happened until years later, with around one third of people abused in childhood waiting until adulthood before they share their experience.

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

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- a child or adult at risk discloses behaviour that is harmful to them

- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- inappropriate sexual awareness in children
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

**It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring.**

*Last Reviewed: Mar 2024*

## APPENDIX 2

### Procedure for Responding to Concerns

#### STAGE 1 – THE WORKER

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

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

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

The record should:

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- include the child or adult at risk's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed
- include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible
- include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- be signed and dated
- be kept secure and confidential and made available only to the church Safeguarding Team (including the church minister), representatives of any statutory authorities involved and the local Baptist Association.

(See Appendix 3 for Record of Concern Report Form)

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

If an issue concerns an adult at risk who does not give permission to pass on the information to anyone else, the worker should explain that they will need to speak with the DPS, who will have greater expertise in dealing with the issue at hand.

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

## **STAGE 2 – THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)**

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

### The duty to **REVIEW**

In reviewing the report that is received, the DPS:

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

### The duty to **REPORT**

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

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or adult at risk is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation.
- refer the concern to others who work with the child or adult at risk in question, asking for continued observation where appropriate.
- Inform parents / carers under certain circumstances, where doing so would not present any further risk of harm.
- Make a formal referral to the police or local Social Services team. With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission. This is not always possible when considering passing relevant information about abuse or concerns to the statutory authorities, however, it is possible to keep the information confidential to the relevant parties. This means not telling or hinting to others what has been disclosed, not even for prayer ministry purposes. For adults at risk, concerns will only be referred to the police or Social Services without consent where:
  - the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
  - there is a risk of harm to others
  - in order to prevent a crime

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children\* the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or equivalent. The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person

who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If an allegation is made against someone who works with adults at risk\*, it should be reported to the police or Adult Social Services.

*\*If a worker has an allegation made against them, they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated by the statutory authorities. It may also be appropriate to put a Safeguarding Contract in place; this should be discussed with the local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact.*

Whenever a formal referral is made to the police, Social Services or LADO, the DPS should report the referral to:

- The Safeguarding Trustee
- The Minister
- The local Baptist Association Safeguarding Contact

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy. All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the DPS and a written record should be made of the actions taken. (See Appendix 4 - Safeguarding Incident Form).

### **STAGE 3 – THE NEXT STEPS**

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

#### The duty to **SUPPORT**

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

Victims; Alleged perpetrators; Children; Adults at risk; Other family members; Church workers; Church Safeguarding Team; Minister; Leadership Team.

#### The duty to **REPORT**

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

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

*Last Reviewed: Mar 2023*

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Record of Concern Report Form**

<b>PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT OR CONCERN:</b>
Name:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Role in Church:

<b>DETAILS OF CHILD / ADULT AT RISK YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:</b>
Name:
Date of Birth / Approximate Age:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them?
If not, please explain why:

<b>IF UNDER 18 PLEASE INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE PARENT OR CARER:</b>
Name:
Address:
Phone number:
Email:
Relationship to the child/ young person:
Do they know that you have concerns that you are sharing?
If not, please explain why:

<b>DETAILS OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (IF RELEVANT)</b>
Name:
Address:
Phone Number:
Email:
Are they an adult or a child (under 18):
Relationship to the child/adult at risk:
Does the child / adult at risk live with the alleged perpetrator?

**DETAILS OF INCIDENT OR CONCERN:**

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

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

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

Please give details of who and when below:

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

This Form should be passed to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) within 24 hours of any incident or concern arising. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have all the information requested in this form. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, please call the DPS straight away and use this form to follow up on that call. Remember if they are not available call the police or social services, do not wait for the DPS to be available.

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

Signed .....

Date .....

*Last Reviewed: Mar 2024*

## APPENDIX 4

### Safeguarding Incident Form

*This form should be completed by the Designated Person for Safeguarding*

Name of church / organisation	
Contact details of church / organisation	
Name of Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)	
Contact details of DPS	
Name of concerned person or to whom disclosure was given	
Contact details of concerned person or whom disclosure was given	

#### INDIVIDUAL OF CONCERN - CONTACT DETAILS

Name	
Date of birth / Age	
Address	
Phone number / Email address	

#### THE INCIDENT

What happened? (Nature of concern / disclosure made) - use the person's own words if known	
When did it happen? (date, time)	
Where did it happen? (specific location)	
Who was allegedly involved and in what way? (include witnesses)	



**ANY ACTION THAT HAS BEEN TAKEN**

Have the carers or parents / guardians been informed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	(Please tick)
If Yes, when and by whom?			
Have the statutory authorities been informed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	(Please tick)
	If Yes, please complete the table below		

*Example:*

<b>Authority</b>	<i>Police</i>	
<b>Name</b>	<i>Bobby</i>	
<b>Position</b>	<i>Child abuse officer</i>	
<b>Email contact</b>	<i>bobby@police.com</i>	
<b>Phone contact</b>	<i>07799 987654</i>	
<b>Contacted by</b>	<i>Minister</i>	
<b>Date &amp; time of contact</b>	<i>01/04/15 1.30pm</i>	

Has the Local Association been informed? <i>(Please do so if the statutory authorities are involved)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	(Please tick)
If Yes, when and by whom?			
Any other action taken:			

**FUTURE ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

What action needs to be taken?	
Who is responsible for this?	

**SIGNATURES**

Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)		Minster / Safeguarding Team Member	
Date & time		Date & time	

*Last Reviewed: Mar 2023*

## **APPENDIX 5**

# **WRBC Mentoring Policy**

Mentoring is an important part of discipleship, and of work with young people, and there may be occasions where it is appropriate for mentoring relationships to be formed at WRBC. This policy outlines how we mentor our young people, and how we keep them safe.

For the purposes of this policy, 'workers' refers to both staff and volunteers.

### **1 What is mentoring?**

Mentoring seeks to encourage a young person's personal and spiritual development and emotional wellbeing, by enabling them to reflect on their own ideas and experiences. It is primarily a listening role, but guidance, challenge and reflective exercises can be used where appropriate. We want to help young people to reach their potential, increase in self-esteem and motivation, and move forwards in any particular life issues they would like to overcome. We also want to encourage them in their spiritual life and discipleship and help them to grow in their relationship with God.

Particularly within a church context, mentoring may take many different forms. The type of mentoring undertaken will depend on factors such as the needs of the young person, the training of the worker and the services that the young person is currently engaged with.

Some of the forms that mentoring may take include:

- Meeting regularly to build relationship through an activity such as playing board games, and give the young person a space to relax and offload
- Checking in with the young person regularly at youth group
- Meeting regularly to discuss a young person's spiritual development
- Meeting regularly to help with a particular practical issue, such as support with revision
- Peer mentoring, where an older young person supports a younger person with any of the above
- Mentoring with a more therapeutic intention, where the mentor and mentee are focussing on a particular issue related to the mentee's wellbeing

Some of these activities will also occur naturally in the course of good youth work. The difference is that mentoring is an intentional relationship between mentor and mentee, in which both parties have agreed to the partnership and understand the goals to which they are working.

### **2 Who can be mentored, and who can be a mentor?**

Mentees must be between the ages of 10 and 18yrs and must demonstrate a desire to participate in mentoring. They must also be prepared to commit to attending sessions and, if appropriate, to working on exercises and goals between sessions.

Mentors must be WRBC workers who have been safely recruited according to the WRBC Safeguarding Policy section 2.3. This will mean that they also have also undergone a DBS check. Mentors can be paid WRBC staff, or volunteers. In some cases, peer mentoring (mentoring by an older young person) may be appropriate, but this should be agreed with your line manager and the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) in advance and will be less formal in nature.

Mentors should be prepared to commit to the mentoring relationship, with regular reviews (every 6-8 sessions) to assess the young person's progress and whether to continue sessions. Except in exceptional and unavoidable circumstances, a mentoring relationship which is ended abruptly by the mentor may negate the value of the mentoring in the eyes of the mentee.

Particularly where the mentoring may be of a more therapeutic nature, or the mentee is struggling with an issue such as anxiety, depression or self-harm, the mentor should have the appropriate training and/or experience before beginning the mentoring relationship. This should be discussed and agreed with the line manager and DPS in advance. This is not so critical where the mentoring is more casual, for example helping with revision or 'checking in'. Where other services are involved, such as CAMHS or counsellors, mentors should not try to work on the same issues because this can cause conflict and can even result in the young person being signed off by their other services. Instead, the mentor should meet them more informally, perhaps to play games and catch up, so that the young person still has support in place without risking services conflicting.

All mentors should be up to date on their safeguarding training, as outlined in the WRBC Safeguarding Policy section 2.2.4, so that they are equipped to respond should there be a safeguarding concern.

Where possible, it is beneficial for a mentee to have some agency when choosing their mentor. There may be particular workers with whom they get on very well, or find it easier to confide in. This should be taken into consideration when choosing their mentor.

Each mentor should discuss their capacity with their line manager so that they do not take on too much, particularly if they have more than one mentee at a time.

### **3 Supervision for mentors**

Mentors should receive termly supervision. This may be with their line manager or another appropriate person within the congregation (as agreed with the line manager) and may be one-to-one or in a group with other mentors. Alternatively, the mentor may wish to nominate someone outside of our congregation for their supervision, for example someone who takes a mentoring or spiritual direction role in their own life. This should be agreed with the mentor's line manager.

Supervision should offer the opportunity to discuss how mentoring is going and to get fresh ideas for how to tackle particular issues or goals. It can also be a place for the mentor to 'offload' if they have heard something particularly heavy from their mentee. Nevertheless, confidentiality should be maintained, and discussion should be general enough to respect the mentee's privacy.

### **4 Process**

Mentoring relationships should begin either with a referral, or an expression from the young person that they would like to be mentored. Referrals may come from church staff, Group Co-ordinators, the DPS, or parents. A Referral Form should be completed, even if it states that the young person has self-referred. In the case of self-referrals, this can be completed with the young person, perhaps in the first session. Otherwise, it should be obtained in advance.

Parental consent must be obtained in writing before mentoring begins.

Mentoring sessions should then be arranged between the mentor and mentee. These should be regular, for example weekly or fortnightly. The mentee's parent should be aware of when and where these will take place, and they should be entered into the WRBC Pastoral TeamUp calendar. If the mentor does not have access to this calendar, sessions may be added by their line manager or a member of the safeguarding team.

All the usual principles regarding meeting young people safely still apply. This includes guidance for appropriate times and locations for meeting young people. An ideal location may be a coffee shop, or the church Lounge (provided that there is another adult in the building). Please see Working with Young People section 1.2.

Mentoring may also take place online, for example via Zoom. This must be agreed by the young person, their parents and the worker's line manager and must be done in accordance with the Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy.

#### 4.1 The first session

The first session should take the form of an introduction, or 'initial assessment'. This ensures that both mentor and mentee have a full understanding of the agreed aims as well as considerations such as confidentiality and boundaries. In some cases, it may be appropriate to do outcome measures such as RCADS and CORE-YP in order to get an indication of the young person's wellbeing, for example their level of anxiety. For more information, see section 7, 'Outcome measures'.

The aims of the first session are as follows:

- To introduce mentor and mentee
- To determine suitability – both the suitability of mentoring for the young person, and the suitability of mentor and mentee
- To outline confidentiality and establish boundaries (see section 5, 'Confidentiality and boundaries')
- To identify the young person's needs, and the agreed aims/goals
- To gain relevant background information about the young person and their situation
- To complete outcome measures (if appropriate. See section 7, 'Outcome measures')

In some cases, it may be necessary to build rapport between mentor and mentee before completing the above list – in which case it should be completed in the next session or as soon as possible.

The details of the sessions should be agreed between mentor and mentee. We recommend that sessions last between 30 and 60 minutes and occur weekly or fortnightly.

### 5 Confidentiality and boundaries

Any information about the mentee and their family must be kept confidential, unless there are safeguarding concerns (see WRBC Safeguarding Policy section 2.1) or other extenuating circumstances.

The mentor should explain to the mentee, and remind them as appropriate, that sessions are confidential but that they cannot promise confidentiality where there is a safeguarding concern.

In the case of a safeguarding concern or disclosure, the process to follow is laid out in the WRBC Safeguarding Policy, section 2.1. In addition to following the proper safeguarding procedure, the mentor should endeavour to inform their mentee about what they must do – at the least, that they have heard something that concerns them, and they must pass that concern on. It can be very difficult for a young person to confide information in someone and then later discover that the information has been shared without their knowledge. This does not negate the need to follow proper procedures in order to keep them safe, but a conversation to inform the mentee can be helpful in maintaining trust and easing their anxieties.

The mentor should also explain to the mentee that there will be some other cases in which notes, or information may be shared – for example, if the young person's mentor changes then the new mentor may receive their notes. If you will be reporting on their progress, for example to the referrer, it is worthwhile to explain to the mentee that this will be general (for example about the goals that have been set) and will not break confidentiality.

Boundaries should be set at the first session and maintained throughout. For example, if the mentee has the mentor's phone number, then they should understand that it is only appropriate to

contact the mentor in certain circumstances – for example to arrange or cancel sessions, or in an emergency.

## **6 Record keeping**

Each mentee should have a file of relevant paperwork, and this may be in hard copy format or digital. It is the mentor's responsibility to keep this updated, and it should be updated as soon as possible after every session.

Paperwork, and the mentee's file, should be labelled with their ID number. This is to take the following format:

- 'WRBC', to represent that they are being mentored as part of a WRBC programme
- The mentor's first and last initial
- The mentee's first and last initial
- The mentee's date of birth

So, if Mary Bloggs (DOB 01/01/2005) was being mentored by Joe Smith, Mary's ID number would be 'WRBCJSMB010105'.

This ensures that records such as outcome measures are kept confidential, because they only contain the mentee's ID rather than their name.

As appropriate to the individual mentoring situation, the mentee's file should contain the following documents:

- Referral Form (required)
- Initial Assessment Form (required)
- Young person tracking form (as appropriate)
- Outcome measures (as appropriate)
- Goal progress records (as appropriate)
- Session notes (required)
- Other worksheets and resources (as appropriate)

Please note that where a mentee is struggling with an issue such as depression, anxiety or self-harm, outcome measures are required. This work should only be undertaken by a mentor with appropriate training and/or experience.

The mentor is responsible for their mentee's file. They should update them as soon as possible after each session. If possible, these records should be kept in the locked filing cabinet in the church staff office, however if this is impractical (for example if the mentor does not have regular access to retrieve them), an alternative method of secure storage is to be arranged with the mentor's line manager. Records should not be stored in a car, even until they can be returned to the filing cabinet.

It is important to note that mentees have the right to see any records held concerning them. Mentors should bear this in mind when phrasing their notes and should always ensure that they are accurate and fair.

## **7 Outcome measures**

Outcome measures can be useful tools - particularly where a mentee is struggling with their mental health or wellbeing, but they can also be useful in other cases. Examples of outcome measures we may use are RCADS and CORE-YP. If a mentor feels that they need to use outcome measures with their mentee, and they have not used them or coded them before, instruction will be given on how to do so.

## **8 Ending the mentoring relationship**

In a church context, mentoring relationships should be longer-term than they may be with statutory services. This is because we are focussed on the holistic wellbeing and growth of the young person, and not simply working on a particular issue until it is resolved. Nevertheless, there may be some circumstances in which a mentoring relationship needs to end – for example if a young person no longer wishes to be mentored, or mentor or mentee are no longer available.

Where this is the case, the mentoring relationship should end well. Attempts should be made to have a final meeting in which to find closure, invite feedback and offer alternatives.

## **9 Safeguarding issues**

The usual WRBC safeguarding procedures apply. If a young person makes a disclosure or there is any cause for concern, the mentor is required to make a written record and follow the process laid out in the WRBC Safeguarding Policy section 2.1 as soon as possible.

For any concerns or questions email [safeguarding@wrbchitchin.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@wrbchitchin.org.uk)

*Last Reviewed: Jan 2024*

## **APPENDIX 6**

# **WRBC Behaviour Policy**

At Walsworth Road Baptist Church, we aim to create a positive environment in which all feel safe, welcome, and included and are encouraged to reach their potential. We recognise that our community is made up of individuals with different characters, and that many have additional needs or influences which may impact on their behaviour. We also recognise that children and young people are still learning about appropriate behaviour, and that mistakes are often made without the intention to harm or upset others. We seek to manage behaviour in a positive manner.

This policy sets out our values relating to behaviour, and the way in which we will respond to both positive and negative behaviour, so that we can respond consistently.

### **1 Values**

- We celebrate positive behaviour and achievement and recognise that it may look different for different individuals.
- We believe that all in our groups, including workers and children/young people, have the right to participate in WRBC activities without fear and to be treated with respect.
- We believe that all in our groups, including workers and children/young people, have the responsibility to treat others with respect.
- We recognise that workers' behaviour influences young people and believe that expectations applied to children and young people should be modelled in the behaviour of workers. This includes apologising for mistakes and demonstrating how to manage disagreements well.
- We aim to use positive strategies to deal with disruptive behaviour.
- We will support workers to manage behaviour through advice, support and training.
- We recognise that in extreme cases, sanctions such as exclusion may be necessary – but we will only use these when all other options have been tried, or when an individual's participation poses a risk to the wellbeing of others.

### **2 Code of conduct**

Our Code of Conduct, for children, adults and those working with them is available on the Church Website.

### **3 Positive behaviour**

We will celebrate positive behaviour and achievement, and we recognise that this may look different for different individuals because of varying abilities, influences and additional needs. We will also model the behaviour we wish to see. We will let parents and carers know about positive behaviour and achievements during our activities.

### **4 Addressing negative behaviour**

Where negative behaviour occurs in our groups, we will initially seek to speak to the individual about their behaviour. In doing this we will:

- Aim to speak to the individual quietly or away from others and avoid embarrassing them or 'making an example' of them.
- Speak calmly and politely, treating them with respect.
- Explain which behaviour we are addressing, because we recognise that they are still learning and may not have realised that they were acting inappropriately. For example, asking them to 'please stop throwing that' rather than just 'stop it'.
- Explain the natural consequences of their behaviour, or why you don't want them to do it - for example that they could break something/hurt someone/what they are saying is disrespectful etc.
- Recognise and celebrate signs that they have listened to what we said or improved their behaviour.

If this is not effective and/or their behaviour is more serious, we may use other sanctions including:

- Speaking to parents about their child's negative behaviour.
- Speaking to a more senior person within the group (Co-ordinator, staff, Deacon etc.) for advice, or to ask them to handle the situation.
- Loss of privileges, or removal from a particular activity in which they are not participating appropriately.
- Payment for deliberate damage to property or equipment.

This will be recorded in writing and given to the appropriate Group Co-ordinator (depending on the group concerned). If appropriate, they may share this report with the Deacons.

If behaviour is very serious (for example law breaking, risking the safety of others, vandalism) we may consider a temporary or permanent ban. This will be carried out by the appropriate Group Co-ordinator. Both the individual's parents and the Deacons will be informed in writing.

*Last Reviewed: Feb 2021*



## APPENDIX 7

# WRBC Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy

At Walsworth Road Baptist Church (WRBC), we recognise that technology provides us with many ways to communicate and engage with others. Social media and electronic communications provide us with many new opportunities and, when used well, can be a very helpful tool in the work of the church. However, like most things, there are risks involved with using these tools without fully understanding them and putting boundaries in place.

We seek to ensure that our communications are open and transparent and reflect the values of our church. We also aim to build links with others in our community and other churches around us by engaging actively with their social media presence.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how we will use social media and electronic communications in a safe and effective way.

For the purposes of this policy, we define social media as the use of platforms, apps and websites which enable individuals to share content and to network. We define electronic communications as the use of electronic devices to communicate. This includes social media but also other methods such as texts, calls and emails, and online conferencing platforms such as, but not limited to, Zoom.

### 1 Conduct on social media and electronic communications

Anyone who holds any role in our church is a representative of WRBC and their actions reflect on us as an organisation. As such, the following guidance applies to anyone who uses our social media profiles:

- Check privacy policies on all social media platforms you use, so that you know who can access the material you post. Be aware that these do change frequently.
- Check privacy settings – it is advisable to set them to 'private' unless you wish your content to be shared publicly.
- Don't share copyrighted material. This includes pictures found on websites such as Google Images and other media, which is available online, unless you have checked that you may share it without a license. Don't assume that, just because it is easily available, it must be free to share. Websites are available which offer royalty-free alternatives.
- Conduct yourself online in the same way that you would in person and treat others as you would wish to be treated. If you would not be prepared to say something loudly in public, or say it directly to another person, then you should not post it online.
- Don't provide personal details, such as posting your phone number so that others can contact you.
- Only share photos that you would be happy for anyone to see. This includes on closed platforms such as WhatsApp or closed Facebook groups, because of the terms of their privacy policies.
- Assume that everything you post is permanent. Even if you remove a post, or it is time limited (such as on Snapchat, or Instagram Stories), you don't know who else has shared, screenshotted or recorded it.
- Do not 'friend' or 'follow' young people on your personal profiles, unless you have a legitimate link outside the work of WRBC (for example if they are part of your family). Never 'friend' or 'follow' a young person linked to WRBC. If they send you a request, you can explain to them why you are unable to accept their request. This important safeguarding principle ensures that all communications are open and transparent and protects both of you.

- Do not use your personal profiles for WRBC business. You are encouraged to follow and engage with WRBC posts but communication, advertisement etc. relating to our work should take place on a church account.
- Not all who hold roles within WRBC are required to use our social media profiles.

## 2 WRBC accounts

WRBC has a number of social media accounts, as well as other electronic communications such as email accounts, Mailchimp and phones. Those with access to or responsibility for these should observe the following guidance when setting them up or using them. This applies to all church accounts including youth accounts, or those set up for particular church projects.

- WRBC accounts should reflect the ethos of our church. This means that content posted or engaged with on these pages should be in line with our values. We will not post, or tolerate, offensive or discriminatory content on our profiles.
- Where possible (such as on Facebook Pages and Groups), we will post a code of conduct for those engaging with our profiles. These should outline appropriate behaviour, for example avoiding harmful or discriminatory content.
- WRBC pages and profiles will have at least two (preferably three) admins. Where this is not possible, the password should be shared with at least two (preferably three) people. This should include someone in leadership, for example the Minister, a Deacon, a member of staff or a group co-ordinator.
- Platforms differ in the way that content is shared and the demographic they tend to reach. This should be taken into account when opening a new account, so that we are using the most appropriate platforms. Pages and groups should be set to 'closed' (meaning that new group members must be approved by an admin) unless there is a reason for them to be open.
- Accounts should not be started in the name of WRBC without the approval of the Minister or Deacons.
- WRBC accounts should be used regularly in order to maintain our online presence – social media platforms use algorithms to decide which content to push to a wider audience. Accounts which are seen to be inactive or unpopular will not reach a wide audience.
- We will only use photographs of individuals (both young people and adults) in line with our safeguarding and our photo & video policies.
- Activity on WRBC accounts, profiles and pages will be monitored. We should draw a line so that we neither censor, nor take a permissive attitude to harmful content. In monitoring our accounts, we will:
  - Allow respectful debate and disagreement, for example comments disagreeing with a post.
  - Screenshot and remove inappropriate posts from those associated with our church. This might include discriminatory or offensive material, images which are inappropriate, or we do not have consent to share, or content which is irrelevant and inappropriate for the context in which it is posted. We will then contact the individual to explain why we had to remove it. Deacons should be informed and receive the screenshots.
  - Screenshot and remove inappropriate or unhelpful content from people we do not know, including 'trolling'. Deacons should be informed and receive the screenshots. It may also be appropriate to report this content on the platform.

### Communicating with young people online

Parents should remain our primary point of contact.

We will obtain parental permission before contacting young people directly through social media or electronic communications. For some groups, this may be included on annual registration forms.

We encourage parents and young people to have a good awareness of e-safety. We therefore will not communicate with young people on platforms for which they do not meet the minimum age restriction.

Messages should be sent in group format with more than one leader in the group. We will explain the reasons for this to young people.

Emails directly to young people should be 'CCed' to another leader.

We will not communicate with young people during school hours (in term time), or between 9pm and 8am. If young people initiate contact during these hours, unless they are at risk, we will wait to respond at a more appropriate time.

We will follow the WRBC Safeguarding and Photo and Video Policies in the same ways online that we would in person. This includes getting consent from the young person and their parent before sharing images, not posting personal details, and responding appropriately to concerns and disclosures.

We will consider the privacy policies of platforms before we begin using them in our youth ministry, as well as other concerns such as location tracking and permanence of posts. When in doubt, seek advice before using the platform - or choose a different platform.

We will only store and use young people's mobile phone numbers and email addresses with parental permission, and in line with our policies. If a young person has a worker's mobile number, this should only be used in relation to the work of WRBC.

It is perfectly acceptable to contact a young person (with their and their parents' permission) for example to check in with them, or to wish them well for their exams etc. However, if this turns into conversation, plans should be made to meet up to continue the conversation. This meeting should follow the measures laid out in Working with Young People section 1.2.

If in doubt, or if a conversation takes place which does not follow these guidelines (for example if contacted directly on social media by a young person), save or screenshot the conversation and make the group co-ordinator or a member of the safeguarding team aware of it.

### **3 Use of the internet and devices during youth sessions**

We use media during our children's and youth sessions. We also acknowledge that many children and young people have their own devices and will bring them to our activities. We will observe the following when young people are using the internet and devices during our sessions:

- We will ensure that games, videos and other content are appropriate to the group, including checking age restrictions.
- Where children and young people are using the internet as part of a group or session, they will be supervised to ensure that the content they are accessing is appropriate.
- Parental controls will be applied to devices owned or provided by WRBC, where this is appropriate and possible.
- Young people will be asked to seek permission before photographing or recording others.
- Nothing will be posted online as part of an activity without the permission of the leaders present.
- The group will be informed of the parameters of the activity for which they are being given access to devices or to the internet. This includes explaining what they are being asked to do, appropriate use, and what to do if they find something which worries them.
- If young people's own phones and devices are likely to be a distraction then they may be collected by leaders, stored safely and returned at the end of the session. Ideally this should be applied to the whole group, rather than a sanction for one individual.

On children's and youth outings and residential:

- The group leader should remain the primary point of contact for parents. This is so that they know what is happening and avoids, for example, a homesick child calling parents to be collected without the knowledge of the leader.
- If young people bring their phones, they should not be a distraction either from the activity or from awareness of safety (for example listening to instructions or when crossing the road). If they are causing a distraction, they should be collected in and returned at an appropriate time.
- On residential, young people should be given specified times in which they may use their phones to contact home. This is to avoid homesickness or disturbing others. At other times, if they need to contact home, they should speak to leaders first. This should be explained to young people and their parents before the event.
- Leaders should model appropriate phone use during sessions, for example putting them away unless necessary to contact someone or look something up.

#### **4 Online meetings and sessions**

At times, we may hold groups and meetings online. The risks of online sessions differ to in-person events, but we must still think carefully about how to safeguard those with whom we work. It is an unfortunate fact of online platforms that there are individuals who will seek to enter and disrupt meetings, for example by 'Zoom bombing', and many churches have been targeted in the past.

All participants in an online meeting, whether leaders or attendees, should agree to the shared code of conduct below. This helps to keep everyone safe and prevents anyone seeing or hearing anything which is inappropriate or makes them uncomfortable.

When planning an online session, you should:

- Obtain parental consent for any children or young people joining in the meeting, unless they are attending as part of their family.
- Appoint a co-host who can help to ensure that only the intended participants have access to the meeting, can monitor conduct, and can watch the chat to see that it is being used appropriately.
- In larger meetings, where participants fill more than one screen, consider appointing 'watchers' who can monitor a screen each.
- Share codes only with the intended participants.
- Ask that participants join the meeting from a communal area of their home, for example the lounge or dining room, rather than a bedroom. Where this is not possible, ask that they choose a neutral background or blur it. This might mean that they sit in front of a plain wall or bookcase, rather than their bed.
- Ask that parents of under 18s stay close enough to the computer that they can see/hear what is happening in the meeting.
- Ask that the whole household use appropriate language when within microphone range of the connected device.
- Ask that the whole household is fully and appropriately dressed if there is any chance that they will appear in the background.

When we hold online meetings, we get a glimpse into the homes of the participants which we would not ordinarily see. We must be mindful that this is not always easy for our attendees. It may be that there are competing obligations within the household, including other household members trying to take part in other online meetings. Online meetings may risk exposing elements of participants' living situation to a wider audience, including abuse and poverty. We therefore may need to show flexibility when planning our meetings and understand that it is not always appropriate to insist that participants turn cameras on.

Being on camera can cause increased anxiety, and some will find being on camera tiring. Where breakout groups are used during meetings or services, leaders & workers should be aware that not all may wish to participate. If cameras are turned off and the participant is muted in a breakout room, it should be supposed that the person does not wish to converse.

WRBC group leaders (including Deacons) & workers should be trained in how to use the chat facility to allow adults and children or young people to contribute to a discussion if they wish whilst their camera is off, and they are on mute.

Should you see or hear something which causes you concern for an individual's wellbeing, you must follow the process laid out in the WRBC Safeguarding Policy section 2.1.

*Last Reviewed: Dec 2023*

## APPENDIX 8

# WRBC Photo and Video Policy

At Walsworth Road Baptist Church we are a community, and photographs and videos are an important way of recording our shared history. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that there are valid reasons why an individual may not wish to be included in photographs or may even be put at risk when those photographs are shared. We also recognise that, in some cases, photographs are personal data under GDPR 2018 regulations and as such must be stored and used appropriately.

This policy outlines how we will take and use photographs and video at WRBC, so that all in our community are safeguarded.

This policy covers both photographs and video using the same measures – so where only photographs are mentioned, video is also implied.

Where 'external purposes' are mentioned, this refers to use of images where they are available online or to those outside our community at WRBC. This may include our website, social media, the media, and printed publications. Parent (for example parental consent) refers to a person over 18 with parental responsibility for the child or young person in question.

### 1 General principles

Whilst it is natural to try to include our whole community in our photos of church events, everyone should have the right to choose not to be photographed. For some people this is for significant safeguarding reasons, for example looked-after children or those escaping domestic violence may be endangered if a shared photograph reveals their location to their abuser. For others, it may simply be a preference – or they may not wish to disclose their reasons.

When we take photographs or video, we will inform attendees of the service/event in advance. This may be during notices, as part of the advertisement or registration for the event, or with signs at the service/event. We will make attendees aware of the purpose for which we are taking photographs, and what to do if they do not wish to be included.

### 2 Conditions of use of photos and videos

- 2.1 Where we use photographs for external purposes, we will not include the subject's name or personal details in, or with, the image. Names should also be removed from file names and alt tags when uploading photos online, as these may be accessible to users of these sites.
- 2.2 Where there is a legitimate reason for a name to be included, for example to celebrate the winner of a competition, we will obtain specific written consent from the individual (or their parent if under 18) before it is used.
- 2.3 Where we name a child or young person in text used for external purposes, we will not include a photo of them unless covered under 2.2.
- 2.4 We will not include personal email or postal addresses, or telephone, mobile or fax numbers, with images used for external purposes.
- 2.5 Where we use group photographs, we will use very general labels, such as 'children's day' or 'youth festival'.

We will only use images of children and young people who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of those photos or videos being used inappropriately.

### 3 Photographs and video of young people

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018, we will obtain parental consent before we photograph or make video recordings of children or young people. Occasionally, we may take photographs of children and young people at events. We may use these images for external purposes.

We will include photo and video consent on every registration and consent form for our groups, events and projects. We will also ask specifically about internal and external purposes, because in many cases families may consent to photos being taken provided that they are not used externally.

Where a parent wishes to change their photo consent, for example to withdraw it once the form has been completed, it is their responsibility to inform us. Where there is doubt (for example where consent is given for an event but in the past it has always been withheld), we will check with the parent before taking photos.

In addition to parental consent, we will respect the right of the child or young person themselves to choose not to be photographed. If a child who has parental photo consent asks not to be photographed, we will not photograph them.

Where our sessions take place in public places, for example attending a large event, the law does not require individuals to seek consent before taking photographs. It may therefore not be possible to prevent photos of individuals being taken by those outside WRBC, regardless of photo consent. This includes the use of those photos in local or national media. In these circumstances we will endeavour to keep those individuals out of photos taken by others, but we cannot guarantee it. We will nevertheless continue to observe photo consent for photos that we ourselves take of the group at such events.

### 4 Photos taken by young people at WRBC events

Please refer to section 4 of the WRBC Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy (part of the WRBC Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on the church website).

### 5 Photographs and video of adults at risk

Please refer to section 1.4 of Working with Adults & Adults at Risk document, which can be found on the church website.

### 6 Photographs at large events

There are some occasions, particularly at large outreach events, where the photographer will not be familiar with every attendee. This will make it difficult for them to exclude individuals who have not given consent for photos to be taken (or who have only given consent for images to be used internally). It may also be difficult to ask individuals to move out of photos without embarrassing them or drawing attention to the fact that they do not give photo consent.

In this case the photographer may take, or be provided with, a reference photo of each individual who does not consent to their photo being used. This reference photo can then be compared with the photos of the event, so that photos which show those individuals can be cropped or deleted to remove them. **All images of those individuals**, including the original reference photo, **must then be removed before the photos can be used.**

This process should be explained to the individual and, if under 18, their parents. They should be reassured that all images of themselves/their child will be removed. Care should still be taken to

avoid taking photos of these individuals – however this can be a useful safeguard where this is difficult to ensure.

Should the individual or their parent be unhappy with these arrangements, an alternative (such as a coloured wristband to indicate no photo consent) should be considered.

*Last Reviewed: Jan 2022*



**APPENDIX 9**  
**WRBC Photography Permission Form**

Name of Child:

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Church Organisation/ Club child attends:

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To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018, permission must be granted by the parent/responsible adult\* before any image/video of your child is taken and used. Please answer questions below, then sign and date the form where shown.

This form is valid for one year from the date of signing / this project only\*\*. Your consent will automatically expire after this time.

To the parent /responsible adult\*

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. May we use your child's image for internal church use?                       | YES/NO |
| 2. May we use your child's image externally on our website/ social media pages? | YES/NO |

I have read and understood the conditions of use on this form.

Name: (parent/ responsible adult\*)

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Signed:

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Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Parent/responsible adult\* name (Block capitals)

\* A person aged 18 years or above with parental responsibility

\*\* Delete as appropriate

*Last Reviewed: Jan 2022*

## APPENDIX 10

### WRBC Driver Self Declaration Form

You have offered to transport children and/or adults at risk at WRBC. In accordance with Baptist Union guidelines and our Safeguarding Policy we need you to confirm that your car is fully licensed, that you have comprehensive insurance and that you have not been prosecuted and convicted for any driving offences. All information will be kept in a confidential manner and reviewed on an annual basis.

We understand that if you inform your insurers that you plan to use your car to voluntarily transport children or adults at risk there should be no increase to your insurance premium. However, if your insurer is not informed and you are involved in an accident your insurance may be invalid. Please check with your insurer to confirm this.

Guidelines for all drivers involved in the transportation of children, young people and adults at risk on behalf of the church can be found in section 3 of the Safeguarding Policy.

Please complete the form below and return to your group leader before transporting children or adults at risk.

Thank you for your co-operation.



### WRBC Driver Self Declaration Form



Name:

- I confirm I hold a clean and current driving licence and have not been prosecuted for any driving offences.
- I confirm that my vehicle is fully licensed and road worthy.
- I confirm I have notified my car insurers that I will use my car to transport children and/or adults at risk for WRBC.

Signature:

Date:

*Last Reviewed: Jan 2022*



Please give details of any special dietary requirements:

If swimming is included in the programme, do you consent to your child taking part? YES/NO

If yes, what distance can your child swim without buoyancy aids?

Are there any activities included in the programme to which you do not give consent?

Please give details of anything else we should know about your child (for example anxiety or travel sickness).

### SECTION 3 – PHOTO/VIDEO CONSENT

Taking photos and video clips are an important way for us to record our activities and share memories. By internal purposes, we are referring to storing photos to use only within our church. External purposes may include the use of images on the church website, on social media, or in the media.

Do you consent to photos/video of your child being used for internal purposes? YES/NO  
Do you consent to photos/video of your child being used for external purposes? YES/NO

### SECTION 4 – DECLARATION (to be signed by a parent, or adult with parental responsibility)

I understand the nature of the activities in the programme and the travel arrangements, and I give consent for my child to participate. I understand that the leaders will take all reasonable care in looking after my child, but they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss of or damage to property during, or as a result of, this event.

In an emergency, if I cannot be contacted despite all reasonable attempts to do so by the leaders, I give permission for my son/daughter to undergo emergency medical/dental treatment including the use of anaesthetics as considered necessary by the medical authorities.

I give permission for Walsworth Road Baptist Church to process the personal data given on this form for use in relation to my child taking part in this trip.

I have read and I agree to the WRBC Code of Conduct and WRBC Behaviour Policy.

I enclose payment of \_\_\_\_\_ for the event (if applicable. Cheques made payable to Walsworth Road Baptist Church.)

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Last Reviewed: Jan 2022*