



Safeguarding Policy for Watnall Road Baptist Church

1. Safeguarding policy statement for Watnall Road Baptist Church

Our vision is to bring hope in the heart of our community through engagement, evangelism and encounter.

1.1 In fulfilling this vision, we:

- Welcome children and adults at risk into the life of our community
- Run activities 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 behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and adults at risk so that all children and adults are shown the respect that is due to them.

- **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.

2. Safeguarding contact points within our church

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

Angela Francis, Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)

She 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.

07974 395 197/ 0115 963 0536 angela.francis1@hotmail.co.uk

Helen McVicar, Safeguarding Trustee

She 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.

07749 044 432/ 0115 963 2891 helenmcvicar@sky.com

The EMBA Safeguarding Advisors are Alan Davies (07963675951) and Dave Bedford (07737946681).

For **urgent advice** contact the **thirtyone:eight helpline on 0303 003 1111**.

Our church minister is 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).

2.2 Putting our policy into practice

- A copy of the safeguarding policy statement will be displayed permanently on the church noticeboard and church office, and is available on our church website.
- Each worker with children and/or adults at risk will be given a full copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures and will be asked to sign to confirm that they will follow them.
- A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of, or other person associated with the church.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually, and any necessary revisions adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures.
- The policy statement will be read annually at the church AGM, together with a report on the outcome of the annual safeguarding review.

3. Safeguarding procedures

3.1 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.

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

How to respond to abuse or concerns

If you know or suspect a child or adult is being abused or may be at risk of abuse, or you have concerns about their wellbeing, don't wait until you are absolutely sure. This doesn't mean that you are jumping to conclusions or making judgements about the situation, it simply means that there is a safeguarding concern.

- 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

In these circumstances, do not delay. Pass on your concerns to your church Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours. If they are not available or are implicated in the concern, speak to the Deacon who is the Safeguarding Trustee, the Minister or get in touch with your Local Association Safeguarding Contact.

If an adult or child is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay.

If someone discloses abuse directly to you, then remember to:

Listen Take what is said seriously;

Reassure Tell them that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that you believe them;

Remain Calm No matter how difficult it is to listen to what is being disclosed. You have been chosen because the person feels able to talk to you;

Be honest Do not promise full confidentiality or offer false reassurance;

Be open Do not ask leading or closed questions, such as "Did she hit you?" It is not your role to investigate. As soon as you have enough information to concern you, stop probing.

Ask Request their consent to share information and seek help;

Explain Tell them that you are going to tell 'x' the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or an appropriate alternative if necessary – see above) and give them a timescale;

Write Document everything the adult at risk has told you, in their own words. You will need to record the questions you asked as well as the answers or information given. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure and should include the time and date;

Report Contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours (or appropriate alternative if necessary– see above) and report the disclosure;

Keep quiet The concerns you have should be kept confidential between you, the adult concerned, the Designated Person for Safeguarding (and the church safeguarding team, if

applicable). The Designated Person for Safeguarding may need to inform the Association Safeguarding Contact and the statutory authorities.

Never go and talk to the alleged abuser or try to investigate the allegations yourself.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding will complete a **Safeguarding Incident Form** and decide on what action will follow.

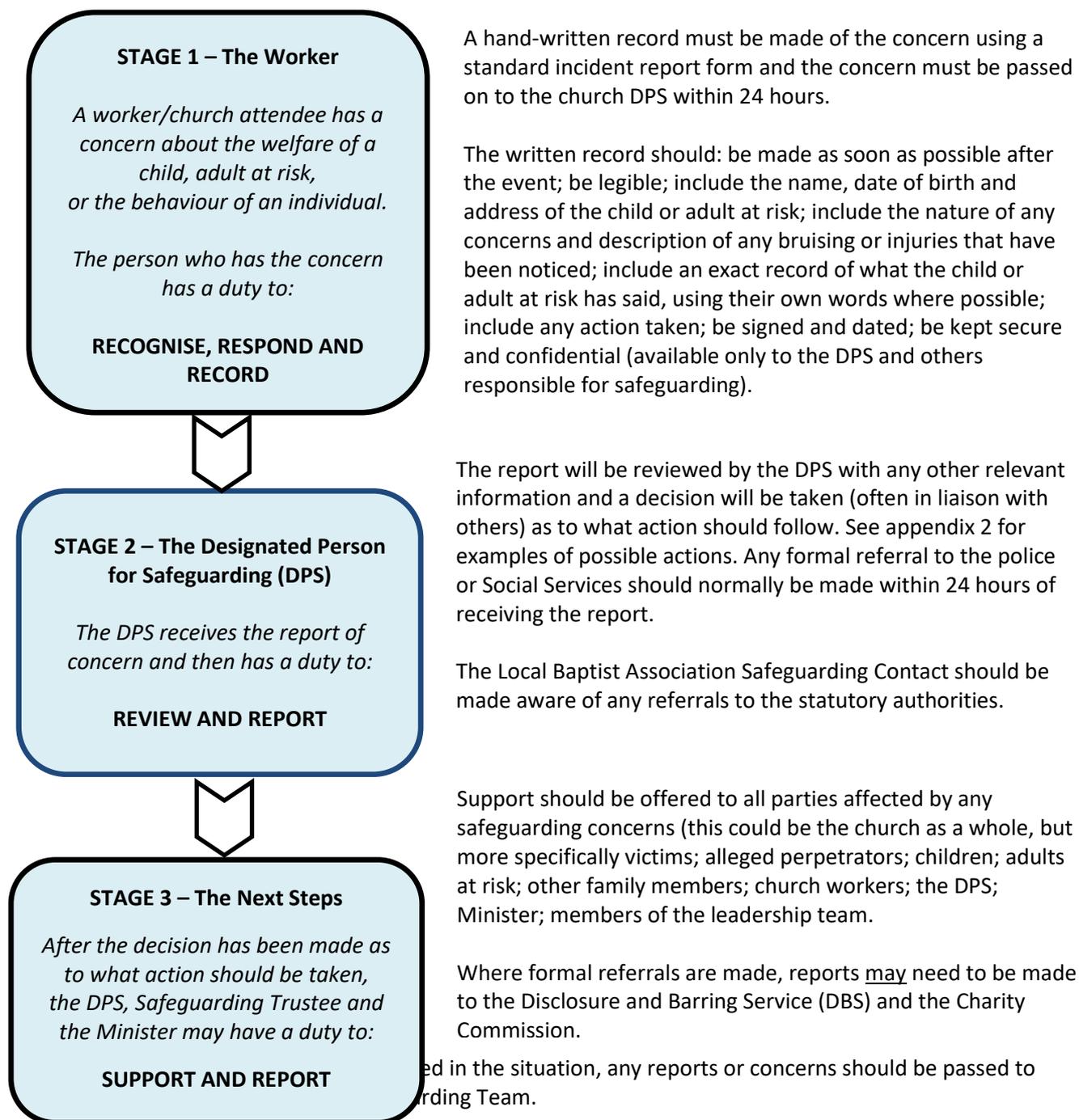
If the police or Social Care Services are contacted then the Association Safeguarding Contact should be informed as soon as possible afterwards. This should be done by the Designated Person for Safeguarding, even if they weren't the person to whom the disclosure was made.

If an adult at risk doesn't want any help the disclosure should still be recorded and monitored but it must still be reported to the DPS.

If there are any concerns about the *mental capacity* of an adult at risk, always refer to your local authority Adult Social Care Services for advice.

3.2 Responding to Concerns

When there are concerns that a child, young person or adult is being abused, the following process must be followed.



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

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

3.5 Allegations Made Against Children and Adults at Risk

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, 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.

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

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

3.6 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.

3.7 Supporting those who have experienced abuse

As a church, we are committed to caring for those who have experienced abuse and 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 has a list of relevant local information and contacts, ready for anyone who may need it.

3.7 Safer recruitment in appointing volunteer leaders and helpers

As a church, we are committed to safer recruitment practices.

Children and young people's groups:

- When a post is vacant the existing leaders will discuss with the Ministry Team what is needed in terms of an outline description of the tasks, responsibilities and time commitment involved as well as the name of the person to whom the volunteer is responsible.
- The job profile will be announced verbally in the notices and placed in the church notice sheet.
- When an interest is expressed an informal discussion will take place asking for details of interests, gifts and experiences, particularly any previous work with children and young people. A volunteer will also be asked to agree to complete a Disclosure and Barring Services Application
- Interviewing – this will take the form of an informal chat with the Children's and Family Worker or Youth Worker. (For a key leadership role the Minister may also be involved in this process) It will give an opportunity to discern whether the volunteer is suitable for the role and together discuss the responsibilities of the post and the volunteer's experience.
- Making the appointment – any decision must be made on the basis of the best interests of the children and young people.

- Where a leader or helper in under 18 they will be in a clear relationship of guidance/mentoring with another leader and in a clear 'apprenticeship' role with high accountability. They will not be able to act independently within this role or lead activities without an adult leader present.

Coffee Shop Volunteers

Coffee shop volunteers are usually recruited through people attending the church. They will all have a DBS check once they are regular volunteers – prior to that they will work under close supervision. They will all undergo level 2 safeguarding training every 3 years when it is available.

They are aged 18+ and their volunteering is seen as part of their service to the church.

There are at least two volunteers working at any one time.

A leaflet has been written to give guidance to volunteers, and a brief summary of safeguarding procedures is displayed in the kitchen.

Renew 34

Hosts for Renew 34 are recruited by identifying people within the church who would be suitable for this role. They will have a DBS check once they are regular hosts and prior to that they will work under supervision. Hosts will undergo level 2 safeguarding training every 3 years.

Training is available for hosts and volunteers via Renew Wellbeing and a review is held once a year.

Natter

Volunteers are recruited from within the church.

At least two helpers each week will have been DBS checked and they will carry the overall responsibility for that week.

Volunteers will receive level 2 safeguarding training every 3 years when available.

3.9 Safeguarding Training

All those working with children and/or adults at risk will receive Safeguarding Training level 2 provided by the EMBA every 3 years.

The Safeguarding Trustee, Designated Person for Safeguarding, all Deacons and the Minister, Children & Families Worker and Youth Worker will receive level 3 training.

Each helper/volunteer will be required to attend a WRBC led training session.

3.10 Pastoral Visiting

Volunteers who work within the pastoral care team are identified from those who are regular attenders of the church and are people who are particularly suited to this type of work (caring, good listeners etc).

Wherever possible no one visits someone of the opposite sex on their own. Other visits may be conducted in pairs where this is considered to be the best option.

The visitors are made aware of the safeguarding policy and will have level 2 training where possible.

3.11 DBS Checks

All those working with children and young people will be required to complete a DBS: Disclosure and Barring Services Application – this can be carried out after a decision to appoint a volunteer to a post has been reached.

In working with adults at risk, an enhanced DBS check is needed if the worker is involved in

- **Providing personal care**
Anyone who assists with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc.
Anyone who prompts and supervises with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc., as the adult cannot make the decision to do so themselves.
Anyone who trains, instructs or offers advice on the above because of an adult's age, illness or disability.
- **Assistance with cash, bills and/or shopping**
Anyone who assists in managing an adult's cash, paying their bills or shopping on their behalf.
- **Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs**
Anyone who provides assistance in the conduct of an adult's own affairs, for example, lasting or enduring powers of attorney.
- **Conveying**

Anyone who transports an adult to, from or between places where they receive health, personal or social care (this does not include transporting people to and from church).

Someone who does not fit the requirement for a DBS check will still need an understanding and awareness of working with adults at risk.

The BU stress that if a person has no criminal record it does not mean that they are suitable for work with children and young people and this can only form part of good practice.

3.12 Young leaders under 18 years of age

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

3.13 Volunteer agreements

All new volunteers will be asked to sign a Volunteer agreement. This ensures that volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

4. Safer behaviour

4.1 Code of behaviour

The church has a code of behaviour for all those working with children and/or adults at risk so that everyone is shown the respect that is due to them:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Use age and ability appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on the child or adult at risk.
- Listen well to everyone. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or adult at risk is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is being spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the individual's body language to better understand what is being said.
- Be aware of any physical contact you may have with a child or adult at risk and record it when necessary. For instance, if you need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to someone in distress, or protect yourself or others from danger.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult at risk, even in 'fun'.
- Do not scapegoat, belittle, ridicule or reject a child or adult at risk.
- Keep a record of any significant incidents or concerns on a Safeguarding Incident Form. Enter the names of all those present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made, etc. All workers who witnessed the incident, overheard it or responded in any way should record the details and sign and date the form.

Specific considerations when working with children:

- Do not invade the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering
- The level of assistance with personal care (eg. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Avoid rough games involving physical contact between a worker and a child
- Avoid sexually provocative games
- When it is necessary to discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. There may, however, on the rare occasion be circumstances where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.
- Only invite children and young people to your home or on trips in groups and always make sure

that another worker is present.

- Notify the DPS of any children's trips which take place in the name of the church. Parental permission must always be sought.
- Do not give lifts to children or young people on your own. Ensure that if transporting children as part of your church role, you have the correct insurance cover in place as well as parental permission.
- No person under 18 years of age should be left in sole charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.

No one should normally be left working alone with children, young people or adults at risk, but should instead work as part of a team. If there are insufficient leaders for groups:

- Internal doors should be left open.
- At least two people should be present before external doors are opened for an event.
- Consider whether you could combine groups together or rearrange planned activities.
- Reconsider whether you can run the group safely, carrying out a Risk Assessment to record your findings.

If workers do find themselves on their own with children or adults at risk, they should:

- Assess the risk of sending the child or adult at risk home.
- Phone another team member and let them know the situation.
- Train additional leaders as soon as possible.

If a child or adult at risk wants to talk on a one-to-one basis you should make sure that:

- You try to hold the conversation in a corner of a room where other people are present.
- You leave the door open if you are in a room on your own.
- Another team member knows where you are.

Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with the group and whether they should be male or female workers, or both. See section 4.4 for recommended ratios. 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.

4.2 Financial Integrity

Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done.

Church workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances or expenses.

Any gifts received should be reported to the deacons, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.

Any money received by the church should be handed to the treasurer or his/her assistant who will provide you with a receipt.

If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the deacons. We strongly recommend that church workers (including ministers) should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.

4.3 Photographs

Permission must be sought before photographs are taken, and if you intend to upload it, make sure that they're happy for people to see it online. When taking group pictures remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

4.4 Good practice in running activities and events for children and young people

Ratios

In all the activities, at all times – each group must ensure that there is a suitable ratio of leaders and helpers of children. These ratios vary according to the age of the children and the nature of the activity. There must also be a balance of male and female leaders in each group.

- Any helpers under the age of 18 are effectively counted as children and young people for the purpose of calculating ratios.
- The number and sizes of rooms being used during activities must also be taken into account when considering ratios.
- Recommended ratios are as follows and these are the ratios we will use when planning groups and activities

Indoor Activities

Age	0-2 years	1:3
	2-3 years	1:4
	3-8 years	1:8
	8 and over	2: 20 (1 male and 1 female, plus 1 extra adult per 10 Children and young people)

Outdoor Activities

Age	0-2 years	1:3
	2-3 years	1:4
	3-8 years	1:6
	8-13 years	2: 15 (1male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult per 8 Children and young people)
	13 and over	2:20 (1 male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult per 10 Children and young people)

Registers

- Registers will be taken at all activities (Sunday and midweek) Ensuring that this is carried out is the responsibility of the Session/Activity leader.
- Where parents and carers are not staying on the premises during an activity they will be required to register a child or teenager with a leader or helper before leaving. This registration should include contact details for the duration of the session.
- A child should not be left at a church activity unless the necessary consent forms and paperwork have been completed and handed into the leaders.

Children with no adult supervision

When children turn up to and want to join in with church activities without the knowledge of their parents/carers, workers will:

- Welcome the child and try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number.
- Record their visit in a register.
- Ask the child if a parent/carer is aware of where they are. Where possible, phone and make contact.
- Without interrogating the child, find out as soon as possible whether they have any specific needs (eg. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Give the child a consent form and explain it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.

Mentoring

If a worker is working with a young person as part of the recognised church mentoring programme:

- The parents of all young people involved in mentoring are required to sign a letter to say they are aware that the mentoring is happening and who it is with.
- Mentoring meetings should only be held in agreed places, and should be in view of other people.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time and someone should be aware that a meeting is taking place and where it is being held.
- A basic record should be kept of dates of significant meetings and any text messages or emails.

- Appropriate boundaries should be put in place in regard to times and demand, ie not phoning or texting late at night, etc.
- A written record should be kept of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.

Dropping off and collection of children

- It is the parent or carer's responsibility to ensure that their child has arrived safely and is registered at an activity. In midweek activities parents should bring their children into the building and register them with the appropriate leader. They should not drop off their children on Watnall Road and allow them to make their own way into the church building.
- At the end of each session the leaders must ensure that all children/young people leave with a responsible and recognised adult.

If a young person is intending to travel to and from activities on their own, the leaders should obtain written consent from parents to say that this is the arrangement.

Transporting children and young people

- All private transport must have correct insurance for passengers. (All volunteer drivers can check this with their own company.) A maximum ratio of 1 adult to 4 children and young people is acceptable for transporting by car.
- Where Hire coaches are used, it must be ensured that the company has full insurance cover and there is a seatbelt for each person.
- Where adults are giving lifts to children/young people in their cars, wherever possible they should avoid giving lifts to children/ young people on their own. If they are alone then the child should be asked to sit in the back.
- Parents and carers will have been asked to sign a consent form in respect of the travel arrangements.
- On every trip that involves transporting children and young people, each adult should be allocated a group of children or young people with a written list of names for who they are responsible, even if the whole group is to remain together. It is best that the group should travel to and from the event with the same adult (if groups are to be changed for the return journey then new lists should be allocated.)

Overnight Activities

(The document 'Safe to Grow' has detailed guidelines for overnight arrangements both on church premises and for taking a group away. These should be consulted by those organising such an event)

Basic considerations are as follows:-

- There should be male and female leaders at the event.
- Males and females should sleep separately. (A decision should be made about whether or not the adults should sleep in the same room/area as the children and young people.)
- Where an overnight stay is involved leaders should meet together to agree how they will best protect themselves, the children and young people. (These arrangements will depend on age, numbers and premises. The agreed details should be confirmed with the Responsible Persons.)

Relationships with parents and carers

- All children and young people should be registered and parents/carers asked for details of full name, date of birth, address, contact telephone numbers. Consent forms for emergency medical treatment should be completed.
- Parents/ carers should be advised of the Safe to Grow policy of the church and given a written statement about who is caring for their child and the name and contact details of the leader.
- If a young person requests or a leader feels that a one-to-one meeting should be offered then Parents/Carers will always be advised by the leader. If parental consent is not given then the meeting would not take place.
- The parents/carers should be advised of what action would be taken if a child protection issue arises.

- There should be a clear understanding of what sort of activities the child or young person will be doing and the time limit of these.
- Arrangements for returning children/young people to their parents' care should be clarified.

Good Practice in relationships with Children and Young People

As leaders and helpers of children and young people the relationships we form with them are a crucial part of the care we give to them. As adults who seek to be caring and nurturing leaders and helpers we are in a place of great trust, responsibility and privilege. The details of our relationships with the children and young people in our care will be influenced by a number of factors, for example individual personalities, how well we know the children, their age and needs. However, in order to ensure their safety and ours, it is essential that we follow the good practice guidelines.

Speaking and listening

- All children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity. We will use age appropriate language and tone of voice.
- We will listen well to the children, being careful not to assume that we know what they are thinking or feeling. We will listen to what is spoken, how it is said and observe their body language.
- If it becomes necessary to discipline and control a child this will be done without shouting.
- We will never engage in scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.

Role modelling

- We will be aware always that as leaders of the children and young people we are also role models in our actions, our relationships and our speech. At no time should anything that we say or do, either intentionally or inadvertently undermine or negatively influence their relationship or perception of others.
- In our relationships with other CYF leaders, the leaders of the church and other people in the church we will always seek to model the qualities love, grace, encouragement and forgiveness. We will take seriously that we are called to be like Jesus in the way we treat and respond to others.
- If at any time we have issues that need to be resolved between adults in the church we will do so away from the children and young people and will not discuss any details of that issue with the children and young people.
- When young people and children's groups are having times of sharing and prayer etc. we will be cautious about what we share on a personal level. As leaders we will not share in detail about our own personal relationships and life issues/ problems (instead this should be shared in appropriate peer group or ministry settings). However, it may be appropriate to share some level of personal experience to illustrate a point in a discussion.

Physical Contact

- A sensitive approach is needed in relation to the appropriateness of physical contact between adults and children/young people in church. Church is an environment where brief hugs, kisses or an arm around the shoulder are a part of greeting one another, or offering support, reassurance or encouragement. Wisdom and sensitivity are needed to establish the boundaries of what is, or is not, appropriate. This will vary from individual to individual; according to situations, circumstances and relationships – as long as boundaries are clear and appropriate some physical contact is acceptable. E.g. there can be a genuine need to reassure a hurt or upset child by putting an arm around their shoulders; it is appropriate to give a brief hug to a teenager who shares some good news with the group.
- At all times we need to be aware that not everyone welcomes this kind of contact, including some children. To a child who has suffered abuse an innocent touch from a leader can have a more sinister meaning; if a child is shy or new to the group physical contact can make them feel extremely uncomfortable. If a child or young person cringes or responds in some other negative way to physical contact then alternative ways should be found to express concern, comfort or support.
- All adults should be aware of their own and co-workers behaviour in terms of physical contact. We should always ask, "For whose benefit is this taking place?"

- If it becomes necessary to discipline and control a child this will be done without physical punishment.
- On any occasions where a child or young person may need to be restrained to protect themselves or others, help on safe handling techniques will be sought.
- We should not engage in rough games that involve extreme physical contact between leaders/helpers and children/young people.
- If a child needs to be taken to the toilet, their privacy should not be invaded.
- If a child needs to change soiled under clothes and be washed – if possible the child's parent/carer should be brought to carry out the task. Where this isn't possible another adult should be present with the leader carrying out the task. For babies and toddlers this may mean keeping the door open from the main room into the toilet and changing area rather than two adults needing to be in the changing room.

Personal Relationships

- As leaders and helpers we form relationships of trust with the children and young people in our care. As such we must not abuse this position of 'power'.
- Where leaders have close 'friendship' relationships with individual children or young people (perhaps due to close family ties and friendships) it is important that this does not impact the dynamics of the group. Favouritism should not be shown, closeness should not be overt and where arrangements are made that take account of the closer relationship (for example: a leader giving a lift home to a child who is a family friend.) This should be regarded as a private arrangement and made clear to the group leaders.
- It is acceptable to invite a group of young people to a leader's home as long as there is another adult present. (Ideally if the home is that of a couple there should be a third adult present.) Where this is not the case a member of the Ministry team should know that the group is meeting)
- It is best not to invite a child or young person into your home if they or you are alone. However, accepting that a teenager may unexpectedly arrive at a leaders home to talk through an issue seek advice in such a way that it cannot be postponed – then the leader should inform a member of the ministry team that the visit is taking place.
- It is wrong for a leader to enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a child or young person in their care. (Clearly it would be illegal with a child, but even in the context of a young leader and a 16 year old child this would not be acceptable in the context of church youth work) This would lead to a confusion of roles and a potential abuse of trust. (If a leader chooses to enter into such a relationship with a young person in their care they would be expected to immediately step down from their leadership role within the church and action would be taken within the safeguarding guidelines)
- Leaders/ Helpers should not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun.
- We should not engage in sexually provocative games.
- Leaders should not respond to excessive attention seeking behaviour that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Leaders should not discuss their own personal relationships either with or in the presence of children and young people although some level of personal past experience may be shared if appropriate.

4.5 Good practice in Health and Safety

- The Health and Safety Policy of Watnall Road Baptist Church should be adhered to at all times. This policy is available separately;
- Children and Young People should not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present. (Responsible being those who are over 18, have been checked by the DBS and are known to the children, young people parents and carers)
- As leaders and helpers we need to consider the following

- First Aid and Accident Book – As many leaders and helpers as possible will take a basic First Aid course. All Accidents will need to be recorded and information given to parents/carers. The book will be kept in the kitchen.
- Fire Equipment and Drill – we need to make sure that we know the Fire Exits, Assembly point and the location of Fire Extinguishers in case of fire.
- Security – we need to ensure that children and Young People cannot leave the building unnoticed and similarly that no one can enter the building without a leaders or helper knowing.
- Activities away from the church premises may require leaders/helpers to carry out a risk assessment before going. E.g. swimming
- All other aspects of health and safety are covered by the Church's policy.

4.6 Good Practice in the Use of technology

The use of technology and Media is a reality and is here to stay. We recognise that all use of technology has impact – some of it helpful some of it unhelpful and some of it raises concerns for the well-being of those using it. In order to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people, vulnerable adults and the leaders and helpers we will adhere to the following guidelines in relation to the use of technology.

Social media sites

- As leaders and helpers, wherever possible, we will use technology to communicate with young people using a means which is visible to others i.e. Group Facebook Page.
- When using social media to connect with young people- as far as possible we will use secure groups for sending arrangements and information; we will send messages that make it clear we are young people's leaders.
- Wherever possible we will avoid inbox messages and private messaging. If it necessary to do so, for example, to follow up an existing issue then the guidelines (below) will be followed.
- When the above cannot be avoided – the following practices should be adopted.
 - Ensure another the youth worker is informed.
 - Keep notes or copies of the messages (particularly if concerned about information within the message).
 - Inform the DPS that a conversation is taking place.
 - If a young person inboxes about a personal/ pastoral situation – it is important to follow the above guidelines and ensure that the young person knows that another leader will be informed of the conversation.
- We will use language that is appropriate and transparent in its meaning – messages sent will be for the purposes of organisation, information or encouragement. We will not engage in long one to one interactions with young people or children through the use of technology.
- We will only become Social Media friends with young people who are involved in groups run by the church and for whom we have written parental consent for their attendance and involvement in activities. These young people will then immediately be added to a church young people's group .e.g. 180, 180+ Groups (in light of this a leader still has the right to decide not to accept a friend request)
- We will not accept friendship requests from young people in fringe groups (e.g. Explore) and School groups (IMPACT) – in these contexts it is advisable to explain to the Young People the good practice guidelines of the church so that they understand why the decision is made.
- We will not accept friendship requests from children or young people under the age of 14 without explicit consent from parents.

Private/personal use of social media

At all times we will be aware that we are in a position of responsibility and role models to young people and others in the community, When posting personal messages on Social Media networks we will do so with an awareness that they are seen by many

- we will not swear or use inappropriate language

- we will not enter into discussions or chats which involve talking about other people or situations that could be understood as gossip, belittlement, mocking or bullying
- We will only post personal messages that are fitting to the integrity of our role as children, family, youth workers.

Texting

We fully accept that texting is a common and necessary form of communication therefore it is essential that leaders recognise their personal responsibility for safety of themselves and others in the nature of the messages they send and receive.

- When texting is used for the purposes of organisation and information where appropriate send a group text (advisable to include another leader in the text)
- Use language that is appropriate and transparent in its meaning (avoid ambiguous messages such as 'you free for coffee?' and instead ideally text messages such as 'if you would like to meet up and chat through the things that were discussed at 180 on Sunday we could go for coffee'. Such explicit messaging is especially important with young people who are new to groups or from families that are not part of the wider church family.
- It is best to refrain from using phrases or terms of affection such as 'love from' or kisses at the end of texts or messages.

4.7 Safer community

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.

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

- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously 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.
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.
- 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.

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.

Working with Alleged or Known Offenders

- If it becomes known that within our congregation there is an offender or someone against whom a serious allegation has been made, our local association should be contacted without delay. There are several processes which will need to be followed, but each one is dealt with on a case by case basis, and the Association Safeguarding Contact will have the expertise to help our church at each step.
- Further, more detailed guidance is available in the Safe to Belong document.

5. What is covered by this Policy?

The policy covers allegations of actual or suspected abuse against adults at risk, which have taken place on church premises or during an activity organised by the church, or where the alleged perpetrator is a church worker.

Church activities include, for example:

- Visiting on behalf of the church a vulnerable person in their home to provide a service of a practical or spiritual nature
- Providing a group within the church specifically or primarily for children or adults at risk.

WRBC has identified the following as the activities in the church primarily working with children or adults at risk but abuse can happen in any church setting.

- Sunday morning childrens' groups
- After school /weekend youth and children's' such as Xplore and 180.
- Coffee Shop
- Renew 34
- Natter
- Pastoral visiting team

The policy applies to all 'church workers' i.e. Ministers, employees, church leaders, church members, volunteers, helpers and any person whether a church member or not who works with or supports children and adults at risk in the context of Church.

Other organisations which use or hire the church building are expected to have their own policy and procedures for safeguarding adults at risk.

From time to time, church members may become aware of abuse or neglect of a child or adult at risk e.g. when visiting an elderly friend in the community or in a care home, where the allegation is unconnected with the church. Such concerns would be dealt with under the Nottinghamshire multi-disciplinary safeguarding procedures. The Designated Person for Safeguarding can give advice in these cases.