



Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Handbook

Compiled from material provided by various sources.

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Parklands Evangelical Church CIO
Maes Y Gollen, Sketty, Swansea SA2 8HQ
01792 204767 | admin@parklandschurch.org.uk
www.parklandschurch.org.uk
Senior Leader: Matthew Crome

Registered charity no: 1185754

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Introduction

Parklands Evangelical Church CIO has put in place this Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Handbook. The aim is to ensure appropriate care for a Vulnerable Adult within our Church community.

Safeguarding means enabling people to live their lives free from harm, abuse and neglect, and to have their health, well-being and human rights protected.

Definition of a Vulnerable Adult: The Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 defines an 'adult at risk' as 'someone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves against harm or exploitation'.

Exploitation concerns the violation of an individuals' human and civil rights by another person or persons.

For the purposes of our church community, we choose to use the term 'Vulnerable adult' rather than 'Adult at risk', whilst defining the term in exactly the same way as in the 2014 statutory regulations.

Abuse can include: verbal, physical, financial/material, sexual psychological, discriminatory, emotional abuse and neglect. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetrated by anybody.

Vulnerable Adults could include people with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Problems, Older People and Disabled People, **particularly when their situation is compounded by additional factors such as** physical frailty, chronic illness, bereavement, sensory impairment, social problems, emotional problems, poverty, homelessness and substance abuse.

It should be noted that:

- Vulnerability is often not a permanent state;
- Vulnerability is not always visible;
- A person with apparently visible vulnerabilities may not perceive them as such;
- We are all vulnerable at different stages of life;
- Vulnerable people may also pose risk and cause harm

Key Principles for Protecting Vulnerable Adults:

- The welfare of the adult is paramount
- All Vulnerable Adults have the right to be protected and safeguarded from abuse
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteer have a responsibility to report concerns and implement the procedures and principals laid out in this handbook.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and/or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- Every day matters. It is better to help Vulnerable Adults as early as possible before issues escalate.
- Adults and their families are best protected and supported when there is a coordinated response from all relevant agencies. This requires the co-operation and sharing of information.

Parklands Church safeguarding policy will be available to be seen by leaders, the safeguarding team, workers, Vulnerable Adults and their families. It will be available to view on the Parklands Church website.

Context

Parklands Church has a ministry to both adults and children, including Vulnerable Adults, who are integrated into the events of the church as much as possible.

They are particularly supported by:

- A weekly gathering at Hazel Court, supporting the bereaved, the lonely, and those enjoying the assisted living opportunities that Hazel Court provides;
- A pastoral team who meet regularly online and aim to provide confidential support for those who have either temporary or longer term difficulties within the church community. Individuals known to the group are regularly monitored on a colour coded system of vulnerability, with those in 'red' prioritised for prayer and assistance, where possible;
- In person community and online 'circle' groups, which aim to support all adults within the environment of smaller groups connecting in people's homes and elsewhere. There is an opportunity for prayer and emotional support within these contexts.
- Pastoral visits by the leadership and pastoral team which aim to provide support for Vulnerable Adults, carried out within appropriate boundaries (see page 29);
- The linking up and forwarding on of Vulnerable Adults to others in the community who may be able to offer additional support.
- Counselling opportunities, where possible and appropriate.

It is the intention of our Church to offer support, encouragement and spiritual teaching to anyone who wishes to receive it. This means that we will come into contact with adults from many different backgrounds and we will encounter very different social patterns.

As a Church we take this responsibility very seriously and through teaching and this document, we endeavour to protect and safeguard the welfare of any Adults entrusted to our care. We recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for Vulnerable Adults. We acknowledge that they can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, verbal and hate crime, and of neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status".

As a leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

As part of our ministry as a Church, we are committed to:

- The care, nurture and respectful pastoral ministry with all Vulnerable Adults, where they are listened to, related effectively to, and valued.
- Encouraging and supporting their families and carers.
- Establishing safe and caring communities, which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
- A clear system to deal with concerns of possible abuse, and to maintain good links with local authorities

- Providing on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines
- Ensuring that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.

Staff and Volunteer Responsibility

Requirements by Law

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect so they can identify Vulnerable Adults who may be in need of protection, as laid out in the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, section 7.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the referral process in the event that they have concerns about the welfare of a Vulnerable Adult.

Responsibilities and Awareness

As far as possible, Parklands church will seek to integrate Vulnerable Adults into the life of the church as a whole.

It may be necessary to provide additional support to ensure Vulnerable Adults are not at risk of being harmed, or in a position to overly burden any member of the congregation or ministry team. They should not be placed in situations where they either could be harmed or could pose risk of causing harm to others, as far as possible.

All staff and volunteers involved in the provision of church services have a responsibility to be aware and alert to any signs of potential abuse. Not all concerns relate to abuse and there may well be another explanation. It is important, whilst being vigilant, to keep an open mind. Concerns should be emailed or discussed by phone with the Safeguarding Team (or the Senior Leader at an event, who may be used as a first port of call, unless it concerns them, and who should pass this on to the Safeguarding Team).

Staff and volunteers must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with current legislation on safe recruitment. All adults will be checked under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) procedures. This covers all who work with Vulnerable Adults, whether staff, volunteers, parents or carers.

The safe recruitment process is as follows:

1. There is a clear written job description or person specification for the post.
2. The applicant completes a volunteer application form and is interviewed if necessary.
3. The applicant is made aware of the Vulnerable Adult protection policy and given a copy.
4. References are checked and the current DBS process is completed. Qualifications where relevant have been verified.

Safe Working Practice

Workers need to follow the code of conduct guidelines to minimise the risk to Vulnerable Adults and/or of being accused of inappropriate behaviour towards a Vulnerable Adult.

Code of Conduct - General guidelines

Workers are expected to:

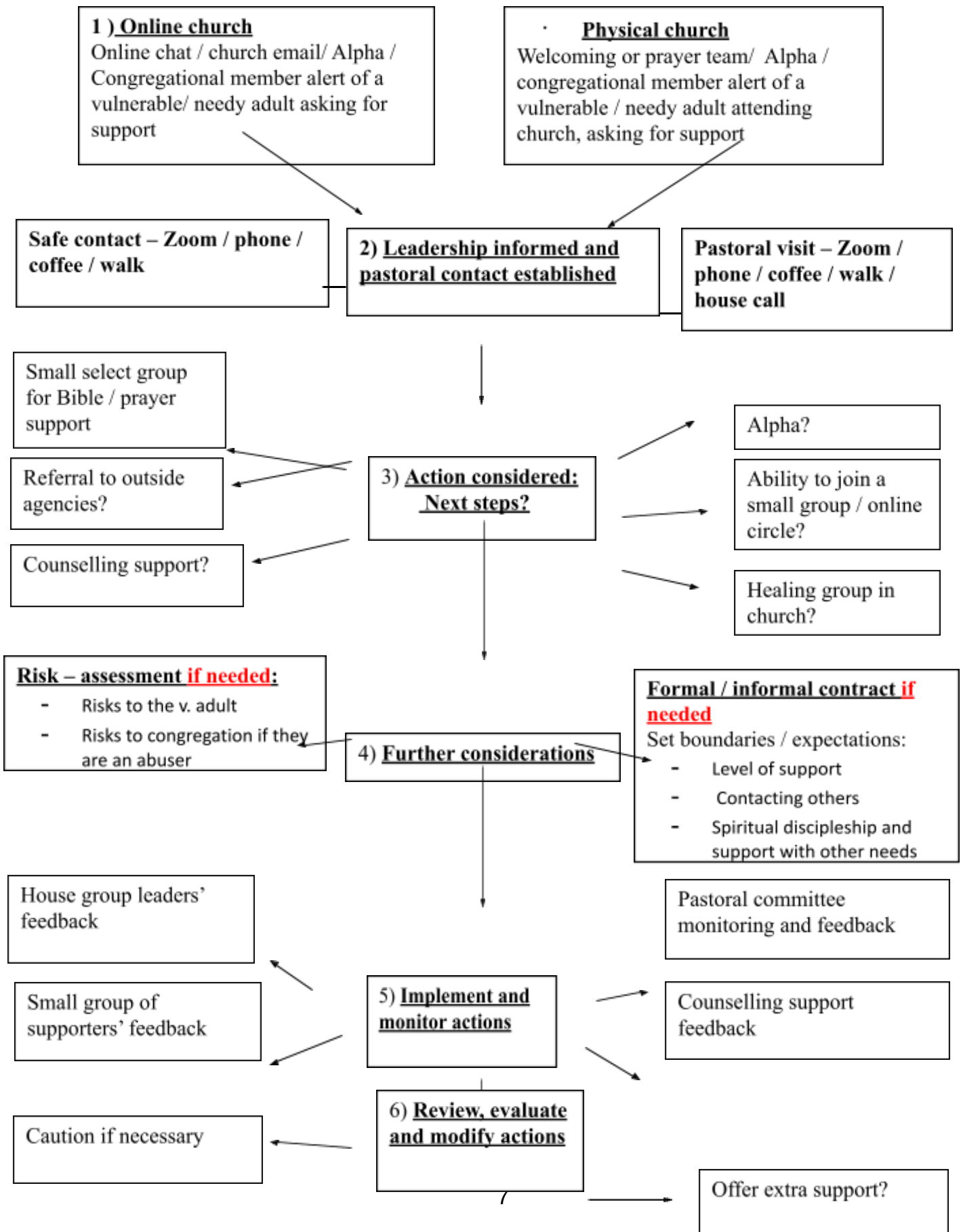
- Leaders and volunteers should take care to observe appropriate boundaries when working with Vulnerable Adults. They should seek advice immediately if they come across a Vulnerable Adult who may have been harmed, or a colleague or volunteer whose conduct appears inappropriate.
- Always respect the adult. Ask about personal preferences, forms of address, how much help might be needed, whether a hug is appropriate. Sometimes it may be necessary to set boundaries for some to ensure the safety of others.
- Do not assume that someone's level of comprehension matches their verbal communication.
- Beware of creating dangerous dependencies. If a Vulnerable Adult is becoming too attached to you, report your concerns discretely to another member of the team. Note any serious concerns / conversations in writing.
- Set a good example: challenge inappropriate behaviour but do so courteously. Be aware of your own power, even if you don't feel powerful.

Visiting a Vulnerable Adult in a home setting:

- Most home visits are straightforward as the adult will be well known to the church. If there are concerns or risks, take another adult along and meet them elsewhere if necessary. Think before you act, and listen to your instincts.
- Never offer 'over the counter' medicines to the people you visit. Do not administer prescribed medicines even if asked to do so.
- Don't offer any advice if you are not qualified to do so – it is fine to say you don't know and seek further information to answer a query. If you are out of your depth, seek advice and refer a person to others.
- Be clear about your boundaries: keep to agreed limits on how much time you will spend with someone and how often you will come. Don't take on extra responsibilities on a bit-by-bit basis. Be realistic about the amount of time that you have and don't feel that you have to say yes to every request for help.
- Set a pattern and expectations about communications between visits. Beware of over-frequent texting or emailing and exchanges late at night.
- Avoid handling money on behalf of Vulnerable Adults wherever possible. If necessary, be sure to provide receipts and cover your actions (another person may be needed to serve as a witness).
- Do not accept any gifts from Vulnerable Adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family.

For detailed information regarding Parkland's policy on communicating via digital platforms and social media with regard to Vulnerable Adults, please refer to Parkland's digital media policies.

Flow chart of Routes to Integration for a Vulnerable Adult:



Definitions and General Indications of Abuse

Defining Vulnerable Adult abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may experience abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. A Vulnerable Adult may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the adult.

There are a number of steps that can be taken to help prevent abuse: the formulation of effective policies, good practice in training and recruitment of staff and volunteers, and clear guidelines all contribute.

However, they are only effective if members of the team actively engage in applying the policies and procedures and encourage each other to maintain good practice. We must all be part of the answer in preventing abuse.

What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse means being treated badly. It can be the result of an action or the failure to act in an appropriate manner. It includes physical abuse, financial or material abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and verbal and hate crimes, and neglect. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts.

Who might abuse someone?

Abuse can occur in any relationship – personal, professional or institutional.

An abuser might be a family member, friend or neighbour.

It could be someone who is paid to deliver care or other professional services, a health worker or someone working as a volunteer.

There are also people who befriend and groom Vulnerable adults and gain their trust in order to exploit or abuse them.

In an institutional setting, such as a care home or day service, the abuse could be by someone working there or someone else living in or using the service.

Possible indications of abuse or neglect include:

- Unexplained injury
- Signs of fear or distress
- Withdrawal
- Signs of neglect
- Personal belongings missing
- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills

There are several categories of abuse and neglect.

Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to.

Recognising the main forms of Abuse:

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a Vulnerable Adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a partner, parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a Vulnerable Adult. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy. Physical abuse can also happen outside of the home. Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Adults with frequent injuries,
- Adults with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones,
- Adults with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns or scalds, bite marks.

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Fear of parents or partner / spouse being approached for an explanation,
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts,
- Flinching when approached or touched,
- Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather,
- Depression or withdrawn behaviour.

Verbal Abuse

Verbal abuse is an attempt to control the behaviour, thoughts, and feelings of another human being through language. Controlling behaviours are designed to manipulate people into doing what the abuser wants them to do under the guise of love or respect or abject fear. It involves using language to seek to pressure its victim into doubting themselves. It can involve blatantly offensive language designed to humiliate and gain power over another person. Verbal abuse is also silence, the behaviour behind "the silent treatment", which purposefully ignores the needs or communication of another person and quietly says, "You are not important enough to acknowledge". **It can include discriminatory language.**

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a Vulnerable Adult in such a way as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the adult's emotional development. It may involve conveying to an adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the adult opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond an adult's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the adult participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing the adult frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a Vulnerable Adult. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a Vulnerable Adult, though it may occur alone.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of verbal and emotional abuse:

- __An adult who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong,
- __Partners, partners or carers who withdraw their attention from the adult, giving them the 'cold shoulder',
- __Partners, parents or carers blaming their problems on the Vulnerable Adult,
- __Partners, parents or carers who humiliate the Vulnerable Adult, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Neurotic behaviour,
- Fear of making mistakes,
- Excessive privacy,
- Self-harm,
- Fear of partner or parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Hate Crime

The police and the CPS have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes:

"Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity."

(<https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime>)

The law recognises five types of hate crime on the basis of:

- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender identity

Any crime can be prosecuted as a hate crime if the offender has either:

demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity

Or

been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

Someone can be a victim of more than one type of hate crime.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a Vulnerable Adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the Vulnerable Adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging the Vulnerable Adult to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a Vulnerable Adult in

preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse.

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn,
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people,
- Having nightmares,
- Running away from home,
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their developmental level, sexual drawings or language,
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia,
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts,
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about.

Financial or Material Abuse

This involves any theft or misuse of a person's money, property, or resources by a person in a position of trust in relation to a Vulnerable Adult. Types of financial or material abuse might include:

- Theft of money or possessions
- Fraud, scamming
- Preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- Employees taking a loan from a person using the service
- Undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- Arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance
- Denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs
- Denying assistance to access benefits
- Misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- Misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home
- Someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress
- False representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- Exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car
- Misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority
- Rogue trading – eg. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse may be:

- Missing personal possessions
- Unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle
- Unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts
- Power of attorney or lasting power of attorney (LPA) being obtained after the person has ceased to have mental capacity
- Failure to register an LPA after the person has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so
- The person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative
- The family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person
- Signs of financial hardship in cases where the person's financial affairs are being managed by a court appointed deputy, attorney or LPA
- Recent changes in deeds or title to property
- Rent arrears and eviction notices
- A lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service

- Failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person
- Disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house
- Unnecessary property repairs

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Paying your bills after the payment due date
- Missing your credit card or loan payments altogether
- Relying on overtime to cover your debt related expenses
- Borrowing from family members to make your monthly debt payments
- Skipping one credit card bill to pay another.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a Vulnerable Adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a partner, parent, or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment),
- Protect a Vulnerable Adult from physical and emotional harm or danger,
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers),
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to an adult's basic emotional needs.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- An adult who is living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe,
- Vulnerable Adults who appear hungry or dirty,
- Vulnerable Adults who are left without adequate clothing, such as not having a winter coat,
- Vulnerable Adults who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence,
- Vulnerable Adults who are often angry, aggressive or self-harming,
- Vulnerable Adults who fail to receive basic health care,
- Parents / Carers or partners who fail to seek medical treatment when the Vulnerable Adult is ill or injured.

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time,
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments,
- Having few friends,
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Other types of abuse

Organised abuse

Where there is more than a single abuser and the adults concerned appear to act in collaboration to abuse a Vulnerable Adult and/or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit Vulnerable Adults for sexual abuse.

Spiritual abuse

Those with faith should also consider the possibility of spiritual abuse. The misuse of power within churches and religious groups has led, in extreme situations, to large numbers of followers committing suicide e.g. Jonestown, Waco and Uganda. Leadership should not be so controlling that it denies people choice and freedom – even to make mistakes.

Peer on Peer Abuse:

Where a Vulnerable Adult abuses the trust of another through some activity then this is abuse. Such situations should be taken seriously and would be investigated in the same way by the protection agencies. This is important as the effect on the victim may be as great, and the perpetrator could themselves be a victim. Since abuse is addictive, it is important to establish the chain and to take action. Peer on Peer abuse may also occur online in the form of Cyberbullying.

Prevent Duty

In July 2015, it was made statutory that all specified authorities comply with the Prevent Duty. Churches are generally not regarded as 'specified authorities', and Parklands Church does not meet the definition of a specified authority. The duties do not legally apply, however the church will

still work in line with the principles of the Prevent Strategy, which was put in place to respond to the challenges of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it. The strategy is used to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given the appropriate advice and support, and to work with sectors where there are risks of radicalisation.

Signs and Symptoms of Radicalisation:

Changes in Emotion:

- Withdrawn
- Depressed
- Aggressive
- Identity crisis

Physical changes:

- Are online more
- Isolated
- New peers
- Appearance changed significantly

Verbal changes:

- Judgemental
- Argumentative
- Extremist Narratives
- Personal Crisis.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that radicalisation often happens online. For more information, please ask the safeguarding co-ordinators and refer to the current Prevent Strategy guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

Responding to the Abused

Sometimes Vulnerable Adults will want to talk about abuse. This may follow some specific activity. They may feel comfortable with a helper or volunteer they have got to know. In the case of any disclosure, the main aim is to listen.

Your manner should be:

- Non-threatening
- Non-possessive
- Calm
- Concerned

Try not to put words into their mouth or ask leading questions.

Instead ask open ended questions using the TED technique.

Ask them to:

- T - Tell
- E - Explain
- D - Describe

Do's and Don'ts

The outcome for a Vulnerable Adult following disclosure is influenced by the response first received. When a victim tells you something which makes you suspect that he/she is being or has been abused:

- Do take the adult to a comfortable place to talk.
- Do listen to what the adult has to say and make sure the adult knows you take it seriously. Show acceptance.
- Accept what you hear without passing judgment or investigating.
- Do reassure the adult that he/she did the right thing in telling you.
- Do tell the adult that you will get them the help they need.
- Do explain to the adult that you will have to tell someone, in a way appropriate to the adult's mental capacity and emotional state.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret.
- Don't comment on or attribute blame for the abuse.
- Don't tell the adult how you think they are feeling.
- Don't ask for further details; don't ask leading questions; don't ask the adult to repeat what they have said to anyone else.
- Avoid showing your own emotions or feelings about the abuse.
- Don't assume anything about the adult's experience.
- Don't offer false reassurance.
- Don't panic or show that you are shocked or alarmed.
- Contact the safeguarding team, or, in their absence, the Senior Leader in charge at the time, provided the allegation does not concern them directly.

Confidentiality

Remember that the welfare of the Vulnerable Adult is paramount.
Don't promise confidentiality or to keep secret what you have been told.

This phrase may be helpful:

"I'm worried about what you have told me today. I will have to talk to somebody else about what we can do next."

Recording

When a Vulnerable Adult tells you something which makes you suspect that he/she is being abused or neglected:

- Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible using the exact words used. This can include recording your observations using the online form if you would be happier recording things this way.
- Record the date, time, place and your observations of any non-verbal behaviour.
- Ideally, use and fill in the incident form provided at the back of this document either online or in writing, but otherwise record on a piece of paper/ online and do not destroy the originals of these brief notes, but hand them in or email a copy with the incident form. The Safeguarding team may need these in order to complete the referral.

Immediately log everything you remember. Remember to date and sign your report. Either email or phone any member of the Safeguarding team, or pass your concerns on to the Senior Leader at that time, providing the allegations do not concern or implicate them.

Cultural Differences

Crucial to any assessment is a knowledge and sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious patterns. While these different practices must be taken into account, we all have basic human rights. Differences in child rearing / attitudes to disability do not justify what in Britain would be regarded as abuse.

Effect of Abuse on Faith

Those who are abused can suffer from problems of poor self-image and blame. They may feel they are 'dirty' or unlovable. Self-esteem may be affected: 'God couldn't love me. I am too bad'. We need to stress that they are not to blame for the abuse. Sensitive pastoral support can help to accept that God loves us just as we are, no matter what.

Romans 8:35-39 asks if anything or anyone can separate us from the love of God. The answer is no, nothing can. As this truth begins to dawn, their self-esteem and confidence may grow. They also need to know that you will not reject them either because of the 'shameful' things that have happened to them. John 15:12 says, 'Love each other as I have loved you'.

Potential Barriers to Reporting Concerns

There are a number of factors which may get in the way of recognising abuse or prevent reporting concerns. These may include:

- Assuming the problem is already known.
- Not knowing the policy and procedures.

- Fear of getting it wrong.
- Disbelief, especially if it involves someone we know.
- Fear of what might happen to the Vulnerable Adult, or anyone in their care.
- Concern about your future relationship with the adult and/or parent/carer, or partner.
- Concern about your relationship with a colleague.

There may also be factors which might stop a vulnerable adult reporting what is happening to them. For the adult the barriers may be:

- Fear that the abuser will harm them further.
- Feeling responsible in some way for the abuse.
- Negative feelings, such as shame.
- Not knowing who to tell or trust.
- Fear of the consequences of reporting the abuse.
- Fear of not being believed or taken seriously.
- Fear of everyone knowing.
- Disability.
- Worried about family breakdown.
- Not realising what is happening is wrong.
- Experiencing some benefit from the abuse.

Reporting Concerns

It is vital that despite any misgivings, you report concerns as soon as possible to one of the safeguarding team, who is responsible for contacting the correct authorities if necessary.

If a staff member or volunteer has concerns about a Vulnerable Adult but is unsure that abuse has occurred they can write, phone or email their concerns to the safeguarding team. Please log any concerns you have, no matter how insignificant they may seem. Your information may help contribute to a bigger picture of concern. All documentation to do with any and all disclosures will be kept securely.

Be Alert - Question Behaviours - Ask for Help - Refer

Allegations Against a Church Worker

There must be a culture that allows all staff and volunteers to feel able to share information or concerns they may have about a colleague's behaviour. This also includes behaviour that has pushed the communication or contact boundaries beyond acceptable limits. Staff and volunteers must also feel safe and comfortable to raise concern about:

- Poor / unsafe practice

- Potential failures in the workplace
- The safeguarding regime of their setting

It is important not to dismiss allegations or even suspicions about another worker. Where there is an allegation against a worker:

- Don't confront the worker or inform him/her of the nature of the allegation
- Report concerns directly to the safeguarding team.

When dealing with allegations against a Church worker:

- The welfare of the Vulnerable Adult is the paramount consideration
- The worker should not be informed of the allegation until advice has been sought from the authorities e.g. Police or from Social Services. Thirtyone:eight is available to contact for advice also.
- It is not up to the recipient of the allegation to determine its validity so it is not your job to judge if the allegation is true or not
- All allegations should be treated in the same way – historical or current
- An investigation against a worker may have three related, but independent strands:
 - (i) Adult protection enquiries, relating to the safety and welfare of any adults who are or who may have been involved
 - (ii) A police investigation into a possible offence against a vulnerable Adult
 - (iii) Disciplinary procedures where it appears that the allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of the worker including suspension as a neutral act
- Even if no legal action is taken, an assessment may still be needed in relation to the workers approach to safeguarding.
- The decision to suspend a worker will rest with the organisation based on the kind of allegation made.

Within a faith community, consideration should also be given to whether the Vulnerable Adult and worker need to be kept separate. It may be necessary for the worker to attend another place of worship whilst the investigation is proceeding.

An internal investigation should not normally take place while the police are investigating allegations. However if there is a need for disciplinary action, agreement from the police must be sought beforehand.

If the allegation is substantiated and where an organisation dismisses the person or ceases to use their services, or the person ceases to provide his/her services, the Designated Chair for Safeguarding should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Individuals with Responsibility for Safeguarding:

The safeguarding team will be aware that when making a referral, consideration has to be given as to whether to discuss any referral with partners, parents or carers. They will seek agreement where possible for the referral to be made, but not if it compromises the safety of the Vulnerable Adult. In situations where abuse is suspected or alleged to have been perpetrated by the partner, parent or carer of the Vulnerable Adult, consent of the parent or carer is **not sought**. By doing so you

might place the Vulnerable Adult at **further risk of significant harm**, for example, further physical or sexual abuse.

Those who work with Adults at risk are required to pass on concerns about the abuse to the Social Services Department and, through them, possibly to other agencies.

The safeguarding team may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, like the Trustee responsible for safeguarding, who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.

Suspicious must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated below. A written or online record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

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

If there are any concerns regarding the safety of a child, this should be brought to the attention of one of our Safeguarding Team immediately:	
Jane de Rooy j.derooy@btinternet.com 07562147784	Suzie Wilson
Meryl Williams meryljonah@gmail.com 075844484679	
Ian Stevenson	Tim Rees

Or contact the Senior Leader Matt Crome on

If the suspicions implicate the safeguarding team and the Senior Leader, then the report should be made to the lead Trustee. The lead Trustee for safeguarding is currently Mark Campion on 07806 785782.

Should the lead Trustee also be implicated, then a report should be made to:

Thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively if the matter is urgent, contact Social Services or the police.

Who to contact outside of Parklands

In exceptional circumstances, such as an emergency or genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, the following may be consulted:

Swansea City Council : Swansea.gov.uk
To report suspected abuse, contact Swansea Social Services.
Tel: 01792 636854

Monday – Thursday : 8.30 – 5.00 p.m
Friday: 8.30 – 4.30 p.m

Email: adult.safeguarding@swansea.gov.uk

If you think a criminal act has taken place you can contact the police on 01792 456999 or 101.
In serious emergencies, call 999.

- Thirtyone:eight (previously Churches Child Protection Advisory Service – CCPAS)
PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ
www.ccpas.co.uk
Telephone: 01322 667207

Only the Police and the Social Services Department have the right and responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse. **Under no circumstances should a Church worker carry out their own investigation.**

Pastoral Care after an allegation of abuse has been made

Supporting those affected by abuse

The effects of abuse can be devastating and long-term, not only for adult survivors but also for their family, friends and other social groups. The church will make every effort to respond with care and compassion to those in need. It is recognised that some may need professional help.

Supporting those to whom the disclosure was made

Hearing an account of abuse can affect the person who the disclosure was made to. Our Pastoral team will work with the Senior Leader to provide care, support and prayer to the team member. The team will not be told details, as this is highly confidential, but support will be offered to anyone who may need it.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending Parklands Church is known to have abused children or adults or is under investigation, the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. However boundaries may need to be set to protect children and adults, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. A written contract is advisable. The Church will look to have direct contact with the person's supervising probation officer. The circumstances will be explained to the individual in such a way as to promote understanding and support, whilst at the same time ensuring that the safeguarding of children and Vulnerable adults takes priority. The probation officer may be able to advise on our management of the situation.

Church leaders may prohibit someone coming onto the premises where there is the issue of someone not keeping to the boundaries set.

Arrangements will be re-assessed on a regular basis. If the offender leaves, statutory agencies and others should be informed.

How and why might this have happened? (This is your opinion only)

Note of any action taken by you:

Name of person whom your information is passed to:

Your name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Check to make sure that everything in your report is clear, even for a stranger reading it in the future.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Online Disclosure Form

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Online Action Form

Vulnerable Adult Protection & Policy Agreement

I have read and understand the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding, Policy, Procedures & Handbook

I understand my responsibility as an employee or volunteer with regards to safeguarding

I agree to adhere to the recommendations and codes of conduct set out in this policy

Full Name _____

Team / Responsibility _____

Signed _____

Date _____

