



# Child Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Handbook

Compiled from material provided by various sources.

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## Introduction

“All those who come in contact with children in their everyday work do have a duty of care to safeguard & promote the welfare of children....and should be aware of the procedures to follow to pass on their concerns/suspicions.”

Children's Act 2004

Parklands Evangelical Church CIO has put in place this Child Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Handbook. The aim is to ensure appropriate care for the children and young people attending our Church community.

Definition of a child (Children Act 1989): Anyone under the age of 18

Key Principles of Child Protection:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children have the right to be protected and safeguarded from abuse
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteer have. 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 children as early as possible before issues escalate.
- Children and families are best protected and supported when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.
- Children's act 2004 s10 - Child Protection Requires co-operation and sharing of information. Parklands Church safeguarding policy will be available to be seen by leaders, safeguarding co-ordinators, workers, parents/carers and children.

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:

Co-Lead – Jane de Rooy  
[j.derooy@btinternet.com](mailto:j.derooy@btinternet.com)  
07562147784

Co-Lead – Meryl Williams  
[meryljonah@gmail.com](mailto:meryljonah@gmail.com)  
07584484679

Ian Stevenson

Suzie Wilson

Tim Rees

Mark Champion

We have referred to, and been in contact with the organisations below to help us in our production of this policy. This policy may not be copied by other organisations.

- Thirtyone:Eight
- Swansea Council

## Context

Parklands Church has a both a children's and young people's ministry.

Our events for children and young people include:

- Weekly gatherings for children on Friday afternoons,
- Weekly gatherings for young people on Friday nights
- Online community and digital content for young people (named as Parklands Church and Emanate TV)
- Youtube channel with content for children and young people (named as Parklands Church and Emanate TV)
- Sunday services and Hub gatherings for all members of the Church including children and young people
- Local outreach events for families
- Parent and baby gatherings

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 in contact with children from many different backgrounds and will encounter very different parental and 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 the children and young people (hereafter 'children') entrusted to our care.

As a Church we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We acknowledge that children can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child."

As a leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to 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 children, where they are listened to, related effectively to, and valued.
- Encouraging and supporting parents 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 child care 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 children who may be in need of protection – see from page 9.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the referral process in the event that they have concerns about the welfare of a child – see from page 16.

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff and volunteers must always act in the best interest of the child.

### Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and to report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

Staff and volunteers must always act in the best interests of the child.

Staff and volunteers should be alert to the potential need for early intervention and to be particularly alert to any child who falls into any of the following categories:

- Lives within an environment where the toxic trio are present (substance misuse, domestic violence, mental illness)
- Is a child with disabilities or special educational needs
- Is returning from care / is a young carer
- Is engaging in anti-social / criminal behaviour

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

### Support, Supervision and Training (Developing Safeguarding Awareness)

- A new volunteer or worker will be observed working with a group.
- Workers will be expected to attend child protection training before starting the role, which will be discussed at interview. A suitable training program will be provided for the worker, and they will be required to attend regular update training sessions to stay informed.
- Informal supervision by an experienced member of staff will be on going. Formal supervision will be arranged as and when deemed necessary, and records kept.

- Children and youth team meetings will be held regularly.

## 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 working with children will be checked under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) procedures. This covers all who work with children 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 interviewed if necessary.
3. The prospective staff member or volunteer is invited to observe the group activity but not given responsibility for children and must not be left alone with them.
4. The applicant is made aware of the child protection policy and given a copy.
5. References are checked and the current DBS process is completed. Qualifications where relevant have been verified.
6. Helpers, including those less than 18 years old, must be under the close supervision of a named worker.
7. Worker to have attended child protection training before undertaking the role.

## Current Definitions of Safeguarding Include:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment / damage of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

## Preventing Abuse

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

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.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy from pages 9-14.

Individuals with Responsibility for Safeguarding:

We believe as a Church that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. If we feel concerned that abuse to a child may have occurred, or a child is suffering from abuse, the following flow is recommended:

**Be Alert - Question Behaviours - Ask for Help - Refer**

## Safeguarding Co-ordinators

are the safeguarding co-ordinations for Parklands Church. If there are any concerns regarding the safety of a child, this should be brought to the attention of one of our safeguarding co-ordinators immediately.

They have responsibility to ensure safeguarding measures are being practiced and implemented in all of our ministry gatherings and events as a Church.

They ensure that we discharge our statutory responsibilities and work to ensure safe and effective systems and processes are in place to ensure safeguarding policy is effective and robust.

They ensure safeguarding concerns are addressed and appropriate actions are taken when necessary.

## Safeguarding Director

Matthew Crome is the **Senior Leader with overall accountability** for ensuring that Parklands has the necessary systems in place to enable the effective implementation of our Safeguarding Policy.

## Recognising Abuse

What is child abuse?

Definitions from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document 2018, produced by the Department of Education Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or



community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes (they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed)
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty
- Children with consistently poor hygiene
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious or logical reasoning
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- Children who reach developmental milestones late such as learning to speak or walk, with no medical reason
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education
- Children who are reluctant to go home after school
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Children who talk about running away
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect:

Physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

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

### 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 child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. 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:

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

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Fear of parents 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
- Running away from home

## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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 child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child 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 children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

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

- \_\_Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- \_\_Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- \_\_Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- \_\_Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child 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 children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities,

encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child 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, as can other children.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy

Changes of behaviour may include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. 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 age, or 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,
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence),
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child 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, a child's basic emotional needs

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are 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 children and/or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children 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:

Children and young people have always been curious about the opposite sex and/or experimented sexually. However, where a child is in a position of power responsibility over another child, and abuses that trust through some sexual activity then this is abuse. Where one child forces themselves on another child of any age, this is also abusive. Such situation should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved and would be investigated in the same way by the child protection agencies. This is important as the effect on the child 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. You can't assume the young person will grow out of it. Peer on Peer abuse may also occur online. The sending of sexually explicit images to anyone under the age of 16 is illegal and could result in criminal prosecution.

### Child Sex Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation(CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions

- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

Child Sex Exploitation can also happen peer to peer. Children and young people may form unhealthy relationships online:

- The sending and receiving of sexually explicit images to anyone under the age of 16 is illegal and could result in criminal prosecution
- Children and young people may become quieter or more withdrawn if on-line exploitation is occurring
- Children and young people may hide their devices and become secretive about who they are messaging if online Child Sex Exploitation is occurring

### Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia. It commonly occurs to girls between the ages of a few days old to 15 years. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long lasting harmful consequences. 28 African countries still condone the practice. The countries with the highest rate of women experiencing FGM are: Somalia, Egypt, Mali, Guinea, Sudan, Sierra Leone. It is also common in the Middle East, including Syria and Iraq.

There are serious consequences to FGM:

- Short term: tetanus, severe pain, bleeding, infection. These can result in death.
- Long term: Cysts, chronic pain, problems with fertility, on-going infection, intense pain during intercourse.
- Women also often suffer very severe psychological trauma including flashbacks and depression.

Signs, Symptoms and other indicators:

- Knowledge that an older sister has undergone FGM
- A family arranging a long term break abroad

Child talks about going abroad to be 'cut' or got ready for marriage or a special ceremony

Since 31st October 2015, a statutory duty has been placed upon providers to report to the police where they discover FGM either through disclosure of the victim or visual evidence. Failure to report FGM has legal consequences. While it is unlikely that FGM would be discovered within the setting of Parklands Church, we have a duty of care to make staff and volunteers aware of the potential signs and symptoms of FGM and to respond to them in the same way as any other signs and symptoms of abuse.

Remember – the above are only examples and don't always mean abuse or neglect. Never assume anything. It is always best to find out for sure.

## Prevent Duty

In July 2015, it was made statutory that all specified authorities comply with the 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:

## Responding to the Abused

Sometimes children 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 in 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 child following disclosure is influenced by the response first received. When a child tells you something which makes you suspect that he/she is being or has been physically, sexually, emotionally abused or neglected:

- Do take the child to a comfortable place to talk. Stay in sight of another team member at all times. Do not go off alone with the child.
- Do listen to what the child has to say and make sure the child knows you take it seriously. Show acceptance.
- Accept what you hear without passing judgment or investigating.
- Do reassure the child that he/she did the right thing in telling you.
- Do tell the child that you will get them the help they need.
- Do explain to the child that you will have to tell someone, in a way appropriate to the child's age 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 child how you think they are feeling.
- Don't ask for further details; don't ask leading questions; don't ask the child 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 child's experience.
- Don't offer false reassurance.
- Don't panic or show that you are shocked or alarmed.
- Contact the safeguarding co-ordinator, or, in their absence, take action yourself.

## Confidentiality

Remember that 'The welfare of the child is paramount'.

Disclose the confidentiality issue at the start, explaining that someone may have to be told. 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."

Immediately log everything you remember. Fill in a logging a concern form or write some notes down as quickly as you are able so that you have as many details clear and accurate as possible.

## 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 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.'

## Who Abuses Children?

There is no "typical" child abuser. They come from all economic, ethnic and social groups. It is important, for those working with children and young people, to be aware that abuse may be



perpetrated by both males and females, or by other children and young people. The abuser is most often someone known to the child, perhaps within the family, a relative, a family friend or neighbour. Children are sometimes abused by someone known to them in an institutional setting. The abuser may be an adult in a position of trust and responsibility with whom the child or young person has a valued relationship.

## Procedures to Follow

Procedure if it is suspected that abuse may have occurred:

- Always act in the best interests of the child
- Do not discuss allegations with anyone except one of the safeguarding co-ordinators
- Report concerns as soon as possible to one of the safeguarding co-ordinators, who is responsible for contacting the correct authorities if necessary.
- If for any reason this is not possible, then use the "Who to Contact Outside of Parklands" information – see page 22.
- The safeguarding co-ordinators will act on behalf of Parklands in determining the course of action regarding all allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse, consulting the Senior Pastor and other pastoral or activity helpers if necessary.
- If a staff member or volunteer has concerns about a child but is unsure that abuse has happened they can fill in a 'logging a concern' form (see page 45) that will be kept on file for future reference if needed. This will be kept in a locked cupboard.
- Please log any concerns you have, no matter how insignificant they may seem. Your information may help contribute to a bigger picture of concern held by the safeguarding team. All documentation to do with any and all disclosures will be kept in a locked and safe.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an

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:

Co-Lead – Jane de Rooy  
[j.derooy@btinternet.com](mailto:j.derooy@btinternet.com)  
07562147784

Co-Lead – Meryl Williams  
[meryljonah@gmail.com](mailto:meryljonah@gmail.com)  
07584484679

Ian Stevenson

Suzie Wilson

Tim Rees

Mark Champion

allegation or suspicion of abuse.

If the suspicions implicate both safeguarding co-ordinators and the director, then the report should be made to the lead trustee. The lead trustee for safeguarding is currently Mark Campion.

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. Details of further resources can be found on pages 22 and 23.

## Recording

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

- Make sure you are not alone with a child, that you can be seen by another member of the team.
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible using the exact words used.
- Record the date, time, place and your observations of any non-verbal behaviour.
- Use and fill in the incident forms provided, they can be found in the back pages of this document, and copies will be available during any interactions with children.
- Do not destroy the originals of these brief notes, but hand in with the incident form. The child protection co-ordinator may need these in order to complete the referral.

## Referral Dilemmas and Actions

You must inform one of the safeguarding co-ordinators of any concerns.

In situations where abuse is suspected or alleged by the parent or carer of the child, consent of the parent or carer is not sought if by doing so the child may be put at further risk of significant harm, for example, further physical abuse or where sexual abuse by a parent or carer is alleged.

The safeguarding co-ordinator will be aware that when making a referral, consideration has to be given as to whether to discuss any referral with parents or carers and seeking agreement, where possible, for the referral to be made. Those, who work with children, are required to pass on concerns about the abuse of children to the Social Services Department and, through them, possibly to other agencies.

If there are objections to a referral being made, your duty to the child overrides consent and you should explain that you must make the referral in any event.

The safeguarding co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:

- Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

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

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the safeguarding co-ordinator, the absence of the safeguarding co-ordinator or director should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight

The leadership will support the safeguarding co-ordinators in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

### 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 child (or adult).
- Concern about your future relationship with the child and/or parent/carer.
- Concern about your relationship with a colleague.

There may also be factors which might stop a child reporting what is happening to them. For the child 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.

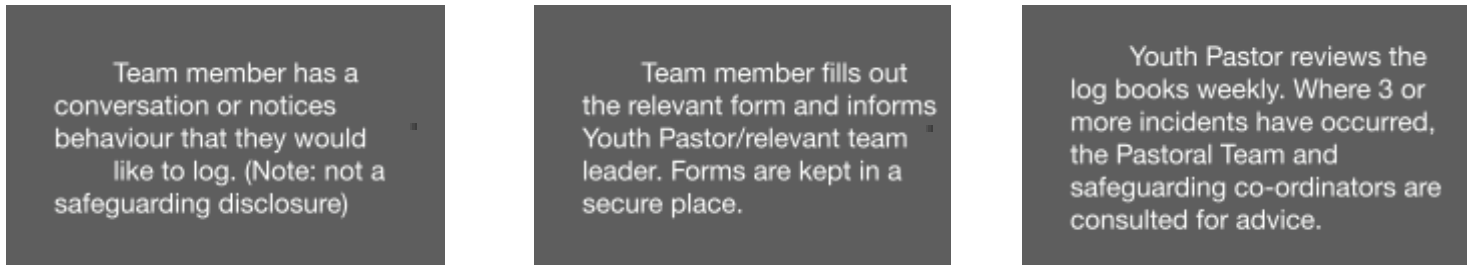
### Allegations Against a Church Worker

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

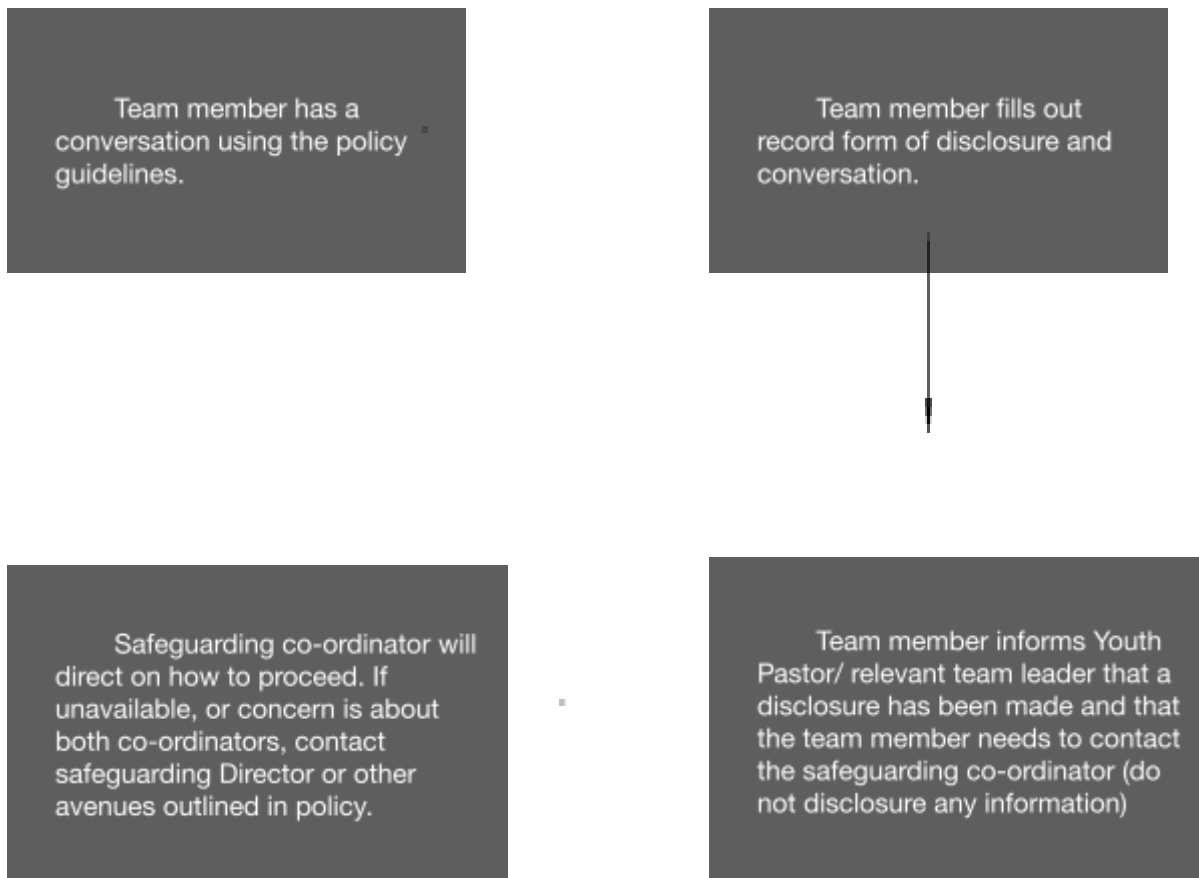
- Don't confront the worker or inform him/her of the nature of the allegation and:
- Report concerns directly to the safeguarding co-ordinator.

## Flow Chart of Procedure for Volunteers and Staff

### Logging a wellbeing concern:



### Conversation with a child and a disclosure has been made:



## Who to contact outside of Parklands

Any concerns about the welfare of a child should be referred to one of the safeguarding team. However, in exceptional circumstances such as an emergency or genuine concern that appropriate action has not been taken, staff members and volunteers can contact or Trustee responsible for safeguarding or speak directly to children's social care.

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

Any concerns must be reported to one of the safeguarding team:

**Thirty one eight –  
Or – Looking at support from an other Church.**

If neither of the above is available, the individual concerned should report the concern him(her)self. When a concern is reported, a record should be made including, for example:

- Name of child, age, date of birth.
- Any special factors.
- Parents'/carers' names
- Home address and phone number.
- Whether the concerns reported are by someone expressing their own concerns or passing on those of someone else.
- Details of what has prompted the concerns – dates, times, any specific incidents, any physical, behavioural or other signs.
- Who the child spoke to and what was said.
- Whether allegations have been made against anybody.
- Whether anyone else has been consulted.

If the safeguarding team are not available, or if suspicions implicate either of the above, then contact the lead trustee, Mark Campion, on 07806785782.

If no-one is available from within the church, the following may be consulted:

- Swansea Social Services Department      01792 635700
- Out of hours emergency duty team      01792 775501
- Swansea Police Child Protection Unit      01792 562870
- Thirtyone:eight (previously Churches Child Protection Advisory Service – CCPAS)  
PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ  
www.ccpas.co.uk  
Telephone: 01322 667207

Emergency calls: In an emergency for incidents requiring immediate police response, please call 999.

### NSPCC Child Protection helpline:

This should be the first number to call to see if it is necessary to contact social services or the police. This is a free 24 hour service providing counselling, information and advice to anyone

concerned about a child at risk of abuse. The experienced helpline staff can make direct contact with CSF, the police or your local NSPCC team on your behalf if you wish. They will also speak with the young person to give advice if needed as well or if they feel more comfortable they have an email address which the young person can write to:

help@nspcc.org.uk Telephone: 0800 800 5000

### Wales Safeguarding App

There has been a website and an app created that give an easily passible breakdown of guidelines and general procedures in regards to child protection and safeguarding. The app is available from:

<https://www.safeguarding.wales>

## Detailed Procedures & Actions of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse:

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact Children's Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

### Allegations of sexual abuse:

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police.

### Allegations of spiritual abuse:

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

### Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people:

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

## Preventing Abuse:

We take serious steps to help prevent abuse happening at Parklands Church, including a Child Safeguarding Policy. We offer training for all those who work with children and adults at risk as well as refresher courses with the aim that they will be empowered to spot the signs and symptoms of abuse.

In all recruitment of staff and volunteers an application form, references and a clear DBS disclosure has to be completed before working with children or adults at risk can begin. Workers required to sign a code of conduct for the role they are undertaking.

We strongly encourage all team members to actively engage with applying the policies and procedures as well as good working practices. We have in place procedures to log concerns if there is a change in team members working practice as well as change of behaviour in children and adults at risk.

We work together so that all the team members will work together in preventing abuse.

We have a Pastoral Care team who are committed to the care of those in our community.

## Pastoral Care

### 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. Support will be offered to workers and volunteers to whom a disclosure has been made. Parklands Church is committed working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

### 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 Youth Pastor 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 the Parklands Church is known to have abused children or is under investigation, the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. 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, at the same time as ensuring that the safeguarding of children takes priority. The probation officer may be able to advise on management of the situation.

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

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

## Whistleblowing

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

If you have concerns about a colleague or volunteer, please contact the Safeguarding officer. We have a form to log changes in behaviour that raises concerns. The following principles underpin managing allegations against workers:

- The welfare of the child 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 Children's Social Services. Thirtyone:eight is available to contact for advice also.
- Workers should be informed of allegations against them as soon as possible but with due regard to protecting evidence and disclosure of information
- 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) Child protection enquiries, relating to the safety and welfare of any children who are or who may have been involved (ii) A police investigation into a possible offence against a child (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 and how the child and worker be kept separate, e.g. 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 Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

In February 2016 a whistleblowing advice line was launched. Call this NSPCC helpline to talk anonymously if you are worried about how child protection concerns are handled in your workplace / volunteer setting: 0800 028 0285

## Physical Contact: Code of Conduct

Physical contact with children and young people should be minimal and meet the needs of the child only:

- A hug or physical contact to comfort a child or young person after an accident or incident is acceptable. A young child may want to be carried or sit on a knee. This is permitted in a public space where other people are present.
- Hugs, cuddles, sitting on knees, stroking, caressing or cradling children or young people in any circumstance other than to comfort or reassure is not appropriate and therefore strongly discouraged.
- A hug to say 'hello' or 'goodbye' is acceptable but should be appropriate to the position of trust held by volunteers.
- Young children should be taught that they have ownership of their bodies and therefore not forced to hug or make physical contact if they do not wish to. Offering children the options of 'High 5' or 'Fist Pump' as an alternative way to say hello or goodbye gives children the choice and ownership of their body.
- Tickling, play fighting, lifting / throwing of children are not appropriate and therefore strongly discouraged.
- In the case that volunteers or team members display inappropriate levels of physical contact with children or young people, they will be spoken to directly by a member of the Church pastoral team.

## Safe Working Practice

Workers need to follow the code of conduct guidelines to minimise the risk to children and/or of being accused of inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person.

### Code of Conduct - General guidelines

Workers are expected to:

- Regardless of numbers, to have a minimum of two adults for gatherings, three is recommended.
- Not work alone in a closed environment, to be in view of another team member when with children at all times.
- Treat all children and young people with respect.
- Not have a favourite or become attached in any romantic way.
- Always respect personal privacy.
- Avoid inappropriate activities and language, being sensitive to the needs of all individuals.
- Challenge any behaviour which may be inappropriate or unacceptable to others.

### Supervision of children

Each group to have two workers that have been safely recruited and DBS checked at all times, and then the following ratios are to be followed:

0 to 2 years:	1 adult to 3 children
2 to 3 years:	1 adult to 4 children
3 to 7 years:	1 adult to 8 children
8 to 11 years:	1 adult to 10 children
12 to 17 years:	1 adult to 15 children

If a group is of mixed gender the supervising staff should also include both male and female workers wherever possible. An activity should not run regularly without this being followed.

A worker should not invite a child or young person alone to their home or another venue, including Church premises.

For children not previously registered:

- Establish the details of the child – name, age, address, telephone number.
- Ask whether the parent/carer is aware of where they are.
- Check what time a child is expected home.
- Obtain any relevant medical information, e.g. allergies, medication taken, so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Give an invitation letter for the parent/carer with your contact details.

### Attendance Records

A record of attendance should be kept for each event, including leaders.

### Debriefing/ Worker Feedback

Worker feedback should be recorded on a regular basis, including safety issues, safe-guarding worries, procedural refinements.

### Risk Assessments

Before undertaking any activity a risk assessment should be carried out and signed off. In order to safeguard children and young people in our care, it is necessary to identify situations where harm may occur and record what steps are being taken to minimise the risk of harm. A risk assessment form should be completed and should include:

- Details of the activity.
- Any identified hazards and the assessed level of risk.
- Who may be harmed and how this might happen.
- Action taken to minimise, reduce or remove harm (this would include noting level of staff supervision required for the activity to safely go ahead)
- The worker responsible and the date of completion.

There will be periodic risk assessments of the safety and security of premises used by children.

Activities should not take place where there is an unacceptably high level of risk or where even low or medium risk cannot be minimised easily.

### First Aid

A first aid kit, properly equipped, should be available at all premises used by children. A list of first-aid persons is available in the church office.

## Toilets

Our current building does not have child specific toilets. During events, children may go to the toilet alone, with a team member outside in the corridor in view of team to ensure safety. Toddlers or children who cannot go to the toilet themselves must be accompanied by their own parent or carer.

## Transportation

One-to-one transportation is to be avoided. As a general rule, staff/volunteers should not take children/young people alone in a vehicle on any journeys however short. If occasions arise where it is unavoidable, such transportation should only occur with the full knowledge of a person in charge and the parent/carer. Appropriate vehicle insurance is essential. Such good practice helps protect children and young people as well as reducing the likelihood of allegations against staff and volunteers.

## Accident/Incident Reporting

An accident/incident form should be completed immediately after any accident or significant incident. Follow-up action should be taken if necessary. This should be discussed with the team/church leader. The completed form should be handed in for safe retention by the children/youth worker.

## Concern and Mental Health forms

If a child or young person displays behaviour that gives you cause for concern, but is not a full disclosure, a log should be made using a concern or mental health form.

If a child or young person asks for pray, or mentions in conversation struggles with mental health, then a mental health form should be filled out.

These forms should be stored securely and kept as a record.

If there are multiple logs or a similar concern for a child or young person, the Youth and Children's Pastor and safeguarding co-ordinators should be made aware, who will then make a decision on how to proceed.

It is recommended that as a base level, when three incidents are logged about a child, the safeguarding co-ordinator and/or Pastoral team are contacted to advise.

## Use of Electronic Communication and Photographic Equipment

### **Communication - mobile phones and email**

The General Consent form contains a section for parents/carers to give consent for their children to be communicated with using email and/or text messaging. These means of communication should not be used where consent has not been obtained.

- Only give personal contact details to children that are within the public domain of the church / organisation, including your mobile telephone number.
- If children want you to have their mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses or similar, and communicate with them this way, make sure that their parents know and have agreed.
- Only make contact with children for reasons related to the work of the church/organisation and maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations by mobile phone or texts with young people. Ambiguous abbreviations or language which is open to misinterpretation should not be used.
- Workers are responsible for using wisely any electronic means of communication to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.
- Individual details including email addresses, telephone numbers, etc should be kept confidential and only shared with the owner's permission.
- Any communication with young people should be able to be viewed by a Youth Pastor at any time if deemed necessary.
- If a leader has a young person's phone number it should only be used for the purposes it has been given. E.g. times, dates, details of group meetings, events, planning.
- Texts can also be used as a means to encourage children or young people if it is appropriate e.g. 'Hope your exams go ok'. If it turns into conversation, communication should be ended and face to face encouraged. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next session. Be mindful of child protection usual parameters.
- Any emails sent to children or young people should have a second team member copied into it.
- Team members should not use their personal mobile phones during events or gatherings with children or young people.
- Where possible only use equipment provided by the church/organisation to communicate with children.
- There will be a children and youth specific phone and iPad in which to use to play music/ communicate if necessary.

## Social Media

Leaders should use general leader/administrative accounts to communicate with children. Leaders should avoid using personal accounts when dealing with church business. Specifically, Leaders should avoid being 'friends' with children they know through church activities. Please see the Safe Online Working Policy for more information - page 35.

## Visual Recording

Photographs and video are considered sensitive data under the Data Protection Act 1998. Written permission must be obtained (whether children or adults) before a photograph is taken or video image recorded.

- Written consent from parents/carers is required before using photographs or video on a website or social media.
- It must be made clear why a person's image is being taken, what it will be used for, what medium it will be made available in and to whom.
- Permission is not required to take images of crowd events in a public area where individual children cannot easily be identified.
- It is preferable to take group pictures, but you must find out whether any parents/carers do not want their children to be in a photograph.
- Photos, images or videos of children and young people should not be taken on personal mobile phones.
- Photos, images or videos of children and young people must not be uploaded to social media sites without the permission of parent/carer or the knowledge and consent of the Children and Youth Pastor.
- All photos, images or videos that are taken of children/young people with the consent of the Children and Youth Pastor who will have gained parental permission beforehand must be deleted immediately after use.

## Youth Work Regulated Activity Policy

### Transportation

One-to-one transportation is to be avoided. As a general rule, staff/volunteers should not take children/young people alone in a vehicle on any journeys however short. If occasions arise where it is unavoidable, such transportation should only occur with the full knowledge of a person in charge and the parent/carer.

- A full UK driver's license must be held for the minimum of one year before driving young people.
- Youth team and volunteers should not drive on their own with a young person unless parental consent is given and the driver contacts the Youth Pastor before and after travel.
- Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
- Youth Team and volunteers must have a respect for speed limits and the high way code.

## Conduct with young people

- To be in line with Church child protection policies.
- Any form of suggestive behaviour or sexual connotations is strictly prohibited and are to be addressed by the Youth Pastor responsible for the young people.
- Any romantic relationship with any under the age of 18 with a volunteer over 18 is strictly prohibited.
- Youth and Children's Pastor to address individual circumstances i.e. excessive physical contact.
- Young people should not be alone at any time in a volunteer's house/flat/etc. Any arrangements for mentoring/discipleship meetings outside of church should be in public areas (such as coffee shops) and arranged with prior consent from parents and the Youth Pastor.

## Alcohol/Drugs

- No alcohol to be permitted at an event or service for under 18's only.
- If alcohol is to be permitted (e.g. church social) then the law must be upheld and ALL INVOLVED in the organisation of the event must be aware of those under 18. Strict guidelines are to be put in place to ensure under 18's do not consume or be sold alcohol.
- If a young person attends an event under the influence of alcohol or drugs then they can be refused the right to entry at the discretion of the Youth Team.
- If a young person is found in possession of alcohol or drugs the team have the right to request the person to leave.
- If volunteers or staff members attend events under the influence of alcohol or drugs themselves they will be sent home immediately and disciplinary action will be taken.

## Mentoring

- A mentoring relationship aims to encourage, support, develop and challenge young people in their physical, spiritual and emotional development.
- Mentoring must take place with a mentor of the same gender and the mentoring relationship must be recognised and accountable by the wider youth team.
- Content of conversation between mentor and young person should be kept confidential except in situations where young people may be at risk or need referral. In these cases it is important that



mentors are clear that they cannot promise confidentiality regarding the situation and that it is passed on to the Assistant Pastor responsible for the young people.

- Where possible the plan of meetings which involve a day, time and location should be shared with the relevant people so that someone knows where you are and who you're with.
- Keep it public. Coffee Shops are a good place to meet as they are usually accessible venues for the young person. Even though some conversations may be sensitive or about personal matters the atmosphere of a coffee shop is usually one where people get on with their own business. Meetings can also take place in the young person's home when parents are in the house. They should never take place in a young person's room. If a youth worker uses their home for these purposes there would still need to be another safely recruited person present. The youth worker should also have the appropriate level of DBS check which covers home working.
- If there is a need to talk about things in a more confidential setting then any room used in a church building should have a window for others to be able to see in and there should be someone else in close proximity to the room. It's good practice to consider the layout of the room and to have the young person sit on the side of the room where the exit is.
- Follow the mobile and social media policy for communicating with the young person

## Safe Online Working and Digital Platform Policy

You should contact your Church safeguarding co-ordinators immediately for advice if you have any safeguarding concerns about a child or young person, and also follow the safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance.

When used properly, social media is an excellent way to communicate with groups of parents or young people in order to provide information or make them aware of upcoming events and activities. There are a variety of platforms that leaders need to be aware of, and only age appropriate applications should be used. Some platform examples are:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Tumblr
- WhatsApp

- YouTube
- Zoom
- Discord
- Tiktok

Some of these are appropriate for the relationship between children/young people and their leader, but some are not. Each of these platforms will be covered in this document. Please apply the same principles to any other platforms that are not mentioned in this document.

By engaging with the Parklands and Emanate Tv social media accounts, you agree to:

- Be safe. The safety of children and young people must be maintained.
- Be respectful. Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.
- Be kind. Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just whether you would say it in person, but the tone you would use.
- Be honest. Don't mislead people about who you are.
- Take responsibility. You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.
- Be a good ambassador. Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.
- Disagree well. Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.
- Credit others. Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.
- Follow the rules. Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

## Consent Forms

Permission from the parent/guardian of any young person (under the age of 18) needs to be obtained before you can contact them, post pictures or videos of them etc. If the child is over 13 they are also required to sign the consent form.

If the young person is 16 or above and living independently/is estranged from their parents then the form must be signed by the young person and a social worker/youth work/appropriate adult.

These will need to be filled out and updated annually.

It is worth mentioning that these consent forms only cover activities and images taken within a church capacity. Images of Church activities involving children and young people should not be on personal accounts, unless the children or young people are a part of your family.

Images taken outside of this context that are shared on personal accounts are not covered by these guidelines. If you find photos that have been posted in the past that contain images of children who have not given consent for images of them to be shared, they must be taken down.

Similarly, even if they have consented but subsequently request for an image to be removed, you must take every effort to remove the photo.

If you see images posted by others that you wish to reshare, you cannot assume that the correct consent has been obtained. The young person must be made aware that image or video is going to be reshared, and can only be done so if there is a signed consent form by both the child or young person and their parent or carer. Only share images to channels you manage if you have signed consent forms for the children in the image.

Even in a closed group, do not post images that you do not have the appropriate consent for. This goes for images that are posted by other people in the group. Any images posted outside your control to a group you manage should be removed if they contain any individual whose consent has not been given.

Consent forms should be kept securely in the Church office.

## Safer Recruitment and DBS

For the team to participate in an online forum (such as a Facebook group, Discord platform, instagram account) that is targeted wholly or mainly to children and young people, or used mainly by children or young people, an enhanced DBS check is required. Those serving on the Children and Youth teams must have already have been through a safer recruitment process and this will include a DBS check.

To post for interact using a public Church page, it is not considered to be target to or used wholly or mainly by children and therefore you don't need the enhanced DBS. You do, however, still need a DBS check.

## Personal Social Media Accounts

Those on the Children and Youth teams should not add or accept requests to follow or friend young people (under 18) from personal profiles if your relationship with them is only as a team member.

Team can be friends with their own children or Godchildren, for example. But should not be friends with anyone under the age of 18 who are not related or you are their legal Guardian or God-parent.

If you currently have friends under 18 you should explain to them that you now have a leadership role working with children and young people and that requires you not to have contact with under 18s via your personal social media accounts.

If they are a part of your Church or youth group they can make the decision to join the official Social Media spaces, such as the Parklands Church accounts or Emanate TV accounts that are regulated as per the guidance in this document.

If a young person turns 18 and becomes a leader, they should unfriend any young people under 18 that are involved in their youth group and follow the guidance for group leaders. This is part of forming new boundaries as a leader.

If, while on a personal account, you do see posts from young people (e.g. shared by someone you are friends with) do not like, react or comment on the posts.

If a member of the Youth team or volunteer is tagged (by someone else) in an inappropriate comment/image/video, it must be brought to the attention of the Youth Pastor immediately and the individual should 'un-tag' themselves as soon as possible.

In using personal social media, staff and volunteers should take care not to post, like, share or otherwise be seen to be producing, promoting or engaging with any material which could be seen as conflicting with the role in working with the church.

## Timings

Contact with young people may only be made between the hours of 8am and 9pm. This applies to all forms of communication unless there is an emergency or residential holiday situation.

## Safe Communication

Children and young people can find it easier to communicate via email or online communication because nobody is physically present. This means the child or young person may be more willing to share personal and sensitive information about themselves or a given situation than they would if communicating face to face.

Do not engage in conversations of this nature with a child or young person over email, text or online communication. Where appropriate say; 'I am sorry to hear this. Can we make a time to meet face to face to talk about this further?'

If you have immediate concerns about the welfare of a young person, these should be referred to the Youth Pastors or the Designated Safeguarding Officers immediately. The safeguarding team will seek to support the young person with professional services such as counsellors or referrals to mental health services. It is not your responsibility to take on the role of a counsellor or support worker

In the case of a young person seeking to confide in one particular person, all support needs to be channeled through the appropriate procedures. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, as a mentor or volunteer, it is not your remit to take responsibility for the welfare of a young person. Individuals should work within the advised codes of practice and should maintain boundaries in their levels of contact with a child or young person.

If a concern over the welfare of a child is raised with the safeguarding team, it may be appropriate to follow up any pastoral concerns with the team rather than the young person. However, there may also be times where information cannot be shared. This will be at the discretion of the safeguarding team.

Mentoring sessions should happen face to face, at an appropriate setting and time with the consent of the Youth Pastor.

## Regulated accounts

Parklands Church currently holds two streams of Digital Platforms:

- Parklands Church Facebook, Instagram and YouTube accounts.
- Emanate TV Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Discord and Tiktok accounts.

Emanate TV is the account that targeted wholly or mainly to children and young people, or used mainly by children or young people, and therefore the following regulations apply.

Parklands Church and Emanate TV accounts are subject to the Parklands Digital Best Practice Guidelines for content and procedures, which will be made available to those serving on team.

**Staff and volunteers must not engage with young people through digital platforms who are younger than a platform's minimum age requirement.**

## Emanate TV

Accounts and Platforms in the name of Emanate TV can only be set up by the Children and Youth Pastor, with the knowledge of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

All accounts must be secure and password protected. Access to the accounts can be given to members of the team.

The account content and conversations must be transparent and subject to regular checks by three designated people, one of those being the Youth Pastor.

The Youth Pastor will have oversight of any Emanate TV accounts. This person will oversee the content that will appear, will decide which links to other sites to accept, and will have online contact with the children and young people who interact with your webpage or profile.

If any Emanate TV platforms are tagged (by someone else) in an inappropriate comment/image/video, it must be brought to the attention of a Youth Pastor immediately and Emanate TV should be 'un-tagged' as soon as possible.

Communication with all children and young people should mainly take the form of information and content sharing only.

This includes informing young people of an upcoming event, organising a time to meet for a prearranged mentoring session or clarifying details of an event.

Content and information sharing that is deemed appropriate includes Church approved theological and Bible content, lifestyle encouragements and content in line with Emanate TV's aims and principals.

In-depth conversations and in -depth general chat with young people should not occur online or over social media as these should happen face to face. Comments and conversations should be encouraging, positive and concise.

All content should follow the THINK principal:

True  
Helpful  
Inspiring  
Necessary  
Kind

Any content deemed inappropriate or against the guidelines of Emanate TV will be removed immediately, and the volunteer or team member will be contact by the Youth Pastor.

All communications with a young person should be able to be viewed by a Pastor at any time if deemed necessary. If conversation histories cannot be recalled, the wrong platforms for communication are being used and the communication needs to be transferred to those that can be recalled.

## Setting up an account

When setting up a new account platform for Emanate TV, the following principals should apply:

1. The page profile, if possible, must be password protected (this may not always be possible) and the password held by at least three leaders of the organisation or group.
2. The site should be monitored.
3. Any inappropriate posts by children or young people or leaders should be removed by the admin/s of the site. Reasons should then be explained to the person who posted the content.
4. All those who use the site should be made aware what the purpose of the site is and that any inappropriate images, content that is not in line with the values of the group/organisation is not acceptable.
5. If a conversation group within Parklands Church, the site/ group should be kept closed i.e. only permitted/authorised members can see what is posted on the site.
6. Contents of any postings should be consistent with the aims of Emanate TV. In cases of doubt leaders should seek advice from the Youth Pastor
7. The parents or guardians should be informed of what the purpose of the group is and reminded to ensure that their child's privacy settings are suitable.

## How to interact on regulated pages

- Emanate TV as a regulated account is permitted to follow, like or subscribe to the accounts of children and young people can be followed.
- Emanate TV as a regulated account can be used to comment, on posts, or converse with children and young people via direct messaging.
- Any communication with young people should be able to be viewed by a Youth Pastor at any time if deemed necessary.
- Any communication must be in line with Emanate TV's policies. Comments must be concise, and direct messaging must be regulated. Communications with children and young people should be via group chat with a minimum of two team members including in the conversation as best practise.
- When direct messaging is used, conversations must be concise, and in-person conversation encouraged.
- Any disclosures made online, must be logged and immediately passed on to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- As in person, the Concern form and Mental Health forms must be filled out (found at the back of this policy, and an online link will be made available) and kept if any conversations or posts flag concerns.

- If any posts, photos or videos mention names, ensure they mention first names only. Emanate TV must not tag a young persons account.
- Emanate TV can repost photos, videos and content sent in by a young person if the correct consent forms are filled out and permission given.
- Emanate TV must not seek out content to repost from a young persons account.
- The team should endeavour not to state any unnecessary personal details or information relating to the child or young person when posting images or photos online e.g. full names, addresses, schools attending.
- When posting photographs or video on social media settings should be set up so that individual children and young people cannot be tagged.

Any inappropriate posts by children or young people or leaders to a group or platform should be removed by the admin/s of the site. Examples of inappropriate post content could be:

- Racism
- LGBT+-phobia
- Prevent issues
- Mental health worries
- Explicit personal images

If anything posted concerns you, you must take the additional step of contacting the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

Inappropriate posts on social media can be part of a larger spectrum of issues (family abuse, peer-to-peer abuse, severe mental health concerns etc.) that others may be aware of, even if you are not.

Any disclosures of abuse reported through a social networking site must be dealt with in accordance with the Parklands Safeguarding policy.

### Emanate TV platforms:

Facebook:

Emanate TV can comment, like and friend children and young people via this platform.

Guidelines on images and communications should be followed.

Facebook is a platform where you can post text, images and videos to your “wall”, and communicate directly via the messenger - a separate application.

If a young person contacts a member of the Youth Team or a volunteer through Facebook Messenger, the conversation must be kept short, clear and with an emphasis on talking ‘face to face’ at the next appropriate point, rather than continuing the conversation on Messenger. Share with the Youth Pastor or your leader that you have been contacted in this way.

Use of live chat facilities between staff/volunteers and children or young people is not permitted. You should refrain from engaging in conversation via these mediums. Live chat services and chat

facilities cannot be kept on record and are therefore an unsuitable form of communication between workers, children and young people.

If a Team Member or volunteer is at all concerned with the tone or nature of comments through Facebook, screen shots should be taken and immediately sent to a Youth Pastor.

On Facebook, you can set up a Group or a Page. Of the two, you should use a Group as it allows for group chats (which means those with Messenger can be communicated), and those within the Group can post on the wall, comment on posts etc. It is important to set it as private. This means that people outside the group or page cannot see the posts inside it, and they cannot join the Group without one of the admins giving them permission.

It is not appropriate to include a parent in a Facebook group with children, even if their child is not on Facebook and they want to be able to pass on information. If they want to be part of the group, they need to have a DBS check. The DBS check you need to moderate a church group does not extend to any other groups you may be involved with outside of church.

The Group should always have two or more leaders as admins. It is important to note that their personal accounts will be the ones visible in the group when they post, so personal account privacy settings are very important.

All content, videos, films should be age appropriate for the group.

Youtube:

Emanate TV can comment, like and friend children and young people via this platform. Guidelines on images and communications should be followed.

Content should be age appropriate for the audience.

Discord and Whatsapp

Discord are forums where groups can be made, messages and information shared.

All content, videos, films should be age appropriate for the group.

All conversations should be encouraged as a group. One to one conversations saved and kept brief (follow text policy) with face to face encouraged. The Group should always have two or more leaders as admins. All those using platforms should be willing to have their messages checked but the Youth Pastor for safety purposes.

## Self-Harm Policy

Context:

Recent statistics would suggest that 1/10 young people in the UK self-harm. As church workers we are ideally placed to build trusting relationships and an environment where people feel safe to express how they feel. As a result we want to be able to give them the opportunity to access the support they need. It is important we are prepared to know how to respond to a disclosure. For many people the way we respond will impact how they feel about disclosing in the future.

Aims: The aims of this policy are:



- To increase understanding and awareness of self-harm
- To equip staff and volunteers to handle a disclosure of self-harm
- To understand the immediate risks of self-harm
- To promote a culture of self-care

## Definition of Self Harm:

Self-harm is an umbrella term to describe a wide range of behaviours. These are split into 2 sub categories: Harming Behaviours: Behaviours that result in long term damage. E.g. under eating, binge drinking or drug misuse. Self-harm is any behaviour where the intent is to deliberately cause harm to one's own body. Self-harm is often understood to be a physical response to emotional pain of some kind. It is often a coping mechanism.

Behaviours of self-harm can include:

- Cutting, scratching, scraping or picking skin
- Biting yourself
- Swallowing inedible objects/ hazardous materials
- Burning or scalding skin
- Hair Pulling
- Banging or hitting the head
- Over-eating or under-eating
- Exercising excessively

This list is not exhaustive, there are a wide range of ways that people may choose to self-harm.

## If you suspect someone is self-harming

- Try to provide a safe opportunity for a person to disclose
- Start conversations that touch on the subject (e.g. how do they cope in stressful situations?)
- Be open and responsive
- Do not ask outright unless you are confident in the relationship you have with each other
- Do not push, it is possible to help and support them without a disclosure

## Important information on procedure when responding to a self-harm disclosure:

Be open with the child or young person. Make them aware that anything disclosed about the welfare or safety of themselves or someone else will need to be referred to the safeguarding officers. The ideal scenario is for the child/young person to come with you to share and disclose further, please consider this as you continue to read the next steps. (For many the sense of lack of control could be damaging so for them to feel they know what's being said and exactly what's being disclosed can actually be comforting and helpful)

If a child or young person discloses an incident/s of self-harm, assess:

- Does the person need any immediate medical attention?
- Is that young person at immediate risk to themselves?
- What are they feeling now?
- What support do they need?

If there has been significant harm or there is a risk of significant harm, then seek help immediately. The child protection procedure of what actions to follow can be found on page 9 of this policy document.

Even if you think that a child or young person is not at risk of significant harm, the youth pastor or children's pastor must be informed (encourage them to come with you). The concern must also be referred to the safeguarding officers. You can complete the 'logging a concern form' which can be found at the end of this document.

Inform the child or young person that you will be informing a member of the pastoral team. Encourage the young person or child to accompany you when you inform the youth pastor or children and families pastor if they would like to.

How to respond to the individual when they disclose about their self-harm:

- Listen. Taking time just to listen will make the person feel empowered and valued.
- Be honest and consistent. It's OK not to understand. Don't pretend you know everything.
- Try to be non-judgemental.
- Let the person know that you are there for them.
- Relate to them as a whole person, not just their self-harm.
- Try to have empathy and understanding about what they are doing.
- Let them be in control of their decisions where possible.
- Remind them of their positive qualities and things they do well
- Offer to help them find support.
- Do not ask them to stop. Often asking them to stop creates a sense that you are another person they feel they are letting down when they self-harm.
- Self-harm is often a coping mechanism. Therefore it is important to address the underlying issues with the child or young person. If appropriate, explore alternative coping strategies in order to help keep them safe.
- Point the child or young person towards other places of support. This might include: Doctor, parent, local support organisations, online support. Here is a useful document created by MIND which may be helpful for them to read:  
[https://www.mind.org.uk/media/5133002/mind\\_und\\_self-harm\\_singles\\_4- web.pdf](https://www.mind.org.uk/media/5133002/mind_und_self-harm_singles_4- web.pdf)

## Providing on-going support

The safeguarding officers will work alongside the Youth Pastor or Children and Families Pastor to assess the on-going support that should be offered to a child or young person after a disclosure of self-harm.

Continued involvement with the child or young person following a disclosure of self-harm will depend on your role and context in which you work with them.

If appropriate, the young person will be encouraged to go to their parent, carer or GP as a first point of referral.

In some circumstances, the safeguarding officers may deem it necessary to make a referral to CAMHS. This is if the child or young person fits 4 – 5 of the following statements:

- Inability to maintain functional relationships
- High levels of anxiety and phobia
- Consistently unstable mood
- Poor concentration and decision making skills

- History of traumatic events

This decision is the responsibility of the safeguarding officers in consultation with the youth pastor or children and families pastor.

## Looking after yourself

Everyone has limitations and we need to ensure we protect our own well-being when working with children/young people who are self-harming.

Things to consider:

- It is OK to pass on responsibility to the safeguarding officers, you don't have to stay involved after someone discloses.
- If you do support someone who is self-harming then it can be a long process with many ups and downs. Taking care of yourself will enable you to stay involved for longer and to keep well.
- Be self-aware – note any changes in your own behaviours, thought patterns and be alert to changes in your personal physical or emotional behaviour
- Maintain good & clear boundaries about how much and what sort of support you can offer
- Rely on supervision and support from pastoral staff. Seek advice from the pastoral team if you are concerned about your own well-being in relation to disclosures or providing support around incidents of self-harm

## STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

### Logging a Wellbeing Concern Form

Type of concern: Physical/ Mental Health/ Emotional Wellbeing \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child/young person: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Ask yourself why you are recording the incident. Record the following factually:

Who? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Note of any action taken by you:

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Name of person whom your information is passed to:

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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

Disclosure Form

Name of child/young person: \_\_\_\_\_



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

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Note of any action taken by you:

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Name of person whom your information is passed to:

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Your name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Child Protection & Policy Agreement

I have read and understand the Child 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 \_\_\_\_\_