



## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### **CONTEXT**

#### **THE CHARITY**

**New Life Church Battersea** is a project of **The Bridge Battersea (the Charity)**, a limited company (number 07539965), and a charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales (charity number 1147543) and whose registered address is at 33 Goulden House, Bullen Street, London, SW11 3HG.

The Charity seeks to advance the Christian faith through the local church. The Church serves the local community by providing wide-ranging ministries involving children, young people, and adults of all ages, and the Charity treats safeguarding as an urgent priority.

#### **THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees of the Charity are currently:

- Andrew Campbell
- Sarah Dowding (Safeguarding Trustee)
- Tom He
- Tania Loke
- Jason Roach

#### **OUR INSURERS**

The Charity has an Access Insurance Services policy (no. 009146/05/22) with QUnderwriting.

## **THE POLICY**

This Safeguarding Policy (the Policy) was drawn up in August 2022 and will be reviewed annually. The Policy is the responsibility of the Trustees and is managed by our Safeguarding Coordinator.

## **PURPOSE**

- Ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing and protective environment for everyone who comes into contact with the Charity
- Ensure that every member of the Charity is protected from harm and abuse and that if abuse is identified, it is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately
- Ensure that our trustees, staff, and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities and duties and are supported to competently and confidently fulfil them
- Support the development of an open and transparent culture that listens to the views and wishes of every member of the Charity and supports the raising of concerns and complaints
- Provide leadership and accountability for every member of the Charity in relation to safeguarding.

## **SCOPE**

The Policy applies to everyone who works on behalf of The Bridge Battersea including the Charity's trustees, senior leaders, group/ministry leaders, paid staff, volunteers, and others working on our behalf.

Charity Commission guidance shows how wide the scope of safeguarding is for charities: "Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities. It is a fundamental part of operating as a charity for the public benefit. As part of fulfilling your trustee duties, whether working online or in person, you must take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with your charity.

This includes:

- People who benefit from your charity's work
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Other people who come into contact with your charity through its work

The Charity Commission will hold trustees to account if things go wrong and will check that trustees followed this guidance and the law. Trustees are expected to take responsibility for putting things right.

The Commission will refer concerns to relevant safeguarding agencies where needed to take further action as it is not a nominated body with the power to implement safeguarding legislation.

Trustees should promote an open and positive culture and ensure all involved feel able to report concerns, confident that they will be heard and responded to.

We expect all trustees to make sure their charity:

- has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries
- checks that people are suitable to act in their roles
- knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner
- has a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant agencies as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follows statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to their charity: this guidance links to the main sources of information
- is quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- does not ignore harm or downplays failures
- has a balanced trustee board and does not let one trustee dominate its work – trustees should work together
- makes sure protecting people from harm is central to its culture
- has enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/trustees for safeguarding and protecting people
- conducts periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice”

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

## **BASIS OF POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy is consistent with:

- current legislation
- national guidance
- local arrangements
- our charitable objectives, governing documents and doctrinal statements

## POLICY HISTORY

Superseded Child Protection Policy last issued	April 2019
Full review and new Safeguarding Policy issued	July 2024
Annual review	November 2024
Annual review	November 2025
Review for New Life Church Battersea	January 2026
Next review due	November 2026

A copy of the Policy is held electronically by the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Trustee. Everyone working with children and young people or adults at risk shall have an electronic copy of the Safeguarding Policy made available to them. We are committed to a rolling training programme for all such workers on the content of this Policy. Training is provided either by the Coordinator, the Safeguarding Trustee or by external specialists.

## GLOSSARY

Throughout the Policy, we commonly refer to the following:

“The Charity” or “We”	means The Bridge Church Battersea
“Church” or “our Church”	means the local church (New Life Church Battersea) resourced by the Charity and whose ministries and activities are the responsibility of the Charity
“Coordinator”	means the Safeguarding Coordinator appointed by the Trustees
“THIRTYONE:EIGHT”	means Thirtyone:eight, an external advisory organisation ( <a href="https://thirtyoneeight.org">https://thirtyoneeight.org</a> )
“DBS”	means the Disclosure and Barring Service which helps to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups ( <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service</a> )
“DBS check”	means the criminal records check carried out by the DBS that

	results in DBS certificates being issued to an individual
“Regulated Activity”	is the term used to describe specified job functions carried out by an employee/volunteer as defined by the DBS. These activities are broken down into two groups, ‘Activity with children’ and ‘Activity with adults’.
“Recruiters”	means the individuals appointed by our Church to help comply with the Safer Recruitment Process outlined in this Policy
“Safer Recruitment Process”	means the process that we have put in place to minimise the risk of unsuitable people being approved to work with vulnerable groups within our Church
“Trustees”	means the trustees of The Bridge Church Battersea

## **BIBLICAL MANDATE FOR SAFEGUARDING**

In His Word, God has made it very plain that the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is of great importance to Him.

Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:

- We are to honour those that God has set in authority over us and to live as responsible and good citizens in the time and place that God has set us in
- Every human life, including that of the unborn, is valuable to God and each person bears His image
- We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers and we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst, from those dangers
- God cares for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger; He calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation
- Jesus’ example was one of valuing, accepting and caring about everyone
- We are to love those around us as God loves them and to seek to bring healing, restoration and reconciliation to broken and damaged lives by the manifestation of the love of God through us
- The church is not a gathering of sinless and perfect people, but rather a community of grace where we seek to encourage one another to grow in faith and obedience to God

- We are called to encourage and challenge each other lovingly and to spur one another on to greater holiness and obedience to God in an attitude of humility, grace and forgiveness

## **SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **TRUSTEES**

The Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding on behalf of the Charity. The Charity Commission has provided detailed guidance on these responsibilities.

### **SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR**

The Trustees have appointed Samantha Reeve to be the Charity's Safeguarding Coordinator ("the Coordinator") to help them to fulfil their safeguarding obligations. Within the Charity, the Coordinator's line manager is the Senior Minister (Tom Dowding).

Where there are any safeguarding concerns and/or allegations, the Coordinator is responsible for collating and clarifying the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and, if appropriate, for passing this information on to the statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Under the authority of the Trustees, the Coordinator will also work to

- act as advocate for children, young people and adults at risk
- ensure the Policy is followed
- provide training and offer advice to our Church
- partner with statutory agencies as appropriate
- ensure the Policy is regularly reviewed and updated
- advise the Trustees and our Church on issues of good practice

### **LEAD RECRUITER**

The Coordinator will also act as the Charity's Lead Recruiter and is responsible for dealing with and processing applications for posts where DBS checks are required. The Lead Recruiter will maintain a 'Single Central Record' for the Charity of all those who have DBS clearances, and of all safeguarding training received by individuals in the Church. They will register with THIRTYONE:EIGHT as Lead Recruiter for the Church and to check and submit DBS forms for their church. The Coordinator will ensure that all those within the church who need a DBS check obtain the required disclosure certificate(s) and receive appropriate training on the Policy and safe practice.

In this work, the Coordinator will be supported by one or more approved Recruiters within the Church. The second Recruiter is currently Tom Dowding.

## **COMPLAINTS**

The Charity distinguishes between two different types of complaints: safeguarding complaints and non-safeguarding complaints. However, we are aware that this distinction is not always clear and our staff and Trustees will take all complaints seriously.

## **SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS**

Any complaints regarding the handling of safeguarding matters should be sent either by special delivery (registered mail) to:

The Safeguarding Coordinator  
c/o 33 Goulden House  
Bullen Street  
London  
SW11 3HG

Or by email to: [sarahanndowding@gmail.com](mailto:sarahanndowding@gmail.com)

Alternatively, complaints may be sent by mail to the Trustees at the above address, or by email to: [info@newlifebattersea.com](mailto:info@newlifebattersea.com).

## **COMPLAINTS RELATING TO OTHER MATTERS**

Other (unrelated to safeguarding) complaints or concerns should be reported using the Charity's separate complaints procedure, details of which should be requested from the Trustees, using the email address: [info@newlifebattersea.com](mailto:info@newlifebattersea.com)

## **PROCESS**

Complaints will be dealt with within a reasonable time period and the complainant will receive a written response to their complaint from either the Coordinator and/or the Trustees.

## **RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND DISCLOSURES**

### **MANAGING IMMEDIATE RISK**

Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual. The worker may seek advice from their team leader or from the Coordinator, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay, or prevent the protective action, or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.

In such urgent situations, and if the Coordinator cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or children's social care (see contact details in Appendix) to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the Coordinator should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Coordinator will notify the Trustees where the matter amounts to a serious incident. The Trustees may also need to inform the Charity's insurers and/or the Charity Commission. In such circumstances, the Coordinator will notify the Trustees and it will be the decision of the Trustees as to whether or not the report is made to the insurers or to the Charity Commission.

### **REPORTING CONCERNS TO THE COORDINATOR**

Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer, in imminent danger, the concern must be reported to the Coordinator:

Details of the concern should be communicated to the Coordinator as soon as possible (phone call/email) within 24 hours. Details can be recorded electronically or on paper. Workers may wish to file the report by using the Incidents and Concerns Reporting Form (see Appendix) and any notes taken should be passed on accordingly.

### **MANAGING THE RISK: THE ROLE OF THE COORDINATOR**

In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the Coordinator will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for a follow-up or further actions that may be required.

Upon receipt of the completed Incidents and Concerns Reporting Form or any other form of communication, the Coordinator will establish a Confidential File in relation to the person at risk, and:

- A chronology will be established and inserted at the front of the Confidential File;
- The Confidential File will be updated with any further discussion or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis;
- The Coordinator will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The Coordinator will not provide any unnecessary information and information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

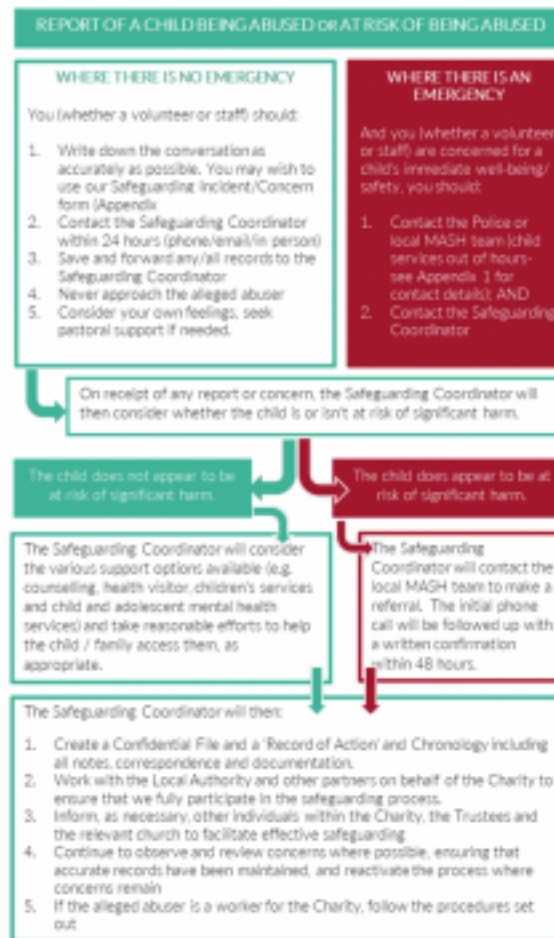
Where the concern appears to meet the statutory threshold, the Coordinator will notify the parent or the carer of the individual concerned, or the individual if they are an adult, that a referral is being made to social care.

- Information will not be shared with the parent/carer in situations where:
  - to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect
  - to do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse
  - the concern relates to fabricated or induced illness
- The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (see Appendix for contact details)
- If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the Coordinator will follow up with Children's Social Care
- The Coordinator will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the Charity to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.
- All conversations, correspondence, and documentation will be placed into the Confidential File and the 'Record of Action' and chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis.

Confidential Files will be stored securely online.

The Coordinator will share information as necessary with the Trustees, other individuals within the Charity, in order to facilitate effective safeguarding.

It is the right of any individual to make a direct referral to the Police or to other statutory agencies or to seek advice from THIRTYONE:EIGHT, although we hope that members of the Churches will use the procedure outlined in this Policy. If an individual believes that the Coordinator has not responded appropriately, they are entitled to contact an outside agency directly and/or contact the Trustees.



## SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Our Safer Recruitment Process has been introduced to minimise the risk of unsuitable people being approved to work with vulnerable groups within our Church. Until this process has been completed in respect of a person, and a satisfactory DBS certificate has been issued to that person, he or she will not be allowed to serve in any Regulated Activity role alone with either children or adults at risk. While the DBS process is underway, a person may serve temporarily provided they are overseen at all times by someone who has completed the full Safer Recruitment Process, and the person has completed an internal safeguarding form issued by the Coordinator.

In addition, and, unless there are clear and justifiable reasons, we require that any person working with any group involving children must be an active member of one of our Church's small groups (or similar group in church that they are connected with). The Trustees consider this to be important because such workers should be relationally connected within their church family and be subject to meaningful spiritual and personal accountability within their church.

## **MANAGEMENT OF OUR SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The Coordinator will manage and oversee our Safer Recruitment Process. This includes maintaining a 'single central record' of recruitment checks and a training log. The Charity utilises online recruitment documents and these are confidential and encrypted and are safely stored on an indefinite basis by the Coordinator. Only the Coordinator and the relevant Recruiters can view the confidential online recruitment forms.

## **OUTLINE OF OUR SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The Coordinator will oversee and monitor the Safer Recruitment Process and liaise with the appropriate Recruiter in respect of each worker until the process has been completed. Where a person ("the Applicant") wishes to serve in a role or roles which are specified below at our Church as either a paid employee or as a volunteer, we will carry out the following process in respect of the Applicant:

1. The Recruiter or the rota leader will speak to the Applicant (who must be 18 years or older) about what the role entails, confirm their small-group involvement, or other form of church-based accountability, and explain the importance of safeguarding. The Recruiter will briefly explain our Safer Recruitment Process and the Applicant will be provided with the web links they need in order to begin that process. If for a legitimate reason (work, distance from church to home, etc.) it is not possible for the Applicant to be an active member of a small group within their church, they must have written approval from their pastor. This must be obtained by the Safer Recruitment Administrator and be submitted to the Coordinator before the Applicant is allowed to serve.
2. The Applicant will submit an online Application form and give us their consent to proceed with a DBS check in their name.
3. The Applicant will submit an online Self-Declaration form and be encouraged to provide details of any criminal record and/or other reasons which may make them unsuitable to work with either children or adults at risk.
4. The Recruiter will contact the Applicant's two referees (who must not be family members) and submit the Online Reference form. If either referee has any concerns, the Recruiter will note them electronically or in writing and report them to the Coordinator.
5. The Recruiter will initiate an electronic DBS application on the THIRTYONE:EIGHT ebulk system for the Applicant and once the Applicant has filled in their personal details the Coordinator will be notified and will in turn notify the Recruiter to complete their part of the application. Where the Applicant already has an

“acceptable” DBS certificate that is on the DBS Update Service, which was received in a different context, the Coordinator will have the option upon seeing the original paper certificate, to rely upon that rather than making a new application to the DBS. The Coordinator will determine if such a certificate is “acceptable” based on the latest guidance from the DBS.

6. The Applicant will sign and submit the online Code of Conduct for working with Children (Appendix 2) and/or the online Code of Conduct for working with Adults at Risk (Appendix 2) as appropriate.
7. If the DBS check is completed and the DBS notify the Coordinator that their checks have come back “clean”, then:
  - a. The Coordinator will record the details of the DBS certificate which has been granted;
  - b. The Coordinator will notify the Recruiter and rota-leader that the Applicant may now serve in the agreed Regulated Activity role.
  - c. The Coordinator will invite the Applicant to complete a safeguarding training session as soon as possible. If the Applicant does not complete the training within 6 months, they will be required to temporarily stop serving in their Regulated Activity role until they have been able to attend the training.
  - d. The Coordinator will request that the Applicant sign-up to the DBS Update Service within 30 days of the DBS being issued.
8. However, if the DBS check is completed and the DBS notify the Coordinator that their checks have come back “blemished”, then the Coordinator will invite the Applicant to a meeting and will ask them to bring their original DBS certificate and to explain what is noted there.

The Coordinator may subsequently need to carry out further enquiries and/or seek additional advice and will conduct a written risk assessment which will be retained indefinitely in a secure place by the Coordinator.

9. Only if the Coordinator is then satisfied that the information recorded on the DBS certificate and the incident/s to which it relates does not make the Applicant an unsuitable person to work in the Regulated Activity role, will steps 7 a) to d) above be carried out and the Applicant will be allowed to serve in the agreed Regulated Activity role.

An individual who has committed an offence against a child or who, for any other reason is considered by the Coordinator to be unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk,

will not be appointed to a role with children and young people or with adults at risk (as appropriate).

Neither the Coordinator nor the Recruiters are permitted to keep records of the results of a DBS check (whether it is blemished or not, nor the facts pertaining to the blemish) for more than 6 months. The Coordinator will maintain a "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log. No physical copies of any DBS certificate will be retained by us.

## **WHICH WORKERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS?**

### **REGULATED ACTIVITY**

All persons who are aged 18 years or over and who apply for Regulated Activity roles with children, young people or with adults at risk will be required to go through our Safer Recruitment Process and to apply for an Enhanced DBS certificate through the DBS where it is legal to do so.

Applicable Regulated Activity roles include, but are not limited to:

- Child workforce: Sunday school teacher/assistant, children and youth activities, leader of children's/youth work, driver of children/youth
- Adult workforce: leader of ministry to adults, adults at risk worker, driver of adults at risk, befriender, CAP worker.
- Adult and Child workforce: minister, ministry trainee, elder, trustee, deacon or any combination from the above areas.

### **NON-REGULATED ACTIVITY**

Where a person is not working in a Regulated Activity with children or young adults, but they supervise, teach, train, instruct and/or care for children, or provide advice and/or guidance on wellbeing or drive a vehicle only for children on more than one occasion then they are eligible for an Enhanced DBS check but without a search of the barred lists. Such workers will have to complete the Safer Recruitment Process.

### **INFREQUENT CONTACT**

Those workers who have 'infrequent contact' with children (like those helping out with children at events like the annual Co-Mission Revive Bible Festival, holiday clubs or those who give children lifts to church events from time to time) are now required to complete

our Safer Recruitment Process and to obtain an Enhanced DBS check (without the barred lists being searched). If such workers already have an Enhanced DBS which is on the DBS update service (which is less than 3 years old) then further checks may not be required.

### **THIRD-PARTY ORGANISATIONS**

If any worker has been sent to serve with us by a third-party organisation (such as Reach Global or London City Mission), it may be that the third party has already required its workers to undergo a thorough vetting process that includes police checks and references. If such a person will be working with children or adults at risk at our Church, the Coordinator will need to check with the third party that they have done all the proper checks and, in addition, the Coordinator will require the worker to complete our Safer Recruitment Process and to attend relevant safeguarding training.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### **YOUNG HELPERS**

Individuals under the age of 18 (but at least in Yr 11 at school) may be allowed, if invited by the group or ministry team leader, to help out with children at our Church (under adult supervision). They cannot be counted into the adult/child ratios or bear any responsibilities. Young helpers under 18 years will not be required to go through the full Safer Recruitment Process, but will be required to sign the Safe Practice Code of Conduct (see Appendix 2) and be invited to safeguarding training (but their attendance will not be compulsory).

### **TRUSTEES**

The Trustees are required to complete the full Safer Recruitment Process, obtain child and adult workforce enhanced DBS certificates (without the barred lists) in their capacity as Trustees and to attend regular (at least once every two years) safeguarding training.

### **PASTORS AND ELDERS**

The Church's Pastor with the Church's elders will also be required to complete the Safer Recruitments Process, including the acquisition of a DBS certificate as a Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Worker, Driver of Adults at Risk (in certain circumstances only) or something similar and will be required to attend regular safeguarding training. This is so that if needed they can serve if there is an urgent or

unexpected need. The only individuals that are exempted from our Safer Recruitment Process are those whose contact with children will always be under the supervision of the child's parents/carers (e.g. during a parent and toddler group). However, we will require the overall leaders of such groups to complete the Safer Recruitment Process and to attend safeguarding training. Advice can be sought from the Coordinator or from THIRTYONE:EIGHT regarding whether DBS checks can/must be sought for a specific role.

## **ADDITIONAL CHECKS FOR WORKERS WHO HAVE LIVED OVERSEAS**

### **EMPLOYEES RECRUITED FROM OVERSEAS**

When recruiting workers from overseas, we will follow the Safer Recruitment Process. If the Church is considering an applicant with substantial or sole overseas residency, a DBS Check in this country may have little value because it is unlikely to pick up charges or convictions relating to offences committed overseas.

Therefore, in addition to requiring such employees (or potential employees) to complete the Safer Recruitment Process, we will also need to make additional efforts to minimise the risk that the worker may be an unsuitable person to work with children, young people

and/or adults at risk. In such circumstances, even if the employee has obtained a satisfactory Enhanced DBS, the Coordinator will:

- Require the employee to obtain either a criminal record check or a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' from all countries where the worker has resided in the past five years;
- Or seek two additional references from the Pastor of their overseas church and from another senior leader of that church. Once those references have been received, the Coordinator will carry out a written risk assessment before making a formal recommendation to the Trustees. The Trustees will then decide whether to allow the employee to serve in the Regulated Activity role.

### **OTHER WORKERS WHO HAVE LIVED OR WORKED OVERSEAS**

Likewise, all other Applicants for roles which require an Enhanced DBS certificate to work with children and/or adults at risk who have previously lived or worked outside the UK for over three months within the previous five years must undergo the same rigorous checks. If any of the applicant's addresses disclosed in their DBS application are

overseas, even if the worker has obtained a satisfactory Enhanced DBS, the Coordinator will:

- Require the applicant to obtain either a criminal record check or a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' from all countries where the applicant has resided in the past five years; or
- Seek two additional references from the Pastor of their overseas church and from another senior leader of that church. Once those references have been received, the Coordinator will carry out a written risk assessment before making a formal recommendation to the Trustees. The Trustees will then decide whether to allow the worker to serve in the Regulated Activity role.

## **REPEAT CHECKS/ RENEWALS**

Subsequent DBS checks will be obtained for all relevant workers every three years or sooner.

- Where the worker has already signed up to the DBS Update Service and has granted us consent to use that information, we will check the worker's online DBS certificate every 12 months.
- Where the worker has not signed up to the DBS Update Service the Safer Recruitment Administrator will initiate an electronic DBS application for the Applicant on the THIRTYONE:EIGHT ebulk system and once the Applicant has filled in their personal details the Coordinator will be notified and will in turn notify the Recruiter to complete their part of the application

Every three years, all workers will be notified by their Recruiter that the three- year period is expiring and that they will need to complete a further revised Safer Recruitment Process as a way of determining their desire and continued eligibility to serve. Workers will be required to:

- Fill out a Renewal Application form;
- Sign the Code of Conduct (see Appendix 2); and
- Attend safeguarding training as offered.

Workers will also be advised to utilise the DBS Update service and to consent to having their DBS certificate checked on the Update Service every 12 months.

## **MANAGEMENT OF PAST OFFENDERS OR THOSE WHO POSE A RISK TO OTHERS SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

We are committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those in the Church who have been affected by abuse.

Pastoral care will be offered without prejudice to all those who require it, including known sex offenders. Where pastoral care is offered to both the person affected by abuse and to the known offender, this will be offered by different people who are able to support those concerned impartially and effectively.

## **OUR DUTIES IN RESPECT OF THOSE WHO POSE A RISK**

It is the nature of Christian outreach and ministry that some people who come to church and seek to participate in church activities will be past offenders. Whatever our pastoral concerns for such people, our priority will always be the safety of the children and the adults at risk within our Church. Where it is known or suspected that a person of concern is attending our Church and/or our activities, we have a duty to discuss this with the local police, probation and/or social services (as appropriate). This will help us to ensure that we are doing everything possible to keep children and adults at risk safe within our Church. Due to the addictive and persistent nature of abusive behaviour, we recognise that those attending our Church who are known to pose a risk (having committed, or being the subject of an allegation of sexual or other crimes against children, young people or adults at risk), will need robust measures put in place to ensure that children and adults at risk are safeguarded.

## **WORKING WITH THOSE WHO POSE A RISK**

We undertake to treat all applicants for positions within our Church fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a DBS disclosure on the basis of conviction information revealed. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working or volunteering in positions within our Church.

## **STAFF RECRUITMENT**

We operate a fair recruitment policy that ensures individuals have the opportunity to disclose any convictions or conviction information in a way that allows us to carry out a clear risk assessment in order to determine whether or not the conviction information is relevant to the position applied for. This will take account of:

- The nature of the conviction and the seriousness of the offence revealed

- The length of time since the offence took place
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offence took place.

As part of our recruitment policy, we will request the appropriate level of DBS check (if this is a requirement of the position) at the final part of the recruitment stage, when a position has been offered. Should we then decide that the information disclosed is relevant to the post applied for, we will withdraw the offer of employment and notify the applicant accordingly.

It is an offence for an individual who is barred to undertake the type of regulated work from which they are barred. It is also an offence to make an application to be considered for such work.

It is an offence for an organisation to offer regulated work (paid or voluntary) with children and/or adults at risk to someone who is barred or to fail to remove a person from regulated work if the organisation has been notified that they are barred.

## **CHURCH PARTICIPATION AND CONTRACTS OF CARE**

When someone attending our Church is known to have abused children, or may pose a danger to adults at risk, we will ensure that the individual has appropriate supervision and is offered pastoral care. In addition, we will set boundaries for that person which they will be required to keep and we will make use of risk assessment and/or Contract of Care agreements. Where required, the Coordinator will seek advice from legal counsel and/or THIRTYONE:EIGHT and/or the Police and Probation Service.

When it is known or suspected that a serious offender is attending our Church, ministries or activities, we will take the following steps:

- If the offender self-discloses their offending past or the church is notified of the offences by other agencies the Coordinator will notify the Trustees and, where required, seek additional advice.
- If the suspected offender has not self-disclosed, the Coordinator should meet with them together with one or two members of the church's leadership.
- Where it is confirmed that the person is a sex offender or other serious offender, the Coordinator will make it clear to the offender that, in everyone's interests, the Coordinator will contact the police and social work department of criminal justice to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place.
- The Coordinator will communicate with the other agencies and will prepare a suitable risk assessment, addressing how the offender can be properly supported

to enable them to participate safely in the activities of the church. Where appropriate, the responsible agencies will share with the Coordinator relevant details of the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) risk assessment for the offender.

- A bespoke Contract of Care will be drafted by the Coordinator or our legal advisers outlining the proposed arrangements for the management and support of the offender. The Coordinator will arrange for the church's Senior Pastor to establish a "Contract of Care team" which will comprise the Senior Pastor, and another elder. The Coordinator and the Contract of Care team will then meet with the offender to seek their agreement to the proposed contract. This contract will then be signed and dated by all parties (i.e. the offender, the Coordinator and the Contract of Care team).
- If the offender refuses to sign the Contract of Care, the Church's Senior Pastor and the Coordinator will inform the offender that they can no longer attend our Church or activities.
- Following the signature of the Contract of Care, the Contract of Care team will monitor the offender's compliance and any breaches will be notified to the Coordinator and be reported under the terms of MAPPA.
- If the individual under one of our Contracts of Care wishes to attend a Co-Mission event where children and/or adults at risk are present (such as the Revive Bible Festival), then the Contract of Care team should notify the Coordinator who will liaise with the event organisers without identifying the individual concerned. A bespoke Contract of Care will be created for that event by the Safeguarding Coordinator responsible for the event or by appropriate legal counsel and it will be signed in advance by the individual concerned and other relevant parties. Where necessary, a "chaperone rota" for the individual concerned will also be created in advance by the church where the individual attends. The chaperone rota will last for the duration of the event (or for whatever portion of the event the offender attends) and will ensure that the individual is properly chaperoned at all times.
- If the individual fails to abide by the boundaries set out within the Contract of Care, the Coordinator will contact the police for advice and the Senior Pastor and the Coordinator will together inform them that they can no longer attend our Church or activities.
- If the individual stops attending our Church, the Contract of Care team will notify the Coordinator and the Coordinator will inform the Police Child Protection team and, where relevant Probation services.
- Information regarding the individual and their offence/s, details of the members of the Contract of Care team and the contents and existence of a Contract of Care are to be kept confidential by the Coordinator and Trustees. The information

must not be shared with other staff or church leaders unless the Coordinator and/or the

Trustees have agreed (in advance) that there are sound safeguarding reasons for the confidential information to be securely disclosed to one or more staff or church leaders for the protection of children and/or adults at risk.

## **CONTRACT OF CARE TEAM**

- The Contract of Care team will function in liaison with the Police and, where relevant, Probation services.
- The Contract of Care team will undertake a regular review of the contract at intervals.
- The Contract of Care team will send an annual report on the offender to the Coordinator.

## **DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST OUR WORKERS**

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Charity takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We recognise that we have the responsibility to take the allegations seriously, to manage the situation effectively while the investigation takes place and to support the person accused throughout the process. In all cases of potential misconduct, the Trustees will make the appropriate pastoral care of victims their primary concern, and in this regard, will seek external advice from professionals such as THIRTYONE:EIGHT.

### **SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES**

Safeguarding allegations against staff or volunteers within the Charity and/or Church should be reported to the Coordinator and/or to the Trustees ([sarahanndowding@gmail.com](mailto:sarahanndowding@gmail.com)). Other complaints or concerns should be reported using the Charity's separate complaints procedure.

1. On receipt of an allegation, the Trustees and the Coordinator will urgently assess whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Dependent upon circumstances, and the immediate action required, it may be necessary to notify the individual that an allegation has been received.

- a. If so, care will be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
  - b. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation will not be divulged.
2. The Trustees will ensure that support is offered to both the worker who is the subject of the allegation and to any potential victims.
3. At the earliest opportunity, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should be consulted. If the LADO is unavailable, initial advice can be sought from THIRTYONE:EIGHT.
4. If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the Coordinator will notify the Trustees and together with leaders of the church (where applicable) will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed.
5. If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the Coordinator will consult with THIRTYONE:EIGHT, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency.
6. Where an allegation is made against a volunteer, and is reported to LADO the Trustees should temporarily require the volunteer to discontinue their involvement in the Regulated Activity pending enquiries. This would certainly be the case where there is evidence that further harm may come to children or adults if they are not removed from duties. The Trustees may recommend or require that the volunteer temporarily ceases all forms of service and ministry for the church.
7. Where an allegation is made against an employee, the best course of proportionate action (for example, suspension or change of duties) will be decided by the Trustees in liaison with the Coordinator and after consultation with THIRTYONE:EIGHT, the Charity's legal advisers and/or other relevant outside agencies. Serious consideration will be given to suspending the worker where there is evidence that further harm may come to children or adults if they are not removed from duties (albeit temporarily). However, the Trustees will need to follow the Charity's employment policies and disciplinary/dismissal process (see the Charity's employment contracts and Co-mission Staff Handbook) and will not suspend a worker unless that is considered to be both proportionate and necessary. Where the Trustees choose not to suspend the employee, they may instead decide to revise the employee's job responsibilities so that they are removed from the activities involving children and young people or adults at risk whilst the allegation is investigated. During such situations, the Trustees will arrange for the worker to be closely supervised without raising suspicion during

the period between the matter coming to the Charity's attention and the authorities being informed.

8. Cases of serious harm will be reported to the Charity Commission by the Trustees.
9. We understand that some allegations may be made maliciously but are committed to taking all claims seriously and to properly investigating them.

## **EXTERNAL REPORTING AND LIAISON**

The nature of the allegation may well dictate the response, particularly if it is of a serious nature that requires the involvement of the local Children's Social Services (M.A.S.H Team), the local Adult Services (L.A.D.O) and the Police.

## **INFORMING THE LOCAL STATUTORY AGENCIES**

Where the allegations are serious and involve children, the Coordinator will notify the local M.A.S.H Team. The M.A.S.H team will have a Designated Officer or team of officers who will have responsibility to ensure that all allegations of abuse against people working with children are dealt with fairly and efficiently.

Where the allegations are serious and involve adults, the Coordinator will contact the LADO. Their Safeguarding Adult Boards (SAB) may provide specific local advice.

The Coordinator will appropriately involve the Designated Officer, the SAB and/or the Police where necessary in dealing with allegations against workers. In addition, where allegations have been substantiated or there is sufficient cause for ongoing concern regarding a workers' conduct with children, young people or adults at risk, the Coordinator will also need to liaise with the Trustees to determine whether a report should be sent to the DBS, the Charity Commission and/or the Charity's insurers.

## **REFERRING TO THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE**

We have a legal duty under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 to make a referral to the DBS when:

- allegations have been substantiated or there is sufficient cause for ongoing concern regarding a workers' conduct with children, young people or adults at risk; and/or

- we take the decision to ‘dismiss or remove’ a worker from working with vulnerable people. This would generally apply at the point at which the worker is cautioned or convicted for a ‘relevant offence’ or where they are believed to have engaged in ‘relevant conduct’ with a child or adult at risk.

Where the DBS determines that there is sufficient evidence, they have the power to place the worker on the list of those barred from working with children. Similarly, where there is concern about the conduct of someone who has worked with adults at risk, it will be appropriate that the worker is referred to the DBS for consideration to be added to the Barred List.

## **REPORTING TO THE CHARITY COMMISSION**

As we are a Charity, our Trustees are required to inform the Charity Commission when a ‘Serious Incident’ has occurred and to make that report as soon as possible. Under Charity Commission guidance, a Serious Incident occurs where a result has, or could, entail ‘...a significant loss of funds or a significant risk to the Charity’s property, work, beneficiaries or reputation.’ A safeguarding incident or allegation may amount to a Serious Incident because of the significant impact which it may have upon the Charity, our reputation and upon those whom we seek to serve.

As far as allegations of abuse are concerned, Charity Commission guidance states: ‘You (the place of worship or organisation) should report this if any one or more of the following occur:

- There has been an incident where the beneficiaries of your Charity have been or are being abused or mistreated while under the care of your Charity or by someone connected with your Charity such as a trustee, member of staff or volunteer.
- There has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated and this is connected with the activities of the Charity.
- Allegations have been made that such an incident may have happened regardless of when the alleged abuse or mistreatment took place.
- You have grounds to suspect that such an incident may have occurred.’

The Charity Commission states that these are ‘zero tolerance’ issues which would always be investigated by them. Serious incidents also include not having adequate safeguarding policies in place and the failure to carry out DBS checks on workers and trustees (where legally possible); in summary, anything that could affect the good reputation of the Charity. If the Coordinator believes that a report may be required, the Coordinator will discuss the matter with the Trustees and, where appropriate, seek legal advice. The decision as to whether or not to make the report to the Charity Commission will be made by the Trustees.

## **INFORMING THE INSURERS**

Our Insurers may also need to be advised of a serious safeguarding incident in accordance with the terms and requirements of our policy. The Coordinator will discuss the matter with the Trustees and, where appropriate, seek legal advice. The decision as to whether or not to make the report to our Insurers will be made by the Trustees.

## **DEALING WITH A WORKER WHO FACES ALLEGATIONS**

### **SUSPENSION OF A WORKER**

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a worker, depending on the nature of the allegation and any advice received from the local authority and/or the police, the Trustees will consider whether the worker ought to be suspended 'without prejudice', in other words without passing judgement on the validity of the allegation. The act of removing a worker (employees or volunteers) temporarily from their role or part of their role is not necessarily an assumption of guilt but may simply be a wise precaution.

This action protects the worker from further allegations of abuse, the Charity from allegations of not dealing with the situation appropriately and, perhaps most importantly, the child, young person or vulnerable adult from further abuse or intimidation. However, such a step would only be taken in consultation with our legal advisers and/or the statutory agencies.

### **SUPPORT FOR THE WORKER**

During any investigation, we will allow the worker to have someone to support them and represent their interests throughout the process.

If it turns out the allegation is a conduct or relational issue rather than abuse, we will observe good personnel practices and properly support the worker as well as the person(s) making the allegation.

### **CONCERNS ABOUT PRACTICE AND WHISTLEBLOWING**

We follow the principles contained in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and expect that all workers (paid or voluntary) will report improper actions and omissions. Whilst all malpractice and acts of discrimination will be investigated, it is especially important that suspicions of abuse are immediately reported to the Coordinator.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Where allegations and concerns are being dealt with that may lead to suspension or which warrant further investigation, a thorough and robust disciplinary investigation will be undertaken to establish 'on the balance of probabilities' what occurred and how this may impact the suitability of the worker to remain in or return to post. This will be undertaken by the Trustees in liaison with the Coordinator and in consultation with our legal advisers and/or the local authority or Police (as appropriate). We will not reinstate the suspended worker until satisfactory conclusions have been reached.

Even if the person against whom an allegation is made resigns to avoid action being taken, we will still report the matter appropriately, complete an investigation into the allegations of abuse and take further action as necessary.

## **Appendix 1: KEY CONTACTS**

### **SAFEGUARDING ADVISORS**

Thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent. BR8 7UQ

0303 003 11 11

[info@thirtyoneeight.org](mailto:info@thirtyoneeight.org)

### **CONTACT DETAILS FOR STATUTORY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN**

Wandsworth Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 020 8871 7899

Wandsworth out-of-hours 020 8871 6000

Police Child Protection Team 020 8247 7827

LOCAL AUTHORITY SAFEGUARDING ADULTS TEAM (L.A.D.O)

Wandsworth 020 8871 6622 / 07974 586 461 LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk

## **APPENDIX 2: SAFE PRACTICE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

This code of conduct supports our Safeguarding Policy. References to the Coordinator in this code refer to the Safeguarding Coordinator for The Bridge Church.

This document covers areas of safe practice in relation to work with children and young people. All workers, whether paid staff members or volunteers, are expected to sign (electronically or otherwise) and adhere to the standards of safe practice outlined within

this document. These guidelines have been established in line with The Co-Mission Churches Trust and reflect current best practice.

Groups not governed by this code are crèches within daytime Bible study groups, where childcare is arranged privately by parents attending the group, who remain responsible for their own children.

## **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

### **KEY PRINCIPLES**

Attempts will be made wherever possible to keep to the following ratio of adults to children, using as a guide the ratios required in regulations governing day-care for under 8's:

CHILD'S AGE	ADULT : CHILD RATIO
0 to 2 years	1:3
2 to 3 years	1:4
4 to 8 years	1:6
9 to 12 years	1:8
13 to 18 years	1:10

- Ideally, no adult will be a lone worker with a child or group of children, except as part of a church's youth mentoring or discipleship programme, or at Bridge Kids with the expressed permission of parents.
- Where possible the gender of the adults should reflect that of the group.
- Adults who assist occasionally or on a one-off basis who have not been appointed formally using the safer recruitment procedures must be under the care of a worker at all times.
- If for any reason a worker is alone with a child, they should ensure that there is a second adult nearby or there are other workers or groups nearby. Workers will try to leave doors open when seeing a child individually.
- No person under 18 years of age will be left in charge of any children of any age.
- Children or young people attending a group will not be left alone at any time.
- A record should be made of any unusual activity or comments by members, recording what leaders witnessed (e.g. throwaway sexual comments, or particularly difficult behaviour) and leaders may want to use the Safeguarding Incident/Concern Form. The purpose of this is to protect both children and workers. Such records must be passed to the Coordinator to be kept in a secure place.

- Any accidents, injuries and/or “near misses” should be reported to the Co-ordinator as required by the Charity’s health and safety policy. A record will be kept by the Co ordinator.
- When transporting children ensure that it is with the knowledge of the team/leadership and that parental approval has been attained. All drivers must have a valid driving licence, valid insurance and must ensure that seat belt laws are complied with. If it is necessary to transport a child on their own (which should only be in exceptional circumstances) they should travel in the back of the car.

## **YOUNG LEADERS**

We are keen to support young people learning about ministry through involvement with children’s work in the church. At the same time, we recognise that young leaders must not be exposed to unreasonable levels of responsibility or risk.

With this in mind, young leaders will not be placed in a role that will require them to complete a DBS check. They cannot be counted into the worker-child ratios. Young leaders will be supported at all times in their roles by adult leaders.

## **BABYSITTING ARRANGEMENTS**

Individuals at New Life Church Battersea may be involved in arranging babysitters so that members of the church can attend various meetings while their children are supervised at home. Whilst great care will be taken to ensure that suitable babysitters are found, this remains an informal arrangement and is done entirely at the discretion of the parents of the children involved. It is not covered by this policy.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT: GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS BASIC PRINCIPLES**

Discipline is a team issue

- Each member of the team has a part to play.
- Agree roles and responsibilities.
- Identify each other’s strengths.
- Be consistent, loving and predictable (the same behaviour produces the same consequences).
- When disciplining a child over poor behaviour, do not do so in a way that humiliates and do not do so one to one behind closed doors.

- Never use physical discipline

Discipline is a planning issue

- Be aware that a poor lesson can result in poor behaviour, because the children are bored and frustrated. It does not follow that poor behaviour is always caused by a poor lesson.

Discipline is a gospel issue

- We work in a context of continual conversation with parents. We want to be speaking to parents about their children, irrespective of their child's behaviour. This acknowledges that we only teach because they have commissioned us to teach their children the Bible for an hour a week.
- Poor discipline prevents others from hearing God speak. That should be motivation enough to act.
- Seek to encourage with positive affirmation both the whole class and individuals, publicly and privately, whenever possible.
- Offer the child a way out by them changing their behaviour.
- Model forgiveness.

## **MANAGING POOR BEHAVIOUR\***

1. Explain to the child how their behaviour is falling below the standards you expect.
2. Warn the child that if behaviour continues to be poor, they will be asked to sit out from the class for a period of time.
3. On the third warning for the same poor behaviour, the child be asked to sit in timeout for the duration of an activity or game. They may not participate in any way while they are there. They are expected to listen. Parents must be informed if this happens, as soon after the lesson as possible.
4. Give the child the opportunity to talk about what went wrong, to say sorry where this is warranted and to pray with the child. Warn the child that if after re-joining the class, the behaviour continues to be poor, they will return to timeout again or their parents will be asked to collect them.
5. If the behaviour makes it difficult to continue the lesson, then one teacher needs to collect a parent from the Church to remove the child. Explain the reasons for this as a final warning, before you take this action.

\*Discipline may vary for children with special needs, in discussion with parents.

## **GUIDELINES ON TOUCH**

- Keep everything public.
- A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. The team should be free to help each other by pointing out anything which could be misunderstood.

## **YOUTH 1:1 MENTORING AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

### **ONE TO ONE MENTORING / PASTORAL CARE**

If a worker is working with young people as part of a church mentoring and/or discipleship programme (for example, reading the Bible one to one with a young person of the same gender as part of the church's youth work) or as part of a pastoral care team:

- The parents of the young people involved are required to provide their agreement (by letter or by email or by text message) that the one to one meetings may take place.
- One to one meetings should only be held in agreed places (for example in church or in cafes or in the park), and should be in view of other people.
- A one to one meeting should have an agreed start and end time and the young person's parents should be notified that a meeting is taking place and where it is being held.
- Appropriate boundaries should be put in place in regard to times and demand, i.e. not phoning or texting late at night, etc.
- In the event of any pastoral concerns a leader may have about an individual member, a leader should take the issue to the parents or church leaders.

### **COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

This policy seeks to clarify and set the boundaries for communication between the youth leaders and members at our Church. All communication between youth leaders and members occurs on a strictly same sex basis – i.e. male leaders to male members and

female leaders to female members (except where mass communication e.g. group emails/Facebook messages sent out). The context for all communication with members is that parents are responsible for their children rather than the youth leaders.

To prevent relationships being misunderstood by a member or an outsider, leaders will not send more than five texts, emails or Facebook messages to one individual in any given week. All communication between leaders and members is to occur between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm. In circumstances where leaders are texted or contacted by members outside of these times, the leader will not reply until the following morning except in cases of emergency. The only exception would be in the evening of a youth event (for example a social, which may not finish until 10pm) where communication asking for practical details can be replied to.

In all communication, leaders are encouraged to be above reproach and exercise wisdom to protect both themselves and the members from accusation or incrimination of any kind. Rather than hinder communication, this policy is intended to encourage youth leaders to communicate appropriately.

The table below outlines the current methods of communication:

	<b>GROUPS FOR AGES 11–14</b>	<b>GROUPS FOR AGES 15–18</b>
Text messaging/ WhatsApp	None	Used to confirm details of attendance at social events and meeting one to one with members.  Occasionally used to send birthday messages, encourage with Bible verses. Same gender only.  Not used for conversations or discussions of any nature.  If using WhatsApp, use group messaging where possible.
Mobile phone calls	None	Used only to confirm expected attendance at an event or a one-to-one meeting. e.g. If leaders and members are at a venue waiting for another member’s arrival, the leader may call to ask where they are.  Not used for any other communication or personal/ pastoral work.

	<b>GROUPS FOR AGES 11–14</b>	<b>GROUPS FOR AGES 15–18</b>
Facebook and Instagram	None	<p>Groups created to communicate details of events, confirm details of and attendance at events.</p> <p>Only group members are allowed to be members of the group. The youth leader is the sole administrator of the group. The Facebook/Instagram group is closed, meaning that no-one outside the group has access to information or communication contained within the group.</p> <p>Leaders will occasionally communicate via personal message on Facebook/Instagram or via the members Facebook/Instagram wall to confirm details of meeting for one to ones or to encourage with Bible verses etc. Same gender only.</p> <p>If leaders and members are friends on Facebook/Instagram, members will have access to the whole of the leader’s Facebook/Instagram profile. The leader has to be above reproach in their Facebook/Instagram behaviour. The member will have access to some content of the leader’s other Facebook/Instagram friends.</p>
Other social networking (Snapchat, TikTok, etc.)	None	<p>None</p> <p>NB. If leader profiles are public, then the content must be above reproach at all times.</p>
Email	<p>May be used to confirm 1:1s only if parents are cc’d. Copies of emails are kept.</p> <p>Parents are informed in emails about details of advertised events.</p> <p>Where details change or new events are arranged, parents will be informed</p>	<p>Email is used for administrative purposes only, e.g. to confirm details of and attendance at events.</p> <p>Copies of emails are kept.</p>

	GROUPS FOR AGES 11–14	GROUPS FOR AGES 15–18
	via email.	

## YOUTH: SOLVENTS AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES.

- Workers should be alert to possession and use of illegal substances.
- If a worker becomes aware a child or young person may be abusing solvents, they should be encouraged to seek professional help from their doctor or a counsellor specialising in this area.
- It is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by our Church to supply illegal drugs or use them on the premises.
- We have a zero tolerance policy on all illegal substances.
- All youth attending any of our services and events must be made aware of our zero tolerance approach to illegal substances.

For the child involved:

- Ask them to stop, warning them of the consequences if they do not (e.g. ban from the group).
- Inform parents/carers if the young person is under 16 years.
- Inform the parents/carers if the young person is over 16 years (with the young person's permission).
- Discuss with the young person the proposed course of action, particularly if they re offend (e.g. possibly informing the police).
- Write down the content of any discussion with the young person, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place and inform the Coordinator, if they have not already been informed.

## YOUTH: TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL

- There is a smoking ban in all enclosed public spaces throughout the UK and a no smoking policy should therefore be enforced within any buildings used by our Churches.
- From October 2014, the ban on smoking was extended to smoking in a vehicle with children present (in England and Wales).
- It is also illegal for anyone under the age of 18 in England and Wales to be sold cigarettes (or other products like roll-up tobacco and cigars) over the counter or at a vending machine.

- There are also strict regulations on the sale and consumption of alcohol where children and young people are concerned. No alcohol will be sold at our events to any person under 18 years. Proof of age will be requested if a worker is unsure whether it is legal to sell an individual an alcoholic beverage.
- Workers do not have the right to confiscate alcohol found in a young person's possession but they can enforce a no-alcohol policy.
- There may be occasions where it is felt necessary to inform parents /carers that a child/young person has been drinking, particularly if they are under the influence or that there are concerns for their health or safety. This should be discussed with the Coordinator.

### **Appendix 3: SAFE PRACTICE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORK WITH ADULTS**

Those working within the Charity who work with adults, including adults at risk of abuse, will:

1. Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines and risk assessments etc. that are provided and that they are implemented. Please note we should not be giving personal care (i.e. helping to dress or going to the toilet).
2. Attend safeguarding training
3. Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and the Trustees and that they are open to challenge.
4. Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety, and the prevention from harm, of those with whom they are working, training and/or serving.
5. Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them
6. Recognise that they may have a degree of power and influence (resulting from theological training, experience, seniority and/or position) and actively refrain from any abuse of their power or influence and always seek to act in the best interest of the individual
7. Be mindful of the spiritual context in which they work and therefore take particular care to refrain from any coercion, bullying, pastoral manipulation or exploitation.
8. Treat them with respect and dignity.
9. Ensure that support is client led and that their views, wishes and choices are respected

10. Treat them as individuals.
11. Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
12. Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
13. If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented
14. Ensure that any physical contact is client-led.
15. Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group.
16. Not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc.) language or behaviour with them.
17. Act with fairness and treat each person equitably; avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
18. Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
19. Report any wrongdoing by other workers, including behaviour and/or words which may appear “odd” or concerning, to the Coordinator or to the Trustees.

## **HOW TO RESPOND TO AN ADULT WANTING TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE OR CONCERNS OF ABUSE**

Do not delay if you:

- Have a general concern about someone’s well-being (changes in behaviour or living patterns);
- See or hear something which could be abusive;
- Are told that something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive

Please pass on all concerns to the Coordinator within 24 hours. If they are not available or are implicated in the concern, speak to any of the Trustees. If an adult is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services without delay and then inform the Coordinator.

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH A DISCLOSURE FROM AN ADULT**

If someone discloses abuse directly, remember to:

- Listen: Take what is said seriously;
- Reassure: Tell them that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that you believe them;

- Remain calm: No matter how difficult it is to listen to what is being disclosed. You have been chosen because the person feels able to talk with you. Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval;
- Be honest: Do not promise full confidentiality or offer false reassurance;
- Be open: Do not ask leading questions, such as 'Did she hit you?'. It is not your role to investigate. Do ask when the last episode of abuse happened. As soon as you have enough information to concern you, stop probing.
- Ask: Request their consent to share information and seek help;
- Explain: Tell them that you are going to tell the Coordinator (our safeguarding lead) and give them a timescale;
- Write: Document everything that the adult at risk has told you, in their own words. You will need to record questions you asked as well as the answers or information given. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure and should include the time, date, place and your name and signature. The original document (handwritten and/or typed) must be passed on to and safely and securely retained by the Coordinator; You can also use the Safeguarding Incident/Concern Form.
- Report: Contact the Coordinator within 24 hours and report the disclosure. A safeguarding alert or concern is not a pastoral issue in the first instance. All concerns need to be directly reported to the Coordinator who in turn may discuss the matter with the relevant church leaders and/or the Trustees at an appropriate time.
- Keep Confidentiality: The concerns you have should be kept confidential between you, the adult concerned and the Coordinator. Based on the nature of the information disclosed, the Coordinator may need to inform the Trustees, the statutory authorities (such as Adult Social Care Services), the Police, the NHS etc.
- Never approach the alleged abuser: Under no circumstances should you carry out your own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Seek Support: The concerns that have been brought to your attention may be deeply upsetting or disturbing, please seek support from a trusted person. It is possible to share your distress while maintaining a level of confidentiality.

## **COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES**

Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language, communication skills and disability. You may need to ask the person to repeat themselves or to check that you have understood what they said.

## **MENTAL CAPACITY**

Within safeguarding, mental capacity is whether or not someone has the capacity or ability to make decisions about themselves and their safety and well-being. There is a fine balance between the individual's rights to autonomy and their need for protection.

Capacity is not a universal concept. It must be applied in a specific context: is the person able to make this specific decision at this particular time? Adults are presumed to have capacity to make all decisions about themselves. Those who work with them should use every endeavour to obtain the decision from the adult. Where an adult lacks capacity or may lack capacity, advice can be obtained from local Adult Social Services if there is uncertainty about an important decision or a situation where harm may occur. If urgent, the Coordinator can make an immediate referral to the relevant local council's Adult Social Care Services for advice.

In terms of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Mental Health Act 2007, adults should be asked for their consent and their wishes and feelings should be ascertained before we take any action. To give consent, they should be able to understand and retain relevant information that is being given to them, believe it to be true and weigh it in the balance, and be able to make a choice. All actions should be based on a presumption of mental capacity and on the consequent right of an adult to make their own choices in relation to their own lives.

## **WHAT IF THE ADULT DOES NOT WANT HELP?**

The mental capacity of the adult at risk is vital in deciding what should be done. All actions should be based on the assumption that the individual has capacity and the right to make

their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. This includes upholding their right to follow a course of action which others may deem unwise or eccentric, including staying in a situation of abuse.

If the adult at risk does not want help it may still be necessary for the Coordinator to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services, who can put a safeguarding plan in place so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice;
- When there is the risk of harm to others;
- In order to prevent a crime.

It is important that the individual knows where to get the appropriate help and support if they should change their mind.

## **PROCEDURES WHERE THERE IS CONCERN FOR AN ADULT AT RISK**

The Coordinator will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the adult at risk is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the Emergency Services (by phoning 999), informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact the local Adult Social Care Team, who has a statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse, for advice. Alternatively, seek advice from 31:8. o Notify as necessary, the responsible church leaders and the Director of Charity Services and/or the Trustees.

## Appendix 4: SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT/ CONCERN FORM

### New Life Church Battersea Incident Report Template

Name and role of person completing this form:
Signature of person completing this form:
Date:

#### Incident

Date and time of incident:
Name/s of person/s involved in the incident:
Activity:
Description of incident:

Witnesses (include contact details):
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#### Reporting of the incident

Incident reported to:	Date:
How (this form, in person, email, phone):	

## **Follow-Up Action**

**Description of actions to be taken:**