



**Park Street Baptist Church**

2 Penn Rd

St Albans

AL2 2QF

**Child Protection Policy**

**Version 1 – Updated Policy**

**Author: Liz Roderick**

**Agreed by: PSBC Deacons and Carole Whittle**

**Ratified at the Church Meeting on:**

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This policy applies to the whole PSBC community including but not limited to paid staff, deacons, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of Park Street Baptist Church, St Albans. It shows a commitment to protecting and safeguarding children against potential harm or actual harm. It fully accepts and promotes the principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount.

The policy also demonstrates a commitment to working with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and welfare of children and acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or about the behaviour of an adult. Park Street Baptist Church will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- **Valuing them, listening to, respecting them**
- **Adopting Child Protection guidelines through procedures and a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers**
- **Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made**
- **Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers**
- **Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately**
- **Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support and training.**
- **Reviewing our policy and good practice annually.**

Park Street Baptist Church will endeavour to safeguard the children who are members or who attend activities we organise or facilitate, by following the procedure if a concern is raised about a child's welfare.

The definition of a child for the purpose of this document is anyone under the age of 18 years. (Please note: the national definition of domestic abuse is set in context of 16 years plus, taking into account how this may impact, or dictate response).

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not the abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional Child Protection agencies e.g. Children's Services, following a referral to them about a child.

## 6. Important Contacts

Park Street Baptist Church has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with.

The named persons for child protection within Park Street Baptist Church are:

Named/designated safeguarding person/lead: Liz Roderick

Mobile number: 07766745700

Email address: lizroderick@ymail.com

Emergency number: 0300 123 4043 (Hertfordshire Children Services)

Name of Deputy: Carole Whittle

Email address: carloeannwhittle@aol.com

Emergency number: 0300 123 4043 (Hertfordshire Children Services)

#### 6.1. Other key contacts

Children's Services 0300 123 4043 (including out of hours)

Police (Child Abuse

Investigation Unit CAIU) 0845 33 00 222 (or in an emergency 999)

NSPCC 0808 800 5000

Further useful contacts are listed in Appendix 5

#### 7. Responsibilities of individuals in implementing this policy and procedure

All members of Park Street Baptist Church are to:

- **Understand and apply this policy and procedure in their activities.**
- **Identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role**
- **Act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others**
- **Be able to recognise harm**
- **Know how to report any concerns in a timely and appropriate way.**

In addition, **the diaconate of Park Street Baptist Church**, are to:

- **Encourage church members and volunteers to understand this policy and procedure**
- **Offer opportunities to undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training**
- **Ensure that the policy and procedure is adhered to and to undertake regular compliance audits**
- **Ensure that a whistle blowing policy is developed, agreed and communicated with all staff and volunteers**

The role and responsibility of Child Safeguarding lead: **Liz Roderick** is:

- **To ensure that church members and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.**
- **Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.**
- **The named person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Safeguarding policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.**
- **Report concerns about a child or request support.**

## **8. Outcomes for children and their families**

In developing this policy Park Street Baptist Church intends that it will promote the welfare of children and young people attending and taking part in its activities.

Children and young people and their parents / carers can be assured that Park Street Baptist Church takes their welfare seriously and wants them to enjoy the activities in a safe and secure environment.

Every adult who works with or on behalf of Park Street Baptist Church is aware of the contents of this policy and understands what the reporting procedures are if there are any activities that may be unsafe or may present a risk of harm, or if the child or young person (or their parent(s) / carer(s)) makes a disclosure of abuse or an allegation against an adult working with them. Such disclosures or allegations will be taken very seriously to ensure that the child is protected.

All adults working for or with Park Street Baptist Church will have been appropriately recruited and DBSs or Enhanced DBSs will be applied for and references taken up. Their induction into volunteering for Park Street Baptist Church will include basic child protection training and a briefing on this policy.

## **9. Policy statement**

### **Park Street Baptist Church will:**

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation by including training on child protection in their induction and in subsequent refresher training is undertaken.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibility to work to the standards that are detailed in the Child Protection Procedures and work always towards maintaining high standards of practice.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to Park Street Baptist Church's named person for child protection – Liz Roderick.
- Ensure that a named person responsible for child protection is appointed and that they understand their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (police and/or Children's Services).
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of workers and volunteers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Provide opportunities for all workers/volunteers to develop their skills and knowledge, particularly in relation to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Ensure that children and young people are empowered to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and know how to raise a complaint or concern.
- Ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of Park Street Baptist Church and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures.

- Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.
- Ensure that appropriate background checks, as above, page 4, are undertaken when anyone joins the organisation and before they start working directly with children and young people.
- Ensure that all people working directly with children and young people have at least a basic understanding of the child protection policy and procedures.

## **10. Legal framework**

The Children Act 1989 sets out that the child's welfare is paramount and safeguarding and promoting it is the priority.

The Children Act 2004 set out a duty on local authorities to work closely with those providing services to children and young people.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. It is important that all practitioners working to safeguard children and young people understand fully their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out key principles which are enshrined within these acts and the statutory guidance. From 15 January 1992, when the treaty came into force, every child in the UK has been entitled to over 54 specific rights, some of which are:

- The right to life, survival, identity and development
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Protection from violence, abuse and neglect
- The right to have their views respected, and to have their best interests always considered
- The right to a name and nationality, freedom of expression, and access to information concerning them
- The right to live in a family environment or alternative care, and to have contact with both parents wherever possible
- Health and welfare rights, including rights for disabled children, the right to health and health care, and social security
- The right to education, leisure, culture and the arts
- Special protection for refugee children, children in the juvenile justice system, children deprived of their liberty and children suffering economic, sexual or other forms of exploitation.

The rights included in the convention apply to all children and young people, with no exceptions. UNCRC website

## 11. Recognising abuse and neglect

### 11.1 Definition of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms 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, by a stranger or via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

An abused child is any boy or girl, under 18 years of age, who has experienced, or is believed likely to be at risk of, significant risk of neglect, and / or physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

#### 11.1.1. Physical abuse

(Including when masqueraded as discipline and chastisement)

The following definition is taken from Working Together (Working Together 2018)

Physical abuse 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.

Physical abuse often arises from a wish to chastise. Smacking is illegal in England but has a legal defence of “reasonable chastisement” under Section 58 of the Children Act 2004 but only in a charge of common assault. Whether a 'smack' amounts to reasonable chastisement will depend on the circumstances of each case, taking into consideration factors e.g. age of the child and the nature of the smack.

The introduction of section 54 of the Children Act 2004 changed the law, to remove the reasonable chastisement defence for actual bodily harm. Actual bodily harm includes minor visible injuries such as a graze, a scratch, an abrasion or bruising around the eye. Common assault implies a transient trifling injury such as reddening of the skin or no injury at all. The use of an implement to hit a child though not specifically prohibited is more likely to leave a mark. Thus, the law allows a parent to smack a child when doing so leaves no mark upon the skin, so only light smacks are permitted. “Over chastisement” which implies at least actual bodily harm would be against the law and the reasonable chastisement defence would not apply. This means, for example, that a parent can no longer justify beating a child on the grounds that the child is difficult to raise.

Although the reasonable chastisement defence only applies to the criminal law the concept influences decisions taken in the family courts. The defence applies only to parents and adults acting in loco parentis (teacher or other adult responsible for the children) with the parent’s permission. Physical chastisement, i.e. corporal punishment, of any form has been prohibited in state schools since 1986, private since 1998 and by childminders since 2003.

It is important that all professionals treat injuries caused to children by their parents as an assault and do not condone or excuse this because their intention was to discipline the child. Professionals should be cautious about referring to such assaults as “over-chastisement” as this can have the effect of minimising the impact on the child of the injuries or implying the child’s behaviour was a contributory cause.

There is evidence that even smacking allowed within the law is harmful to children. For example, minor forms of regular smacking of pre-school children is associated with an increased risk of antisocial behaviour after 2-3 years even when allowing for other parenting

risk factors and the presence of such behaviour at study entry 6, 7 Maternal depression and violence between adult partners are associated with a greater risk of smacking children than either factor present alone regardless of child behaviour.<sup>8</sup> Parents who experience physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to smack their own children.

### Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been physically abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of physical abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Multiple missing episodes
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-harming tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

#### 11.1.2. Emotional Abuse

The following definition is taken from Working Together (Working Together 2018)

Emotional abuse is a form of Significant Harm which involves 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 children 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 the 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 cyberbullying) 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.

### Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been emotionally abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of emotional abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Physical, mental and emotional development delay
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Inability to cope with praise
- An unwillingness or inability to play

### 11.1.3. Sexual Abuse

The following definition is taken from Working Together (Working Together 2018)

Sexual abuse is a form of Significant Harm which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. 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.

### Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been sexually abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of sexual abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia

- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or childminder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

#### 11.1.4. Neglect

The following definition is taken from Working Together (Working Together 2018)

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 caregiver)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

#### Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has experienced neglect, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of neglect should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing/lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems

- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies
- Learning disabilities due to poor brain development

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse. It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

#### 11.1.5. Child Sexual Exploitation

The following definition is taken from DfE: Child Sexual Exploitation, February

2017

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse 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 clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child sexual exploitation is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

Sexual exploitation can have links to other types of crime. These include:

- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence in intimate relationships
- Grooming (including online grooming)
- Abusive images of children and their distribution
- Drugs-related offences
- Gang-related activity
- Immigration-related offences
- Domestic servitude

The following vulnerabilities are examples of the types of things children can experience that might make them more susceptible to child sexual exploitation:

- Having a prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- Lack of a safe/stable home environment, now or in the past (domestic abuse or parental substance misuse, mental health issues or criminality, for example)
- Recent bereavement or loss
- Social isolation or social difficulties
- Absence of a safe environment to explore sexuality
- Economic vulnerability
- Homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- Connections with other children and young people who are being sexually exploited
- Family members or other connections involved in adult sex work
- Having a physical or learning disability
- Being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)
- Sexual identity

Children rarely self-report child sexual exploitation so it is important that practitioners are aware of potential indicators of risk, including:

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. without plausible explanation;
- Gang-association and/or isolation from peers/social networks;
- Exclusion or unexplained absences from school, college or work;
- Leaving home/care without explanation and persistently going missing or returning late;
- Excessive receipt of texts/phone calls;
- Returning home under the influence of drugs/alcohol;
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for age/sexually transmitted infections;
- Evidence of/suspicious of physical or sexual assault;
- Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups;
- Multiple callers (unknown adults or peers);
- Frequenting areas known for sex work;
- Concerning use of internet or other social media;
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours; and
- Self-harm or significant changes in emotional well-being.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. All practitioners should assume that in the course of their work with children they will encounter children at risk of sexual exploitation. All practitioners working with children and families need to know where to get help: Local

multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will set out the process for referring concerns about the welfare of children to local authority children's social care. Anyone can make a referral and ask for advice. If a child is considered to be in immediate danger, the police should be contacted.

#### 11.1.6. Child Criminal Exploitation

The following definition is taken from the Government website: Guidance exploitation and vulnerable adults: county lines, February 2020

What is child criminal exploitation?

Child criminal exploitation is increasingly used to describe this type of exploitation where children are involved, and is defined as:

“Child criminal exploitation is common in county lines and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology.”

Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

Dangers of criminal exploitation (as define on NSPCC website)

It's important to be aware of the risks of criminal exploitation or being involved with a criminal gang. They can use different tactics to recruit and exploit children and young people, including bribing them with rewards, befriending them, and threatening them, or coercing them.

Dangers of criminal exploitation include:

- being subject to threats, blackmail and violence
- being exploited and forced to commit crimes
- being arrested, including for crimes committed by the gang that they have not directly committed under the law of joint enterprise
- not being able to leave or cut off ties with the gang
- having their safety or the safety of friends and family threatened
- risk of physical harm, rape and sexual abuse
- risk of emotional abuse
- risk of severe injury or being killed
- abusing drugs, alcohol and other substances
- long term impact on education and employment options.

Exploiting a child into committing crimes is abusive. Children who are targeted can also be groomed, physically abused, emotionally abused, sexually exploited or trafficked. However, as children involved in gangs often commit crimes themselves, sometimes they are not seen as victims by adults and professionals, despite the harm they have experienced. It's important

to spot the signs and act quickly if you think a child is being groomed or is becoming involved with a gang.

Please visit the NSPCC website for further guidance on Child Criminal Exploitation

#### 11.1.7. Effects of Domestic Abuse

Please see the NSPCC website for guidance on advice for professionals on how to support children exposed to domestic abuse.

Effects of domestic abuse (NSPCC website)

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

What's important is to make sure the abuse stops and that children have a safe and stable environment to grow up in. Our services can support children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse to help them move on and receive the care they need.

#### 11.1.8. Extremism

The following definition is taken from Working Together (Working Together 2018)

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

#### 11.1.9. Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying affects everyone at some point in their lives. It may be at school, at college, in an activity group or club, in the workplace or even at home.

Parents, carers, teachers and others working with children have a duty to take action if they suspect or discover that child(ren) are being bullied.

Bullying includes:

- People calling you names
- Making things up to get another person into trouble
- Hitting, pinching, biting, pushing and shoving
- Taking things away from someone
- Damaging another person's belongings
- Stealing someone's money
- Taking friends away from them · 'Cyberbullying'

- Spreading rumours
- Upskirting - this is a criminal offence and must be reported to the Police.
- Threats and intimidation
- Making silent or abusive phone calls
- Bullies can also frighten the victim so that they don't want to go to school or take part in other activities.
- The victim may pretend to be ill to avoid the bully

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying in the real world, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone. Types of cyberbullying can include:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- Trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Shaming someone online
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

## **12. Steps to follow if you are worried about a child or if a child confides in you**

Park Street Baptist Church recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse and believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts, hesitations, or other considerations (such as the potential to have a negative impact on professional relationships with a family). When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, staff and/or volunteers will follow the steps set out below.

If a child confides in you, you will:

- Stay calm, approachable and open to what they have to say
- Listen to them carefully without interrupting
- Make it clear that you are taking what they are telling you seriously

- Acknowledge that you understand how difficult this might be for them to say what they are saying
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone
- Let them know that you will do everything you can to help them
- Do not show any shock or disgust
- Do not probe further
- Do not ask leading questions that might suggest the answer
- Do not make assumptions
- Do not make any comments about the alleged abuser
- Do not make promises you cannot keep, particularly about keeping the information ‘secret’, but explain that you may need to share it with an appropriate person
- Do not discuss with others apart from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy); and

Follow the steps set out below:

#### Step 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: “I’ve noticed that you don’t appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person talks about matters that may be indicative of abuse
- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm
- Notify Park Street Baptist Church’s Named Person for Child Protection / Safeguarding
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure on the form attached at Appendix 1 and send to the Named Person for Child Protection / Safeguarding
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely – Named Person will ensure this is completed.

#### Step 2

- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact the Police and/or Children Services. If a referral is made direct to Children’s Services, this must be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.

NB Parents / carers will need to be informed about any referral to Children, Schools and Families unless to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm.

- The named person can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through Children's Services 0300 123 4043 or from the NSPCC 0808 800 5000, and/or their website.

Professionals, employees, managers, helpers, carers and volunteers in all agencies must make contact with Children's Services:

- If it is believed or suspected that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm.

A referral must be made as soon as possible when any concern of significant harm becomes known - the greater the level of perceived risk, the more urgent the action should be.

#### IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD, YOU HAVE A DUTY TO REFER

The belief or suspicion about significant harm may be based on information which comes from different sources. It may come from a member of the public, the child concerned, another child, a family member or other professional staff. It may relate to a single incident or an accumulation of lower-level concerns.

The information may also relate to harm caused by another child, in which case both children, i.e., the suspected perpetrator and victim, must be referred.

The suspicion or allegation may relate to a parent or professional or volunteer caring for or working with the child – see Section 15 below Managing Allegations against an Adult who works with children or young people.

A referral must be made even if it is known that Children's Services Social Care are already involved with the child/family.

Advice and consultation may be sought about the appropriateness of the referral by contacting the local Children's Services or, if the case is open, from the allocated social worker. Alternatively, advice may be sought from the Police or the Named Person for Safeguarding.

### **13. Safer Staffing and DBS checks**

Park Street Baptist Church will ensure DBS checks or Enhanced DBS checks are completed for staff and/or volunteers working directly with children or those who have frequent contact, via specified activities in the church, directly relating to children.

Any staff or volunteers who have not been vetted prior to working with children should be closely supervised and **never** be left alone with a child in a one to one situation.

### **14. Managing allegations against an adult who works with children or young people**

If it is alleged a person who works or volunteers with children at Park Street Baptist Church has in any activity connected with her/his employment or voluntary activity:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against / related to a child
- Behaved toward a child in a way which indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- It is discovered that an individual known to have been involved previously in child abuse, is or has been working with children

#### 15.1. Procedure

The person to whom an allegation is first reported should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. S/he should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification, it is important not to make assumptions. Confidentiality should not be promised, and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

Actions to be taken include making a written record of the allegation using the informant's words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present. This record should be signed and dated and immediately passed on to the Named Person for Child Protection without delay.

If there is an immediate or imminent risk of significant harm to a child or young person, you should contact Children's Services or the Police and then speak to the Named Person for Child Protection to inform them of the actions you have taken and follow this up in writing on the form attached at Appendix 1.

The Named Person for Child Protection must take steps to ensure that the person against whom the allegation is removed from the situation immediately. This may be done by either agreement or suspension from volunteering until the matter has been fully investigated.

If, for any reason, there are difficulties with following the above procedure a referral should be made directly to Children's Services and/or the Police.

The need for consultation must not delay a referral, which should be in accordance with the referral procedure.

## 15.2 Confidentiality

Information about a referral about a child or an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to:

- Protect children
- Facilitate enquiries
- Avoid victimisation
- Safeguard the rights of the person about whom the allegation has been made and others who might be affected
- Manage disciplinary / complaints aspects

The Named Person for Safeguarding may ask you for further information in order to make any referrals. You should not discuss or share this information with anyone else within the organisation. Any paperwork you have generated should be stored in a locked filing cabinet or stored on a computer securely.

## **16. Managing activities involving children and young people**

### 16.1. Record keeping

Park Street Baptist Church will keep a register of attendance and emergency contact details for all children and adults working with us.

Any details will be kept securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and in accordance with GDPR.

### 16.2. Off Site Visits

A Risk Assessment will be completed for all activities which involve an off-site visit with children or young people away from Park Street Baptist Church.

### 16.3 Taking photographs or videos of children:

No photos or videos will be taken of children or young people under the age of 18, who are involved in any activity at Park Street Baptist Church without the prior written permission of their parents/guardians/carers.

No photos or videos containing children under the age of 18 will be posted on any social media linked to and/or the website for Park Street Baptist Church, without the prior written permission of their parents/guardians/carers. That withstanding, the posting on social media of any photos or information about children and young people linked to Park Street Baptist Church is closely monitored and only occurs in exceptional circumstances, e.g., for the purpose of advertising a community event.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Sample Reporting a Concern Form

#### Strictly Confidential

Please print clearly

Full name of the Child:			DOB	
Address:				
Name(s) of parent(s) / carer(s)				
<b>About the Incident</b>				
Time	Date	Location	People involved	What role did they play (affected person/participate/witness)
Describe the incident as fully as you can in your own words. If a child made a disclosure or allegation to you record in their words where possible. Attach additional sheets where necessary				
<b>About the person filling out this form:</b>				
Name			Role	
Addresses			Contact No:	
If you referred this directly to Children School and Families or the Police please state why, include the name of the worker / officer you spoke to and the date / time				
Date you sent this form to your Named person for Safeguarding				



## *Appendix 2 – Sample Code of Conduct for all Staff and Volunteers*

### **This is a suggested Code of Conduct.**

Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind always.

### **DO NOT:**

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting
- Smoke in front of any child
- Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child.
- Use any racist, sexist, homophobic, discriminatory or offensive language.
- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times.
- Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust.  
Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Rely upon good nature to protect you or believe 'it could never happen to me'.
- Give children presents or personal items \*

\*Exceptions to this could be a custom, such as:

buying children, a small birthday gift or leaving present, help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity.

Both types of gifts should come from the organisation and in a formal capacity and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding children and the child's parent/carer. Similarly, do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the Named Safeguarding Lead.

### **DO:**

- Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage get their parent or carer to assist them.
- Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from children and be consistent.
- Remember if you have to speak to a child about their behaviour you are challenging 'what they did', not 'who they are'.
- Make sure you have read the Safeguarding Children Procedure and policy

statement and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.

- Seek advice and support from your colleagues and your Named Person for Safeguarding.
- Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and wellbeing of a child, that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.
- Seek opportunities for training.
- Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children.
- Make sure you are familiar with your organisation's Confidentiality Policy.

### **Advice for those who work with children, when using any form of ICT, including the Internet**

**For your own protection it is advised that you follow this advice:**

- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend anyone connected to your setting, member of the community or be incompatible with your role.
- Use your organisation's or setting's ICT systems and resources for all official business. This includes your business email address, business mobile phone or photography equipment.
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data is kept secure and used appropriately.
- Only take images of children and/or staff or volunteers for professional purposes. Ensure that the parent/carer of any child under 18 has given written consent. See Appendix 3
- Ensure that any images are represented only in a positive context and are removed from your websites when they expire.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in work and outside, will not bring your organisation or professional role into disrepute.
- You have a duty to report any e-Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or your organisation. For example, being investigated for online offences, such as making and/or distribution of indecent images of children.

### **USE THE INTERNET RESPONSIBLY**

**For Online Safety guidance please visit the NSPCC [website](#)**

### *Appendix 3 – Sample Image consent form for use by staff and volunteers*

**This form can be used for consent to take and use images of children.**

We sometimes take photographs or video footage for publicity purposes. These images may appear in our printed publications and publicity materials, on our website, or both.

We may also send the images to the news media, who may use them in printed publications and on their website and store them in their archive. They may also syndicate the photos to other media for possible use, either in printed publications, or on websites, or both. When we submit photographs and information to the media, we have no control on when, where, if or how they will be used.

The images we take will be of activities that show the children / organisation in a positive light. The images will not be associated with negative, distressing or sensitive issues to do with an individual's welfare or that may cause offence or embarrassment. It is the responsibility of the senior staff to ensure that consent is obtained from parents/guardians/social workers, and that children who are at risk or cannot have their photograph taken for legal or social reasons, are not in the photograph.

***Please note that websites can be viewed throughout the world, not just in the United Kingdom where UK law applies. In giving your consent, you understand that the photos may be used in both printed and electronic form.***

Please see below for sample Image Consent Form:

We will take all reasonable measures to ensure the images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended. However, we cannot guarantee this and take no responsibility for the way images are used by other websites or publishers, or for any consequences arising from publication.

<b>Sample Image Consent Form</b>			
<b>To give your consent, please answer the questions below, then sign and date the form where shown and fill in any relevant information</b>			
May we use your image(s), or those of your child(ren) if under 18, in our publicity material, including printed publications, video recordings and on our website (delete if this does not apply)? <i>Please tick</i>	Yes		No
We sometimes send publicity material about our services, including photographs where appropriate, to the news media and partner organisations, who may use the image in printed and/ or electronic form and then store it in their archive. Can we use your photograph, or your child's, in this way? <i>Please tick</i>	Yes		No
Signed		Job Title <i>If applicable</i>	
Print name		Date	
Please print your child/ren's names:			
1			
2			
3			
<b>FOR EXTERNAL USE</b>			
Event & Location			
Photographer's name			
Contact details for person photographed <i>(if needed)</i>			

## ***Appendix 4 – Ratios***

When working with children the following recommended minimum ratios of workers to children apply:

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities</b>	<b>Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities</b>
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender and not related to each other) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender and not related to each other) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender and not related to each other) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender and not related to each other) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

This does not take into account special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratios. In calculating the ratios of workers to children, young helpers who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the workers. A married couple or other directly related people should be counted as one adult for the purposes of the recommended ratios rather than two workers.

## *Appendix 5 - Mentoring Guidelines*

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

- The parents of all young people involved in mentoring are required to sign a letter to say they are aware that the mentoring is happening and who it is with.
- Mentoring meetings should only be held in agreed places, and should be in view of other people.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time and someone should be aware that a meeting is taking place and where it is being held.
- A basic record should be kept of dates of significant meetings and any text messages or emails.
- Appropriate boundaries should be put in place in regard to times and demand, ie not phoning or texting late at night, etc.
- A written record should be kept of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.

## *Appendix 6 - Electronic Communications - Cyber Safety*

### Modern Technologies and Safe Communication

A worker's role description will include an acknowledgement and approval of technologies such as email, social networking and mobile phone communications as a legitimate means of communicating with young people. It should also include the expectations of the church in relation to their use. On the general consent form, parents/carers sign to agree that the young person can receive such communications.

Young people also need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to electronic communications. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their contact details and should not be pressurised otherwise.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with children aged 11 years and younger. For more information on cyber safety, please refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain *Cyber Safety Guide*, which can be found on their website as well as the *Guide to using Social Media to Communicate with Young People*, which is also available on their website.

### Email

Email should be limited to sharing generic information, for example, to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used, workers will ensure that they are accountable by copying each message to a designated email address. It is important workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, for example, avoiding inappropriate terms such as 'love' when ending an email.

### Communicating using Instant Messaging (e.g. Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram)

Instant messaging should be kept to an absolute minimum. Workers should save significant conversations and keep a log stating with whom and when they communicated.

### Mobile Phones

Workers need to take care in using mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- Mobile phone use should primarily be for the purposes of information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language and should not use abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Paid workers will be issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- Workers should not take photos of children, young people or adults at risk unless permission is sought in advance and should not store such photos on personal phones.

## Social Networking

- Workers should have a site that is used solely for children's / youth work communications and is totally separate from their own personal site. This is to ensure that all communication with children and young people is kept within public domains.
- Workers should not send private messages to children on social networks. Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Workers should not accept 'friend' or 'following' requests from children on their personal site, nor seek to be 'friends' or a 'follower' of any child known to them in a church context.

## Taking Videos and Photographs of Children

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, churches must be very careful if they use still or moving images of clearly identifiable people. Previous legislation was reinforced through the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.
- Many uses of photographs are not covered by the Data Protection Act 1998, including all photographs and video recordings made for personal use, such as a parent/carer taking photographs at school sports days or videoing a church nativity play.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including email, postal address or telephone number.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.

## ***Appendix 7 - Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities***

Each church needs to identify and fill several important posts that underpin effective safeguarding in the church. These notes outline the main responsibilities relating to safeguarding connected with key leadership roles.

### **Trustees / Deacons**

- Ultimately responsible for safeguarding
- Responsible for the implementation of policy and procedures
- Responsible for supporting the church workers
- Responsible for raising awareness about best practice within the church
- Responsible for ensuring that the relevant people have received the appropriate training

### **Safeguarding Trustee / Deacon**

Not necessarily the person who heads up safeguarding in the church – could be a trustee / deacon with an interest and willingness to learn.

- Takes a lead on safeguarding matters for the trustees / deacons
- Is the point of contact with trustees / deacons for safeguarding issues
- Ensures church policy and procedures are reviewed annually

### **Designated Person for Safeguarding**

- Receives all reports of concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- Listens, observes and passes on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice from the relevant people
- Acts as a link between the church and other agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Verifier**

- Responsible for all aspects of processing DBS checks for church staff and volunteers (with the exception of the accredited minister who is checked by the regional association)

### **The Minister**

- Shares with the trustees the general responsibility for the adoption and implementation of the church's safeguarding policy
- Takes responsibility for ensuring that the pastoral needs of all are being met
- May need to be made aware of safeguarding issues in line with the above guidance.