



# CHESTER ROAD

## Baptist Church

### *Safeguarding Children, Young People and 'Adults at Risk'*

### *Policy and Procedures*

#### **Definitions**

1. **Child** Any person aged 0-11 years.
2. **Young person** Any person aged 12-17 years.
3. **'Adult at risk'** Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

#### **Purpose of this Safeguarding policy and procedures:**

1. Protect children, young people and 'adults at risk' from harm and abuse, providing them with safe opportunities to develop and grow.
2. Equip volunteers, staff and Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees) to know what to do if, and when, they encounter, or have concerns about, a potential safeguarding matter.
3. Reduce the risk to volunteers, staff and Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees) of false-accusation.
4. Demonstrate to potential service users and the wider community that Chester Road Baptist Church takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously, is professionally organised, and can be trusted.
5. Comply with statutory legislation, responsible self-regulation, and external auditing, making full use of Baptists Together's 'Excellence in Safeguarding' (or equivalent) and support from the Baptist Regional Safeguarding Lead.

#### **Policy statement:**

**Our vision:** To see God's Kingdom come and His will done in Sutton Coldfield, north Birmingham, and beyond, as it is in Heaven.

**Our mission:** Growing community! Making disciples! Working with others to enable everyone within 5 miles and beyond of Chester Road Baptist Church to become disciples of Christ.

**Our values:** Intimacy; Inclusive; Involved; Intergenerational; Interdependent; Impact.  
See [ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Values](http://ChesterRoadBaptist.org.uk/Values)

#### **Our safeguarding responsibilities:**

Chester Road Baptist Church recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people, and 'adults at risk' who participate in any of its activities on or off-site, regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.

Chester Road Baptist Church seeks to prevent the abuse of children, young people and 'adults at risk' by establishing, consistently implementing, continuously improving, and regularly reviewing its Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Safeguarding involves the whole church. We as members of Chester Road Baptist Church commit to holding each other to account for, and playing our part in, creating a safeguarding culture that promotes the welfare and safety of children, young people, and 'adults at risk'.

When working with umbrella organisations like the Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade and Messy Church, Chester Road Baptist Church retains primary responsibility for safeguarding and therefore this safeguarding policy and procedures remains principle. Enhanced

**Key policy measures:**

1. To appoint and enable individuals with specific Safeguarding roles/responsibilities, including ideally a Safeguarding Team, to lead on the implementation of Chester Road Baptist Church's Safeguarding policy and procedures.
2. To ensure all volunteers, staff, and Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees) receive clear guidance, training and support in safeguarding children, young people, or adults at risk.
3. To plan the work of Chester Road Baptist Church so as to prevent situations where abuse of children/ young people/ 'adults at risk' may occur.
4. To follow safer recruitment by treating all those who seek to work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', or have authority over such workers (i.e. volunteers, staff and Deacons/ Trustees), as applicants, exploring their experience and potential suitability before confirming their appointment.
5. To require all volunteers, staff and Deacons/ Trustees to provide two acceptable references and to complete an Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (and repeated every three years) as a condition of working or volunteering with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' at Chester Road Baptist Church.
6. To implement and issue guidelines to all who work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' on how to deal with disclosed and suspected abuse, and give training on the use of these guidelines.
7. If a volunteer, staff member or Deacon/ Trustee is accused or suspected of abuse against a child, young person and/or 'adult at risk', Chester Road Baptist Church will act professionally, promptly and decisively to remove them from duty, so as to protect the interests of the child/ young person until the investigation is completed.
8. If an individual with an offending history that poses a safeguarding risk seeks to attend Chester Road Baptist Church, the Safeguarding Team will liaise with other agencies to assess whether or not we can manage the risk to children/young people/'adults at risk', and what measures should put in place.
9. To work to prevent bullying from happening between children, young people, or 'adults at risk'; ensuring bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need.
10. To implement and issue guidelines to all who work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' in how to effectively and safely communicate using electronic/ digital communications, and give training on these guidelines.
11. To issue guidelines to all volunteers, staff and Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees) on safe practices/ habits when working with children/ young people/ 'adults at risk'.
12. To follow and comply with good Health and Safety practice for all activities involving children, young people and 'adults at risk'.

13. To ensure off-site trips and overnight/ residential events for children, young people or adults at risk are well planned and safe.
14. In order to maintain relevance and currency, this *Safeguarding Children, Young People and 'Adults at Risk'* policy and procedures will be profiled and re-affirmed once a year at a Church Members' Meeting and comprehensively reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.

#### **Key policy measure implementations:**

#### **1.0 To appoint and enable individuals with specific Safeguarding roles responsibilities, including ideally a Safeguarding Team, to lead on the implementation of Chester Road Baptist Church's Safeguarding policy and procedures.**

- 1.1 **The Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees)** have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding at Chester Road Baptist Church. Collectively, they are responsible for:
  - 1.1.1 the implementation of policy and procedures;
  - 1.1.2 raising awareness of safeguarding 'best practice' within the church;
  - 1.1.3 ensuring safe recruitment of all volunteers/staff;
  - 1.1.4 ensuring all volunteers/staff have received the appropriate training;
  - 1.1.5 supporting volunteers/staff/Minister(s).
- 1.2 One of the Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees) will serve as the **Safeguarding Deacon/Trustee**. On behalf of the Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees), they will:
  - 1.2.1 oversee and monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees);
  - 1.2.2 raise the profile of safeguarding within the church, ensuring the policy statement is reaffirmed annually at a Church Members' Meeting;
  - 1.2.3 be the point of contact with Deacons/Trustees for safeguarding issues;
  - 1.2.4 ensure the Safeguarding policy and procedures are comprehensively reviewed every three years.
  - 1.2.5 Chair the Safeguarding Team.
- 1.3 The **Designated Person for Safeguarding** (ideally not the Safeguarding Deacon/Trustee) will:
  - 1.3.1 receive all reports of concerns regarding safeguarding of children/ young people/ adults at risk;
  - 1.3.2 listen, observe and act on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice from the relevant people;
  - 1.3.3 act as a link between the church and other professional agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters;
  - 1.3.4 receive appropriate training to enable them to fulfil their role competently and confidently.
  - 1.3.5 To ensure continuity, a **Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding** will ideally also be appointed to assist the Designated Person for Safeguarding.
- 1.4 **Safer Recruitment Verifier(s)** will be appointed to:
  - 1.4.1 administer safer recruitment of volunteers, including application form, reference checks, interviews.
  - 1.4.2 process Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, including identity verification
  - 1.4.3 To ensure continuity, a **Deputy Recruitment Verifier(s)** will also be appointed to assist the Safer Recruitment Verifier.

- 1.5 If such posts exist, **specialist paid staff** responsible for children, young people and/or adults at risk have an important role to play in the implementation of Safeguarding policy and procedures in their specialist ministry area(s). They will usually have relevant experience and training in Safeguarding, and significant contact with children, young people and/or adults at risk – and the volunteers who serve them.
- 1.6 The (senior) **Minister** also has an important role to play in the implementation of Safeguarding policy and procedures, and in supporting volunteers/staff. They are often more accessible than most to those with a Safeguarding concern. For accountability and continuity, the Minister(s) should not fulfil the Designated Person for Safeguarding role.
- 1.7 To ensure a joined-up, sustainable, and accountable approach, the above distinct roles will form a **Safeguarding Team** (it is not healthy for the above distinct roles to be fulfilled by the one same individual), comprising:
  - 1.7.1 Leadership Team Deacon/Trustee for Safeguarding;
  - 1.7.2 Designated Person for Safeguarding;
  - 1.7.3 Deputy Person for Safeguarding;
  - 1.7.4 Specialist paid staff responsible for children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', as considered appropriate;
  - 1.7.5 The (senior) Minister.

**2.0 To ensure all volunteers, staff, and Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees) receive clear guidance, training and support in safeguarding children, young people, or adults at risk.**

- 2.1 All volunteers and staff working with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', as well as Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees), should know their responsibilities for the safeguarding of children, young people and 'adults at risk'. This is helped when people are provided with clear role descriptions.
- 2.2 Chester Road Baptist Church will provide all volunteers and staff with effective team support and supervision, with clear reporting lines. No individual should be left unaccountable for their actions or practice. Team Leaders/line managers will ensure work/ministry is organised/operationally-managed on a day-to-day basis in ways that protect both children/young people/'adults at risk' and volunteers/staff, ensuring neither are placed in unreasonable positions of vulnerability.
- 2.3 All volunteers and staff, as well as Deacons/Trustees, will be given a copy of the *Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk* policy and procedures as part of their induction to serving with Chester Road Baptist Church.
- 2.4 Chester Road Baptist Church will provide all volunteers and staff working with children, young people and/or adults at risk with adequate training in Safeguarding principles and practices.
  - 2.4.1 Everyone who works with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' will be required to completed *CRBC Essential Safeguarding Training for All* (renewed every 2 years; 1.5 hrs; to catch all, delivered a few times each year; delivered by CRBC Safeguarding Team member/s):
    - all volunteers who work with children/ young people/ adults at risk
    - all Deacons/Trustees
    - all staff in people-facing roles
    - all external facility hirers/users that can't evidence their own safeguarding training.

2.4.2 In addition, some will be required to also complete Level 2 & Level 3 BUGB *Excellence in Safeguarding* training (renewed every 4 years; 2 x 3 hrs = 6hrs; delivered by HEBA at varied locations:

- all *team leaders* in children/ young people/ 'adults at risk'
- the LT (Deacon/Trustee) responsible for Safeguarding
- the Designated Person for Safeguarding (and Deputy)
- all staff in roles working with children/ young people/ adults at risk;
- all Minister(s)

### 3.0 **To plan the work of Chester Road Baptist Church so as to prevent situations where abuse of children, young and/or adults at risk may occur.**

3.1 To ensure the safety of children/ young people and their volunteers/staff, the following *minimum* adult/child ratios must be observed:

| Age range                            | Minimum ratio –<br>INDOOR activities | Minimum ratio –<br>OUTDOOR activities |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 0-2 years                            | 1:3 (minimum 2)                      | 1:3 (minimum 2)                       |
| 3 years                              | 1:4 (minimum 2)                      | 1:4 (minimum 2)                       |
| 4-7 years (Infants sch yrs R, 1 & 2) | 1:6 (minimum 2)                      | 1:6 (minimum 2)                       |
| 8-11 years (Junior sch yrs 3-6)      | 1:8 (minimum 2)                      | 1:6 (minimum 2)                       |
| 12-17 years (sch yrs 7-13)           | 1:10 (minimum 2)                     | 1:10 (minimum 2)                      |

- 3.2 These ratios do not take into account special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, that may require additional adult involvement.
- 3.3 Only volunteers and staff authorised by Chester Road Baptist Church to work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' – and who are aged 18 years and above – will be included as part of these ratios.
- 3.4 Enabling children and young people to take on 'peer leader' / helper roles can be hugely significant for them. Those aged under 18 years cannot be counted as adult members of a team and must, therefore, be counted as children/ young people for the purpose of ratios. They must be closely supervised by an adult worker and never given sole responsibility for a group of children or young people.
- 3.5 Chester Road Baptist Church will take steps to ensure that a volunteer, staff member or Leadership Team (Deacon/ Trustee) is not left alone with a child, young person and/or 'adult at risk' where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This may require that groups work within the same large room or work in adjoining rooms with the door left open, and that doors are fitted with vision panels. This good practice can be as much to the benefit of the worker/ volunteer as to the child/ young person/ 'adult at risk'.
- 3.6 When a group is the only activity taking place on Chester Road Baptist Church premises, there should always be at least two authorised, non-related adults present.
- 3.7 Children under eight years of age will not be allowed to wander around the premises unless supervised by their parent/ carer or as part of an organised activity.
- 3.8 If using their home as a meeting place, volunteers, staff and Deacons/ Trustees must take extra care not to be alone with a child, young person and/or 'adult at risk'. There should always be another authorised non-related adult in the home and the parents/carers must know where the child/ young person/ 'adult at risk' is.

- 3.9 All external venue hirers/ users (organisations or individuals) of Chester Road Baptist Church's facilities will be required to comply with Chester Road Baptist Church's minimum standards for the safeguarding of children, young people and 'adults at risk'. All external users should make clear that, though they use Chester Road Baptist Church's facilities, they do so without Chester Road Baptist Church accepting any responsibility or liability for any of their activities or standards of care that they provide towards their group participants.

**4.0 To follow safer recruitment by treating all those who seek to work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', or have authority over such workers (i.e. volunteers, staff and Deacons/Trustees), as applicants, exploring their experience and potential suitability before confirming their appointment.**

- 4.1 All those that seek to work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' at/with Chester Road Baptist Church, as well as Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees), will be required to complete an application form and interview – appropriate to the role/ responsibility they are applying for.
- 4.2 All prospective volunteers and staff, as well as Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees), must provide a complete career history, detailing what they were doing, from when and to, and with what organisation. They must give satisfactory explanation for any and all gaps.
- 4.3 All prospective volunteers and staff, as well as Deacons/Trustees, will be asked to declare if they have any criminal convictions or cautions. Failure to disclose relevant information in sufficient detail will be treated as a 'breach of trust'.

**5.0 To require all volunteers, staff and Deacons/Trustees to provide two acceptable references and to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (and repeated every 3 years) as a condition of working or volunteering with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' at Chester Road Baptist Church.**

- 5.1 As a condition of voluntary service/employment, Chester Road Baptist Church requires a minimum of two acceptable references. One must be from someone who has observed the applicant with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk'. The other must be from someone external to Chester Road Baptist Church. All reference requests will include a copy of the Role Description/ Person Specification.
- 5.2 For employed staff positions, a third reference from the applicant's current or most recent employer will also be obtained.
- 5.3 As a further condition of service/employment, Chester Road Baptist Church requires all volunteers and staff, as well as all Deacons/Trustees, to complete an Enhanced Disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- 5.4 Because the **DBS Update Service** does not provide a comprehensive real-time check on all data searched in a single-use Enhanced DBS Check, until this is confirmed rectified by the UK Government, Chester Road Baptist Church does not accept DBS Update Service checks. In all cases, Chester Road Baptist Church will undertake a new DBS check.
- 5.5 All situations which involve work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, so, all convictions which relate to children, young people and 'adults at risk', however old, must be

declared. Information about other criminal convictions must also be given, as these may be relevant to the suitability of an applicant.

- 5.6 Service/ employment with Chester Road Baptist Church may commence with a valid and appropriate Enhanced Level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check obtained from another organisation providing it is less than 36 months old. This is to allow Chester Road Baptist Church time to obtain its own copy from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- 5.7 For all volunteers and staff working with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', as well as all Deacons/Trustees, Chester Road Baptist Church requires such Enhanced Level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to be repeated every 36 months. This is not required for those individuals in support functions that do not work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk'. If in doubt, an Enhanced Level Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be obtained.
- 5.8 It is a condition of service/ employment with Chester Road Baptist Church that all volunteers, staff and Deacons/Trustees disclose to their team leader/ line manager immediately and in full if they receive a criminal caution or conviction. Failure to do so will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

**6.0 To implement and issue guidelines to all who work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' on how to deal with disclosed and suspected abuse, and give training on the use of these guidelines.**

**6.1 Types of abuse:**

- 6.1.1 Physical, where children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' receive physical hurt or injury. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- 6.1.2 Sexual, where adults seek sexual gratification by using children, young people and/or 'adults at risk'. It may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- 6.1.3 Neglect, where children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' experience the persistent failure to meet their basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such that it has a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability.
- 6.1.4 Emotional, where children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' are harmed by a constant lack of love and affection, or threats, taunting and the like. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- 6.1.5 Domestic, Threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between persons aged 16 or above who are, or who have been, in a relationship, or between family members. Children/ young people who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims in their own right (Domestic Abuse Acts 2021).
- 6.1.6 Financial, where adults steal money or purchase possessions at below 'market rate' from children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', commit fraud, deprive them of benefits or any other finances or ask children, young

people and/or 'adults at risk' to carry out tasks, giving them very low financial reward.

- 6.1.7 Religious, whereby adults abuse power in the name of God or religion, to satisfy their own needs at the expense of others.

## 6.2 **Signs of abuse:**

- 6.2.1 Physical abuse, being unexplained injuries or those which have received no medical attention, hidden injuries, signs of neglect.
- 6.2.2 Sexual abuse, being allegations (disclosure) made by the children, young people and/or 'adults at risk', pre-occupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults – in ways that are inappropriate for their age.
- 6.2.3 Neglect, being failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child/ young person, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill-health. Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of a child, young person and/or 'adult at risk'.
- 6.2.4 Emotional abuse, being regression in behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/ adults, attention seeking, running away, stealing, lying, looking uncared-for.
- 6.2.5 Domestic, see above physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It is rarely a one-off event; usually a pattern of abusive, coercive and controlling behaviour.
- 6.2.6 Financial, being theft of property, coercion to hand-over or sell possessions or rights at below 'market rate', coercion to perform tasks for little or no reward that would normally be remunerated (paid for).
- 6.2.7 Religious, being excessive or unusual physical punishment resulting from behaviour not in line with parents'/carers' rigid religious zeal; threatening divine/eternal judgment if narrow religious beliefs or practices are not maintained; strange, unnatural and often perverse beliefs on sexual matters and sexual development in line with parents/carers' religious beliefs; denial of association with any person not sharing the religious beliefs of the parent/carer.

N.B. It is important not to take the above signs as indications that abuse *has* taken place; instead, they should make you stop and think, without jumping to conclusions.

Physical abuse and neglect are more difficult to hide. Sexual and emotional abuse are far more difficult to identify and prove. Many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations.

- 6.2.7 Bullying. See 9.0.

## 6.3 **Dealing with a 'disclosure':**

- 6.3.1 A child, young person or 'adult at risk' is said to have made a 'disclosure' if they voluntarily and without prompt communicate that they have been, or are at risk of being, abused.
- 6.3.2 It is Chester Road Baptist Church's policy to always report accurately, fully and promptly *any and all* 'disclosures' to Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures) or the Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB), or the Police. Chester Road Baptist Church is not qualified to investigate the validity of 'disclosures', hence its commitment to report *all* 'disclosures'.
- 6.3.3 All volunteers, staff, and Deacons/ Trustees in receipt of a 'disclosure' should act in accordance with the following guidance:

- Do not delay.
- Inform the Designated Person for Safeguarding, his/her Deputy, or the (senior) Minister.
- He or she must contact Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures), the Birmingham Adult Safeguarding Board (DASB), or the Police. An Inter-Agency Referral should then be completed and sent within 48 hours.
- If you are unable to reach either the Designated Person for Safeguarding or Minister, or you are not confident in their or Chester Road Baptist Church's ability to act appropriately, you should contact Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures) direct ☎ **0121 303 1888** (9am-5 pm) or **0121 675 4806** (out of hours) or Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) ☎ **0121 303 1234**. Chester Road Baptist Church seeks to be professionally and morally responsible in placing the welfare of children, young people and 'adults at risk' over and above its own reputation or standing in the community.
- Any disclosure involving a Brigade member will also need to be reported to Boys Brigade/Girls Brigade HQ. For Boys Brigade ☎ **0300 303 4454** automated service - choose the correct option. For Girls Brigade ☎ **01246 582322**.
- If you have reason to believe that a child, young person or 'adult at risk' is at **immediate risk of harm**, contact the police on **999**.
- Do not discuss the concern with anyone other than the Designated Person for Safeguarding, Minister, your ministry leader, or the appropriate individual(s) within the Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures), Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) or Police. No-one else within Chester Road Baptist Church should be involved or informed. Confidentiality is vitally important.
- For the protection of the child/young person/'adult at risk', as well as for the parent(s) carer, and to preserve the quality of evidence, the parent(s)/carer must not be informed of the 'disclosure' without prior authorisation from Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures) or Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB).
- Do accept what the child/young person/'adult at risk' says, keeping calm and looking at them directly.
- Do let them know that you will need to report the information; do not promise confidentiality.
- Do be aware that the child/young person/'adult at risk' may have been threatened.
- Do reassure the child/young person/'adult at risk' that they were right to tell you and that you believe them.
- Where appropriate, let the child/young person/'adult at risk' know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.

- Make detailed notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what was said, by whom, and when it was said. Record dates and times of these events and, even if you subsequently write-up your notes in a neater format, keep your original hand-written record for future reference.
- Do not attempt to prompt the child/ young person/ 'adult at risk'. Do not ask leading questions as this could result in a valid case being thrown out of court.

#### 6.4 Dealing with a 'suspicion':

- 6.4.1 If a child/young person/'adult at risk' does not make a 'disclosure' but you are nevertheless concerned by what you observe or hear, you should act on your 'suspicion' in accordance with the following guidance:
- Discuss with your team leader the nature of your concerns.
  - Keep a log of your concerns. Is there a pattern to the occurrence?
  - Be curious. Sensitively ask the child/young person/'adult at risk' open questions (but never if it's a 'disclosure') without, as far as possible, drawing attention to your concerns. Are your concerns alleviated by what you hear, or do you need to act on them?
  - The decision to inform Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures) or Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) of a 'suspicion' should ideally be taken by your ministry team leader, Designated Person for Safeguarding, or Senior Minister. You should co-operate reasonably with any BSCB or BASB investigation, child protection/ adult safeguarding conference/ inter-agency case review.

#### **7.0 If a volunteer, staff member, or Deacon/Trustee is accused or suspected of abuse against a child, young person or 'adult at risk', Chester Road Baptist Church will act professionally, promptly and decisively to remove them from duty, so as to protect the interests of the child/young person/'adult at risk' until the investigation is completed.**

- 7.1 If a volunteer, member of staff or Deacon/Trustee is under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, young person and/or 'adult at risk', they will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Chester Road Baptist Church will also notify the Baptist Regional Safeguarding Lead.
- 7.2 Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister must be reported immediately to the Baptist Safeguarding Lead, and the church's safeguarding policy and procedures then followed. The Minister should not be informed of the referral.
- 7.3 Any safeguarding concern about the Designated Person for Safeguarding and/or Safeguarding Trustee must be reported immediately to the Minister, who will then inform the Baptist Regional Safeguarding Lead. The DPS and/or Safeguarding Trustee should not be informed of the referral.
- 7.4 In order to protect the child/young person/'adult at risk', and to support the worker, the individual will be suspended on full pay and without prejudice to allow time and space for the allegation to be fully investigated. Chester Road Baptist Church will suspend the individual(s) at the earliest opportunity, having consulted with Birmingham Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) (in accordance with Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board procedures)/ Birmingham Safeguarding

Adults Board (DASB) and/or Police. During this time, the volunteer/ staff worker/ Deacon/Trustee must, as a condition of service/employment, co-operate reasonably with the investigating process and comply with any and all reasonable restrictions on their contact or communications with Chester Road Baptist Church volunteers, staff, Deacons/Trustees or service users until such time as the investigation is completed.

- 7.5 Chester Road Baptist Church will, without prejudice, provide the individual under investigation with an appropriate 'peer support' to accompany them through the process and, if appropriate, to facilitate two-way communication.

**8.0 If an individual with an offending history that poses a safeguarding risk seeks to attend Chester Road Baptist Church, the Safeguarding Team will liaise with other agencies to assess whether or not we can manage the risk to children/young people/'adults at risk', and what measures should be put in place.**

- 8.1 When someone who is alleged or known to have an offending history that poses a safeguarding risk asks or attempts to attend Chester Road Baptist Church, the Safeguarding Team (not an individual) must consider, in partnership with other agencies, what safeguarding actions or measures might be necessary to better manage the risk to children / young people/ 'adults at risk'.
- 8.2 The Safeguarding Team should seek advice from the Baptist Regional Safeguarding Lead and the Probation Service and/or Police.
- 8.3 The rights of the offender to re-build their life without people knowing the details of their past offence(s) must be balanced against the primary need to protect children/ young people/ 'adults at risk'. Being an inclusive church, because God is Love, we welcome all those we meet, whatever their story, beliefs or lifestyle. However, this must not undermine our safeguarding responsibilities.
- 8.4 When a person who has been convicted of abusing children/young people/'adults at risk' seeks to attend Chester Road Baptist Church, it is important their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a Safeguarding Contract is put in place. This must establish clear boundaries, attendance/ participation conditions, appropriate behaviour expectations, non-compliance sanctions/ consequences, available support/ pastoral care, and a next review date. The DPS will inform and take advice from the Baptist Regional Safeguarding Lead and the Probation Service and/or Police Offender Manager. The Safeguarding Contract must be put in place before they start attending the church. In consultation with the Police, a Safeguarding Contract may occasionally be considered appropriate also for someone who has faced allegations of abuse but not been convicted.

**9.0 To work to prevent bullying from happening between children, young people, or 'adults at risk'; ensuring bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need.**

- 9.1 Bullying is another form of abuse, and it can be verbal or physical. Bullying doesn't just happen to children; adults can be victims too. Bullying is usually defined as a repeated pattern of behaviour intended to cause emotional or physical harm to another person or exert power over them. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically, regardless of their age, ability or

status. Bullying happens within churches. Anyone in the church can be a victim of bullying, just as anyone in the church can be the bully, including those in leadership.

- 9.2 Some examples of bullying that could arise in the church context are:
- Being verbally or physically abusive towards another person
  - Isolating or deliberately ignoring someone, or excluding them from group activities
  - Spreading rumours and malicious untruths about another person
  - Name calling and personal insults
  - Making false accusations
  - Sending abusive messages or degrading images via phone, email or social media
- 9.3 Bullying will always cause a great deal of pain and harm for those on the receiving end. Some signs that can indicate a person is being bullied are:
- Withdrawal from group or church activities; appearing anxious, tearful or more reticent than usual, particularly in a certain context; development of mental health difficulties, such as depression or anxiety disorders; drop in performance relating to any church roles; physical injuries.
- 9.4 In order to help prevent bullying, the following procedures will be adopted:
- The children and young people will be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour for their groups, which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable. This should then be displayed somewhere visible to the whole church.
  - The church will display signs stating the importance of valuing and respecting each other even in disagreements and this will be practically embedded into the leadership approach to others.
  - Everyone in the church, whether children or adults, should know how they can report any incidents of bullying.
  - All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously and details will be carefully checked before action is taken.
  - The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.
  - An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour.
  - All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions that are taken.
  - Where an allegation of bullying is made against a church or group leader, advice will be sought from the local regional safeguarding lead as this should be addressed.
  - Incidents of bullying may be reported to the statutory authorities in line with the church safeguarding procedures.
- 9.5 It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviour, such as respectfully challenging or disagreeing with someone else's beliefs or behaviours, setting reasonable expectations with regard to work deadlines and activities or taking legitimate disciplinary action.

**10.0 To implement and issue guidelines to all who work with children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' on how to effectively and safely communicate using electronic/ digital communications, and give training on these guidelines.**

- 10.1 It is not appropriate to use these electronic/ digital communications methods with children (0-11s). For them, all communication should be made via their parent/guardian. More information on cyber safety can be found on the Baptist Union Website in the Cyber Safety Guide.

- 10.2 Young people also need to be aware of the protocols that staff & volunteers follow in relation to electronic communications. It is important to remember that young people have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their contact details and should not be pressurised otherwise.
- 10.3 Means of Communication
- 10.3.1 E-mail should be limited to sharing generic information. If e-mail is being used, workers will ensure that they are accountable by copying each message to a designated e-mail address and including other leaders in the e-mail thread. None of the e-mail addresses of young people and adults at risk should be made visible to other recipients.
- 10.3.2 Communicating via Text/SMS/WhatsApp or equivalent should be kept to an absolute minimum. Workers who have been issued a mobile phone from Chester Road Baptist Church should be first point of call. Any conversations with young people or adults at risk on a personal mobile phone must include at least two leaders/adults in the conversation.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
  - Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the staff or volunteer's supervisor.
  - Staff and volunteers should use clear, unambiguous language and should not use abbreviations e.g. 'lol'.
  - Staff and volunteers 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.
  - Platforms like Snapchat that do not automatically keep a record trail of conversation must not be used when communicating with children, young people or adults at risk.
  - When using Whatsapp it is important to gain permission from the young people or adults at risk to add them to a group where their mobile number will be on display for everyone within the group to see.
- 10.3.3 Social Networking
- Staff and volunteers should have a site that is 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 domain.
  - Staff and volunteers should not send private messages to children, young people or 'adults at risk' on social networks. Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
  - Staff and volunteers should not accept 'friend' or 'following' requests from children, young people or 'adults at risk' on their personal site, nor seek to be 'friends' or a 'follower' of any child, young person or 'adult at risk' known to them in a church context.
- 10.4 In line with the Data Protection Act (1998) and GDPR, permission to take photographs or videos of children, young people, or 'adult at risk' must be obtained via a consent form before the photograph is taken or footage recorded. It must be made clear what the image or footage will be used for. Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including e-mail, postal address or telephone number.

- 10.5 When a service or event is being live-streamed or recorded to be shared online later, we will ensure people are aware that this could result in them being shown 'on screen'. We will do this through signage and announcements. We will ensure there is always an 'off camera' area, and limit as far as possible the camera focus to the area of main action e.g. stage. To ensure consent, only children accompanied at the service/ event by their parent/carer will be permitted to participate in 'on screen' activities.

**11.0 To issue guidelines to all volunteers, staff and Leadership Team (Deacons/ Trustees) on safe practices/ habits when working with children/ young people/ 'adults at risk'.**

- 11.1 Chester Road Baptist Church will inform volunteers, staff and Deacons/Trustees about the risks of '**grooming**', and how to guard against it.
- 11.2 If a worker enters into a romantic relationship with a young person or 'adult at risk' that is a member of the group they serve, this is an **abuse of trust**. This is illegal (The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.) Volunteers, staff, or Leadership Team (Deacons/Trustees) must never have a romantic or sexual relationship with a young person aged 16 or 17 years or an 'adult at risk'. Young adults especially must ensure they do not abuse the position of trust with those who may not be much younger than them. If you have concerns about a relationship forming between an adult helper and a young person or 'adult at risk', then you should notify our Designated Person for Safeguarding.
- 11.3 Where children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' require **transportation/ lifts**, this will only be done with parent/carer consent, using vehicles fitted with seatbelts (unless using public transport), and with two authorised adults present. Volunteers, staff and Deacons/Trustees should not give lifts to children, young people and/or 'adults at risk' on their own. If there is absolutely no safe and secure alternative to this, the worker must *first* seek authorisation from a member of the Safeguarding Team, reasonable attempt made to obtain parent/ carer consent, and then the child/young person/ 'adult at risk' must sit in the rear of the car.
- 11.4 Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transactions and gifts.
- 11.4.1 Those who work with 'adults at risk' may become involved in some aspects of personal finance – collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts of other evidence of what has been done.
- 11.4.2 Workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- 11.4.3 Any gifts received should be reported to the church secretary, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- 11.4.4 Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated church workers.
- 11.5 All church computers/laptops will have suitable parental controls and blocks put on as well as a password system in place. All workers will sign the Acceptable Use of ICT Declaration before being able to use a church computer/laptop.
- 11.6 It is good practice to record pastoral visits or meetings, noting the date, time, location, subject and any actions which are to be taken. The record of these meetings should stick to facts and try to avoid opinion. Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns or disclosures should be passed on to the DPS and stored in a safe and secure manner for at least 75 years.
- 11.7 It is the responsibility of all group leaders/responsible persons within the building to ensure the safety of themselves and those who are in their care. In addition, it

is a legal requirement that all group leaders/responsible persons are familiar with the emergency procedures in the event of a fire.

- 11.8 The church premises will be made as accessible as possible to all people. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, lighting or heating will be addressed wherever possible, and where necessary, aids and adaptations put in place. In all on-site activities, we will consider the varied requirements of all those attending and be as inclusive as possible.

**12.0 To follow and comply with good Health and Safety practice for all activities involving children, young people and 'adults at risk'.**

- 12.1 It is the responsibility of all group leaders/ responsible persons to ensure the physical safety of themselves and all those in their care whilst participating in activities on-site and off-site. This will be evidenced by **risk assessments**, and compliance with Chester Road Baptist Church's current **Health and Safety Policy and Procedures**, covering, for example, access and security, fire safety and evacuation, first aid, food safety and hygiene, PAT testing...
- 12.2 At least one, preferably two, trained **First Aiders and First Aid kit** will always be present and available in the building, and for all off-site activities. Injuries, accidents, or incidents will be recorded in the Accident Book. A list of all staff and volunteers who are First Aid trained should be kept in the Church Office. All groups will ensure that they have sufficient trained first aiders on their team so that there is always at least one, preferably two, first aiders present at events and activities.
- 12.3 It is the responsibility of group leaders to ensure they and their staff/ volunteers know the **fire safety and evacuations procedures**. In the event of fire or incident, it is the responsibility of the group leader, supported by the staff and volunteers, to alert all children, young people, and 'adults at risk' in their care, ensuring they are all safely evacuated and accounted for.
- 12.4 To comply with the **Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013**, if any type of food or drink is to be offered, be that for fee or free, then at least one member of staff/ volunteer involved in the preparation or serving must have at least Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene.
- 12.5 Any and all activities involving children, young people, and/ or adults at risk, taking place either on-site or off-site, must be adequately covered by Chester Road Baptist Church's **insurance** policy. It is the responsibility of group leaders to ensure their planned activities are not exempt from this policy.

**13.0 To ensure off-site trips and overnight/ residential events for children, young people or adults at risk are well planned and safe.**

- 13.1** There are some specific considerations which need to be made for outings and overnight events involving children
- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
  - Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
  - Consent forms will be obtained for the specific activities involved.
  - There will be workers with first aid and food hygiene certificates with the group
- 13.2** Sleeping arrangements for overnight events will be carefully considered. It is not acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with young people. Instead, workers should be situated in close proximity and ensure that the young

people know where to go if they need help. There should be at least two workers on duty until all young people are asleep.

- 13.3** Where a young person is questioning their gender identity or considering, progressing or has completed gender reassignment we will consult with them and their parent/carer about arrangements for residential trips and sleepovers. If needed the DPS will seek advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.
- 13.4** No child/ young person/ adult at risk will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The activity leader will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, the activity leader needs to ensure that the premises are licensed.
- 13.5** The event leader will have a fire safety procedure in place, which will include the following:
- Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the overnight event is in a building, then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill will be practised on the first day.
  - When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. The building will also need to comply with fire regulations.
  - In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).
- 13.6** It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every child/young person participating in an overnight event, and this may include monitoring access on and off the site.
- 13.7** General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running around tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).
- 13.8** Recognising that children are likely to be dispersed around the **swimming** area with additional requirements for oversight as they get changed or visit the toilets there will be an increased adult to child ratio for swimming trips. Prior to the trip, workers will establish the swimming ability of the children attending and obtain specific consent. Workers should never change in front of the children.
- 13.9** There will be a **named person for safeguarding** on all outings and residential trips. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.
- 13.10** A medical consent form should be completed in advance by each member of the group and held by the leader(s). This will include any health concerns, emergency contact information and contact details for their GP. This will allow emergency medical personnel to have access to information should the need arise.
- 13.11** Staff/ volunteers should not agree to hold or dispense medication for those on an event. If someone is unable to manage their own medication then consideration should be given as to whether their usual carer could attend with them or whether they will not be able to attend the event.

**13.12** As well as no less than the above, group leaders should in addition comply with specialist residential policy and procedures which may arise from membership of a partner organisation e.g. Boys Brigade/ Girls Brigade.

**14.0** *In order to maintain relevance and currency, this Safeguarding Children, Young People and 'Adults at Risk' policy and procedures will be profiled and re-affirmed once a year at a Church Members' Meeting and comprehensively reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.*

**14.1** The Deacons/Trustees, led by the Safeguarding Deacon/Trustee and the Safeguarding Team, are responsible for ensuring Chester Road Baptist Church has a 'fit-for-purpose' Safeguarding Children, Young People and 'adults at risk' policy and procedures in place and that these are being appropriately implemented.

**14.2** This Safeguarding policy and procedures may need to be comprehensively reviewed and updated more frequently in light of changes, for example, in national policy, 'best practice', or case law.

**14.3** Information about how to report a safeguarding concern and who to will be displayed in the facilities e.g. the toilets.

## **Document Control**

### **Supporting Documents:**

**Safeguarding Incident Form**

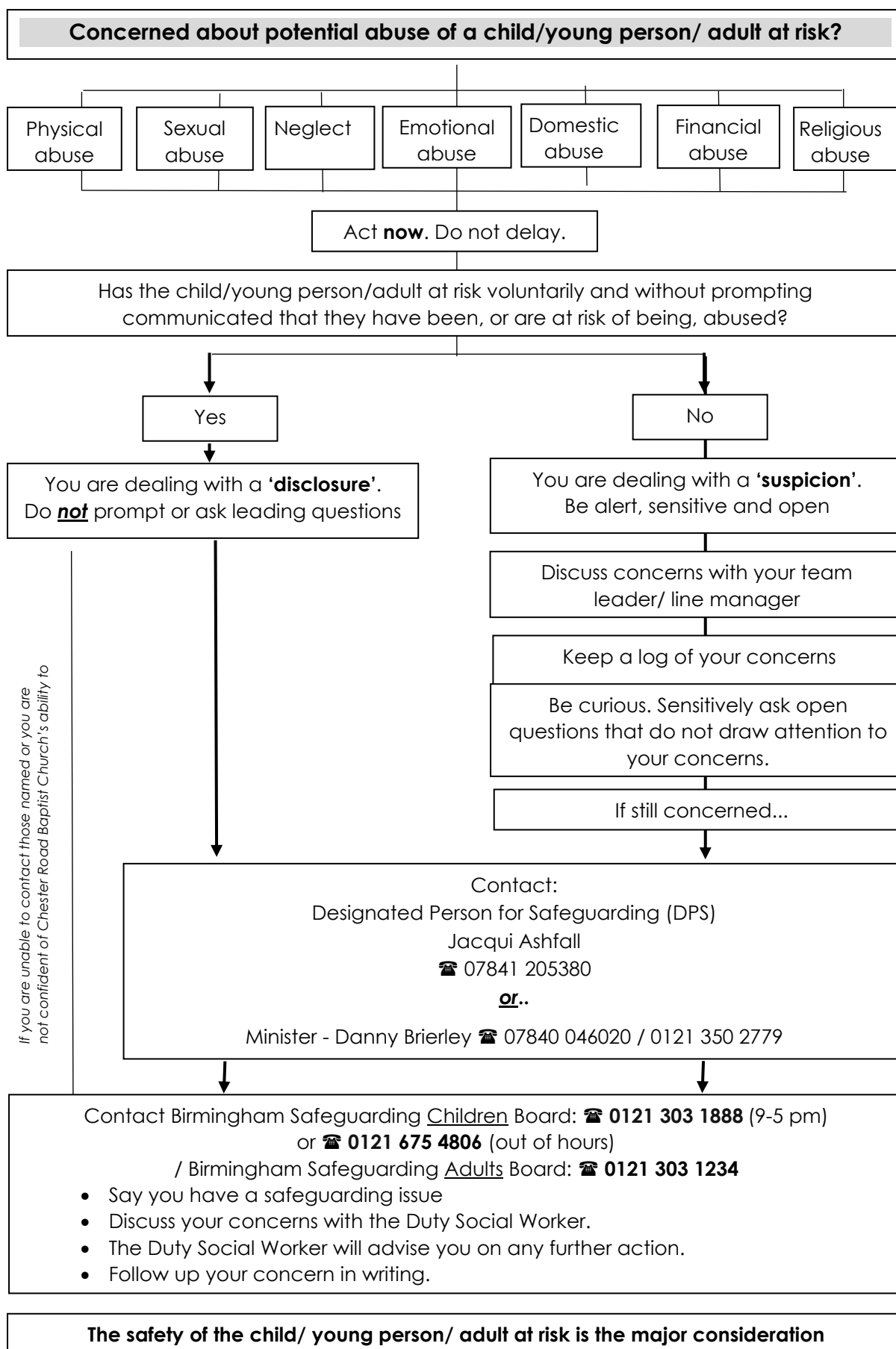
**Application Form**

**Interview Schedule**

**Reference Request**

**Reference template**

(All available from Safeguarding Team, HR Team or in main church office)



## Safeguarding Incident Form

To be completed by the Designated Person for Safeguarding

Page 1 of 3

|                                          |  |
|------------------------------------------|--|
| NAME OF CHURCH / ORGANISATION            |  |
| CONTACT DETAILS OF CHURCH / ORGANISATION |  |

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| NAME OF DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)      |  |
| CONTACT DETAILS OF DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING |  |

|                                                                  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| NAME OF CONCERNED PERSON OR TO WHOM DISCLOSURE WAS GIVEN         |  |
| CONTACT DETAILS OF CONCERNED PERSON OR WHOM DISCLOSURE WAS GIVEN |  |

### INDIVIDUAL OF CONCERN - CONTACT DETAILS

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Name                         |  |
| Date of birth                |  |
| Address                      |  |
| Phone number / email address |  |



**FUTURE ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

- What action needs to be taken?
  
  
  
  
  
- Who is responsible for this?

**SIGNATURES**

|                                                      |  |                                                                 |  |
|------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| SIGNATURE OF<br>DESIGNATED<br>SAFEGUARDING<br>PERSON |  | SIGNATURE OF<br>MINISTER (OR<br>SAFEGUARDING<br>DEACON/TRUSTEE) |  |
| DATE & TIME                                          |  | DATE & TIME                                                     |  |

## Safeguarding and Christian principles

Chester Road Baptist Church is committed to safeguarding children, young people and 'adults at risk', not only because statutory and best practice guidance says we must, but also because we are compelled to do so by the values of Christian faith.

Jesus saw His mission as being to bring about healing, wholeness and well-being, freedom from oppression, and liberty – social and spiritual inclusion for all. In so doing, He prioritised the socio-economically marginalised (Lk.4:14-21). This was for all ages: for children as much as for adults.

Jesus challenged the 'social norms' of His day. Radically, unlike other religious leaders, He welcomed the young, as well as women, those who socially-excluding illnesses and those labelled 'sinners' by others. Indeed, Jesus showed deep concern for children and their care (Mt 21:16; Mk 10:16). In particular, the Bible states:

*"People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have Him touch [bless] them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to Him and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'"* Lk 18:25-26

Jesus did not specifically address safeguarding issues in language that mirrors current UK 'best practice' (in the same way He didn't specifically refer to use of the Internet, drug misuse, or car crime). We are left to work from His principles. For example, Jesus did say:

*"Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."* Mt. 18:6-6

Like good shepherds, those who work with the young (lambs) should provide for their safety, protection and care, ensuring those who would manipulatively seek to harm the flock are prevented from doing so (Jn.10).

The Bible reveals that both 'family' and the wider 'community' are intended to provide children/ young people with unconditional love, appropriate affection, protection from harm, and encouragement to develop self-autonomy as they grow from being developmentally immature dependent people to being developmentally mature inter-dependent people.

Children/young people are seen as gifts from God who, like adults, are 'made in the image of God' (Gen.1:27). Every child matters because every child carries the 'DNA' of God.

Children/young people within family are to be protected from sexual abuse. Leviticus 18:6-16 prohibits sexual relations by close relatives, such as parents, in-laws, siblings, grandparents, aunts/ uncles etc... This was to protect the well-being of children.

The Bible says all people – young and old – can know true and complete forgiveness if they live according to God's agenda, not their own. This is all about God's grace, not how much they may have erred in the past. However, to forgive is not to forget. Being all-knowing (omniscient), God does not – and cannot – forget. He remembers everything – and yet still chooses to forgive. That's grace! Therefore, with those that have 'sinned' against others, and especially against the young/ vulnerable, we might forgive but must not forget. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps us to not forget. To protect the young from harm, and to help those that pose a risk to them, we plan our work so that those that have 'sinned' against them (or who pose a threat of doing so) are kept well away from children and young people. We forgive, but we do not forget.