



loving God, loving people,
transforming communities

Safeguarding Policy

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This policy was agreed at the Trustees' discussion held on 6th November 2023

Signed*J. Lake* BEC Safeguarding Trustee

Bilton Evangelical Church

Part 1: General

1.1 Who we are

Name of Church	Bilton Evangelical Church (hereafter “the Church”)
Location	Main Street, Bilton, Rugby
Denomination	Independent Evangelical
Vision	Seeing transformation in Rugby and beyond, as everyone follows Jesus.

The Church’s mission is to equip communities of disciples who make new disciples. Part of that mission includes a growing ministry to children, young people, and adults at risk.

1.2 Safeguarding Principal Statement

Every person has value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God’s own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God’s re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

1.3 Principles

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people, and adults.
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people, and adults, particularly when they are vulnerable.
- establishing safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
- challenge any abuse of power within the Church, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance, and recognised good practice.

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1.4 Key Concepts and Definitions:

- **Adult at Risk:** any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness, or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, significant harm, or exploitation.
- **Safeguarding:** protecting children, young people or adults at risk from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- **Adult/child protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- **Abuse and neglect:** may occur in a family, in a community, or in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child/adult at risk or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

1.5 Categories of Abuse and Emerging Themes

The categories of child abuse are physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect.

The abuse of adults at risk may take the form of physical, sexual, financial, discriminatory, psychological, domestic, or organisational abuse as well as neglect, self-neglect or modern slavery.

It is important to recognise that other forms of abuse are rapidly emerging:

- Online crimes and abuse
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and trafficking
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic Abuse (including coercion and control)
- Child Abuse linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB)
- Honour Based Abuse
- Radicalisation
- Spiritual Abuse
- Self-Harm
- Historical abuse
- Sporting abuse
- Gender Identity

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1.6 Responsibilities of the Leadership

The Leadership Team, (namely the Pastors, Church Leaders, and Trustees, hereafter “the Leadership”), take very seriously their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk entrusted to the church’s care.

As part of the Church’s mission, the Leadership is committed to:

- Listen to, value, and relate effectively to children, young people, and adults at risk.
- Ensure their protection within all church activities.
- Encourage and support parents and carers.
- Carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- Respond without delay to every complaint made within the Church which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended a child, young person, or adult at risk.

1.7 Specific Responsibilities

The Trustees are also responsible for policies, including this one. The promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all of God’s people to reach their full potential. The Trustees will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

The Church appoints a Safeguarding Coordinator (also known as Designated Safeguarding Lead “DSL”) and one or two Deputies for Children, Young People, and Adults at Risk.

Their roles are to:

- provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues.
- promote safeguarding best practices within the Church.

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The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Coordinator and their deputies in their roles and will accept that any information they may from time to time have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way and on a need-to-know basis.

1.8 Events with Church Groups off the Premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to the Church Administrator.

1.9 Other Groups on Church Premises

The Church Administrator will consider the various users and uses of the building when rooms are booked (whether paid for or not).

Generally:

If the premises are used for one-off events, for example, birthday parties, then this policy need not apply. There are exceptions, e.g., overnight activities involving persons at risk.

If the premises are used for regular activities, then safeguarding needs to be considered. Outside organisations should have their own Safeguarding policy. If no policy exists and regular activities are planned with persons at risk, then the Church may refuse the use of church premises to other groups.

1.10 Complaints

It is hoped that complaints concerning Safeguarding issues can generally be dealt with informally by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

However, the Leadership, with the help of the Safeguarding Coordinator will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child, or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

Everyone can contribute to a safeguarding culture, whatever role or status in society and regardless of the position we hold within our church family.

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1.11 Key Personnel

Names of key personnel can be found in the “ABOUT US” section of the BEC website.

[ABOUT US | Bilton Evangelical Church \(BEC\) | Rugby \(becchurch.org.uk\)](#)

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Part 2: Reporting a Safeguarding Incident

2.1 Recognise, Respond, Record, Report, Reflect

Recognise:

- That a safeguarding allegation, concern, or incident may be taking place (see appropriate sections for further information).

Respond:

- Contact the Police if the person, or another, is in immediate danger or if a crime has been committed.
- Assist the person to a place of safety.
- Listen.
- Reassure them that there are people who can help.
- Avoid making judgements or conducting an investigation.

Record:

- In writing, as soon as possible. Ideally within an hour.
- Complete the *Cause for Concern* form (below) whenever a child, young person, or adult at risk is involved.
- Advise an adult at risk that the form will go no further than the Safeguarding Coordinator unless the adult at risk chooses otherwise.

Report:

- Securely forward the *Cause for Concern* form without delay to the Safeguarding Coordinator or a deputy. Ideally within 24 hours
- If appropriate, make a referral to the relevant external agency (agency details are available in the footnotes of the *Cause for Concern* form).
- Obtain consent from an adult at risk before making a referral. Encourage them to make the report themselves.

Reflect:

- Expect a follow-up call from the Safeguarding Team.
- Support yourself. Exercise self-care.

For further information:

Contact Thirtyone:eight

Email safeguarding@becchurch.org.uk (if non-urgent)

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2.2 Cause for Concern Form

(for use by any staff/volunteers– This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten black ink must be used and care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible). Hard copies of this form are available on the main noticeboard in the foyer of the BEC Centre^{1,2,3}

A PRINTED COPY OF ALL SUBMITTED FORMS WILL BE STORED SECURELY IN THE BEC CHURCH OFFICE

Name of subject of concern:	Date of birth/age:	Address:
Date, time and location of incident:		Date & time (of completion of form):
Your Name (print):		
Role/Job title: _		
Signature:		
Other members of the household:		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanor, appearance, injury, witnesses, etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary and state here how many extra sheets are attached)</i>		
How did the concern come to light?		
What is the child/adult saying about what has happened?		
What action has been taken?		
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns, etc.		
Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Co-ordinator:		

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your Safeguarding Coordinator without delay

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Guidance notes for Form 1 (volunteers/staff only):

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form:

1. As a registered body the church is required to ensure that its duty of care towards its beneficiaries is carried out in line with the principles enshrined within the Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People, 2018, and the Care Act, 2014. (Refer to BEC safeguarding policy at this point too).
2. Essential principles of recording the information received/disclosed/observed:
 - a. Remember: do not investigate or ask any leading questions.
 - b. Make notes within the first hour of receiving the disclosure or observing the incident.
 - c. Be clear and factual in your recording of the incident or disclosure.
 - d. Avoid giving your opinion or feelings on the matter.
 - e. Aim to record using the 4 W's and 1 H: When, where, what, who, and how.
 - f. Do not share this information with anyone else except your safeguarding co-ordinator in the first instance and they will advise on who else will need to be informed, how and when.
 - g. Make use of the additional information section to add any other relevant information regarding the child/adult/ family that you may be aware of. This can include any historic concerns or observations.
3. **What constitutes a safeguarding concern?** – any incident that has caused or is likely to cause significant harm to a child can be classed as a safeguarding concern. Abuse is classified under four different categories (with regards to children) as already stated within the safeguarding policy (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). With regards to adults, there are 6 further categorisations. Whilst it may be helpful to record a specific category in the above form, if possible, this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is important to seek advice from your safeguarding co-ordinator or thirty-one:eight at this stage.
4. **Why do you need information regarding 'other household members'?** – It has been demonstrated as important to include information about significant adults in the household especially when concerns relate to children as this has been a recurrent risk factor in several serious case reviews.
5. **Why is the view of the child/adult significant?** It is important to give whatever detail is available of the child or adult's explanation (or verbatim) of the matter to help ascertain if it is plausible and to help offer a context to the concern identified.
6. **Passing information to the Safeguarding co-ordinator** – Your safeguarding co-ordinator holds ultimate responsibility in responding to any safeguarding concerns within the church/organisation and therefore it is important that they have oversight of the actions being taken and make relevant and appropriate contact with statutory agencies if required. They will remain the most appropriate link between the organisation and external agencies.

If you have a genuine concern that it is NOT SAFE for a CHILD to return home, please call one of the below numbers for advice.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS:

Warwickshire Front Door (Children's Social Care): **01926 414144 option 3**; Out of Hours Duty: **01926 886922**
ThirtyOne:eight: **0303 003 1111- Option 2** 7 days a week, 7am-midnight
Police: **999**

If a CRIME has been committed against an ADULT AT RISK, or someone is in immediate danger, call 999

If an ADULT AT RISK does NOT give you permission to arrange any further support, or contact any services, no matter how much you think it will help/is necessary – you CANNOT do anything further.

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Part A: Safer Recruitment Procedures

A.1 General

Within the Church, every member is encouraged to serve.

The Church Leaders will support the Pastors as they oversee the different ministries and clusters of the Church, and a member (hereafter “Leaders”) will have responsibility for an individual ministry or cluster.

Other members will serve in ministry teams (hereafter “Volunteers”).

As a company, the Church also has legal responsibilities, and the Trustees are responsible for the employment of paid staff (hereafter “Staff”). Staff will usually have a Line Manager. Note that non-members may serve as Staff or Volunteers.

A.2 Guidelines for the Recruitment and Support of Paid Staff

Care must be taken in the appointment of all Staff likely to have contact with children, young people, or adults at risk. The Church should be able to demonstrate that everything has been done to promote safeguarding.

Safe recruitment is vital because it minimises the likelihood of people being harmed by those in positions of trust. These procedures are to safeguard those working with children, young people, and adults at risk, as well as those they work with.

Staff must undergo a thorough recruitment process. It is important to have information about the candidate’s background to be as sure as possible that unsuitable persons are excluded. Only carefully assessed candidates should be appointed to work with children, young people, or adults at risk.

Good safer recruitment practices can impact the following areas:

- Posts should ideally be advertised, for example in the Church newsletter, to make the appointment public and ensure equality of opportunity for applicants.
- The recruitment process should include the completion of an application form (including a Self-Disclosure statement) and at least two verified references. Interviews should also be held and, where necessary, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks received.

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- Staff should sign a *Code of Conduct* form.
- Staff should undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first year of appointment along with other necessary training (e.g., food hygiene, first aid, manual handling).
- Staff should have an annual review conducted by their Line Manager.

Note: Actual recruitment processes can be found in *Procedures for Appointments at BEC* and the Church Constitution. These documents are available from Trustees. At least one Trustee will be present at any interview, and records for successful applicants are kept electronically on a secure server, in line with GDPR (data protection).

A.3 Guidelines for the Appointment of Volunteers

For volunteers who are likely to have contact with children, young people, or adults at risk, best practice would be to follow the guidelines above. This need not be as formal as for paid staff.

For example:

A brief job description with some information on the role.

A chat with the Ministry Leader in place of a formal interview or annual review.

All Leaders and Volunteers should serve a six-month probationary period and have their appointment reviewed and ratified by their Ministry Leader, at the end of this period.

Note: Within the Church, Church Leaders ratify the appointments of all Leaders.

A.4 Self Declaration

All Staff and Volunteers working with Children and Young people or Adults at Risk should complete a Self-Declaration as part of their DBS check.

If a DBS check is not required, for example, when volunteers run events for children and their parents, then the church *Declaration of Suitability* form (copyright Thirty-one:eight) should be signed.

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A.5 Training

All Staff and Volunteers working with Children and Young people or Adults at Risk should attend Basic Safeguarding Training once every two years.

All workers are responsible for reading any church policies regarding safeguarding and are expected to adhere to the guidelines in the Church's current policies. |

Commented [FS(1)]: Originally in 2021 Social Media section.

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Part B: Social Media Guidelines

B.1 Social Media

This section provides parameters to guide church staff and volunteers when social media tools are used on behalf of BEC, or when BEC becomes part of a social media dialogue.

The church recognises that using the internet and other forms of technology is an important part of the lives of children and young people we work with. We understand that for many children and young people that we work with, using the Internet is a regular part of their lives and has a significant impact on their social development.

In accordance with BEC's safeguarding policy, we recognise that we must take all possible steps to prevent young people from significant harm or risk whilst using the internet or any other forms of technology. In addition, it is the responsibility of BEC to ensure that safeguarding procedures are established and updated to ensure that workers working with young people and indeed themselves are protected.

This policy applies to all online and mobile platforms for sharing content and information, whether hosted by BEC or hosted by individuals. Social media refers to social networking services, short message services, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image/video sharing sites, and other methods for sharing real-time information among users. Due to the ever-changing speed of social media, this applies to all new social media platforms, whether or not they are mentioned. All social media platforms are relevant and included.

B.2 Guidelines for those working with Social Media

Be selective! There are a variety of digital platforms available. Use the right medium for the message. For example, do not use a Facebook post to communicate sensitive or private information. In addition, it has been decided specific apps are not appropriate for BEC usage, e.g., Snapchat. If in doubt, ask the Ministry Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator.

Be smart! A blog, community post, or social media post is often visible to the entire public and can/will be shared by others in numerous ways that cannot be controlled at any level. Be extremely wise with all content posted.

Use grace! Always use Biblical wisdom when utilising social media. For example, if someone has offended you, consider discontinuing the conversation/post, and speak

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to them privately, with another impartial adult present as a witness if necessary/appropriate. Again, speak to the Ministry Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator.

Ask! In areas where this policy does not provide a direct answer for a specific situation or issue, please check with the Ministry Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator before acting on the situation or issue.

If workers do not adhere to these guidelines, whether intended or not, this will result in a meeting with the Ministry Leader or one of the Pastors to decide on the course of action to take, in accordance with Church policy.

B.3 Social Networking Sites – Usage

For BEC youth accounts using or setting up a social networking site/medium that is to run and maintain communication about the group or activity, the following principles should apply:

- Page profile should be password protected and password held by two or three leaders of the group or activity.
- The site/page/group should be monitored.
- Any inappropriate posts by young people should be removed by the admin/s of the site/group/page and the reasons should be explained to the person who posted the content. All those using the site/group/page should be made aware of what the purpose of the site is and that any inappropriate image and content that is not in line with the values of BEC is not appropriate.
- The site/group should be kept closed where appropriate and possible: only permitted/authorised members can see what is posted on the site.
- Contents of any postings should be consistent with the aims of BEC. In cases of doubt, leaders/helpers should seek advice firstly from the Ministry Leader, or if unavailable the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- As a member of BEC, all youth workers and helpers should remember that their online presence and posts can have the ability to affect the ministry at BEC. When in doubt, be positive!

B.4 Social Networking Sites – Leaders Communicating

Leaders should not friend or follow children or young people on social media. However, there will be certain exceptions to this rule because BEC is a church family. Discretion is advised and it is always better to err on the side of caution. When an adult has accepted a friend request from a young person associated with their group

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or activity, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence.

Social media postings should never disclose sensitive or confidential information unless written consent to share information is obtained from the young person, or parents/guardian where appropriate.

Messages should not be one on one where possible. There should always be a minimum of two leaders involved in a group chat.

Any events or activities run by BEC Youth that are organised or publicised on social media sites for group members should be set up as closed groups and membership managed by administrators.

Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people after 9 pm.

In signing emails or messages, leaders should simply sign their name and the name of the group/organisation where appropriate.

Parents/guardians should be asked to give their permission for leaders to communicate with young people under 16 years of age via social networking sites or by any other means of internet communication such as email. This can be included in an annual consent form. Parents or guardians should be the main port of contact and communication and copied into any relevant communications to their child.

The parents or guardians should be informed of what the purpose of the social media group is and reminded to ensure that their privacy settings are suitable and that they should not accept any friend requests from young people.

Parental permission via annual consent forms is required for photographs and video footage of young people and the consent forms should state what the usage of the images will be for, for example, promotion of the group or activity via social media or publications. Leaders should endeavour not to state any unnecessary personal details or information relating to the young person when posting images or photos online, for example, full names, addresses, schools attending, etc.

Any disclosures of abuse/cyberbullying/neglect/exploitation through a networking site must be dealt with according to BEC's Safeguarding policy. If any doubt, contact the Safeguarding Coordinator. If appropriate, actions may be taken which may include the police/child protection services or other external organisations.

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B.5 Youth Meetings Online

When using video conferencing for online meetings, there should be at least two responsible adults present at any one time during the meeting.

Parents should be made aware of the purpose of the meetings, and the times and dates freely available to them.

B.6 Mobile Phone Usage

Leaders involved in youth ministry should only have a young person's mobile number if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them. As much as possible, group chats should be set up with a minimum of two leaders involved in the chat. One-on-one texts should be avoided and where possible, parents involved in the communication.

Parental permission should be sought if the leader will be contacting the young person via mobile phone.

If a leader has a young person's mobile phone number, it should only be used for the purposes it has been given. For example, times, dates, details of group meetings, events, and planning.

Texts can be used as a means of encouraging a young person when appropriate for example, "I hope your exams go ok". If it turns into a conversation, it should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next group meeting or session.

Camera Phones

Pictures can be a very effective way of communicating; they can also have a negative effect.

Leaders and young people should not be sending pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing. It is a criminal offence to take, make, permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18.

When posting photographs or videos on social media, settings should be set up so that an individual cannot be tagged, where possible.

Images should be stored safely in an electronic file on devices that have secure passwords.

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When photos are taken for use within a church service or for communicating with youth members, leaders should discard these images as soon as they have been shared appropriately.

If any electronic device/memory that contains video or images is disposed of, the images and video should be wiped from the memory in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

Use of Mobile Phones in Activities

Young people, parents, and guardians should be informed about the safe usage of mobile phones and devices, and the policy for the usage during the event or session.

Confirmation that when on activities, a named leader is the primary point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.

The usage of mobile phones or devices including text messaging, games, or music cannot be allowed to be a distraction from the safe awareness of the environment.

That mobile phones or device usage should not interfere with the full participation in activities.

B.7 Use of Computers/Tablets/Web-Enabled Games Consoles/Smart TVs

If devices are used as part of activities within the group or activity, they should be used within the following guidelines:

All games, videos, and films are age appropriate for the group.

Internet searching should be monitored and age appropriate.

Young people should be supervised during the activity.

Parental settings should be used on all devices.

Permission should be asked before videoing or recording other members of the group.

Nothing should be posted without the leader's knowledge or agreement.

The group should be informed of the parameters and guidelines for this activity.

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B.8 Safeguarding

Always conduct yourself on the internet as you would face to face and be aware of what you say and how you say it. If you would not say or do something in the real world, then don't do it online. In addition, be aware that what you type can be easily misconstrued or misunderstood, because you cannot convey tone and meaning in the same way online as you can face to face.

If you are signed up for social media platforms, always ensure that your privacy settings are up to date. Often, they can change with frequent updates that occur.

Be aware that anything you post on social media or in groups can be passed on and made widely accessible.

It is recommended that online gaming with youth members is avoided.

At all times, leaders should try and avoid being one-to-one with children and young people. Ideally, two leaders will be present. However, should this be impractical, a leader with two or more young people is acceptable. This also applies when travelling in the minibus. Hence, all trips will either start or end at the BEC Centre.

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Part C: Adults at Risk

C.1 Intent

BEC Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all adults at risk and affirms that the needs of vulnerable adults are paramount.

BEC Church recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities, or by a reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

BEC Church encourages members to be in a Life Group, as a place where members can support one another.

This section addresses the safeguarding of adults at risk. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support BEC Church in being a safe, supportive, and caring community for vulnerable adults, survivors of abuse, and for communities.

BEC Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of adults at risk and recognises that this may take the form of physical, sexual, emotional, financial, discriminatory, psychological, domestic, or organisational abuse as well as neglect, self-neglect or modern slavery. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for doing all it can to ensure that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard are maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to, and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities, and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

BEC Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice, and training for Leaders and people associated with BEC that seeks to ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all who may be at risk.

BEC Church affirms and gives thanks for the support of those who are workers with adults at risk and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

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C.2 Categories, Signs and Indicators of Abuse:

- Physical abuse
 - Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing
 - Rough handling
 - Scalding and burning

Possible signs and indicators:

- No explanation for injuries or inconsistencies
- Bruising, cuts welts, burns and/or marks on body
- Frequent injuries

- Sexual abuse
 - Rape or attempted rape
 - Sexual assault and harassment
 - Exposure to pornography or witnessing sexual acts

Possible signs and indicators:

- Bruising or bleeding in the rectal or genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy where the individual cannot consent to sexual acts
- Self-harming

- Psychological or Emotional abuse
 - Enforced social isolation
 - Removing mobility or communication aids
 - Preventing the expression of choice and opinion
 - Threats of harm or abandonment
 - Cyber bullying

Possible signs and indicators:

- Feeling threatened or fearful of someone
- Anxiety and confusion
- Spending long periods alone
- Appearing frightened

- Modern Slavery
 - Human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation such as escort work, prostitution, and pornography.
 - Debt bondage i.e., being forced to pay off debts that will realistically never be paid

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Possible signs and indicators:

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation

- Financial or Material abuse

- Theft of money or possessions
- Fraud, scamming

Possible signs and indicators:

- Missing personal possessions
- Unexpected lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle

- Domestic violence or abuse

- Includes physical, psychological, sexual, and financial
- 'Honour' based violence or forced marriage
- Involves intimate partner or family member
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Possible signs and Indicators:

- Visual injuries or unexplained marks, scars, or injuries
- 'Excuses' for injuries
- Partner appears controlling or manipulative

- Discriminatory abuse

- Including discrimination on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, age, colour, language, culture, religion or belief, and politics.

Possible signs and indicators:

- Harassment/taunting/bullying
- Loss of self-esteem
- Not being able to access services or being excluded

- Organisational abuse

- Neglect or abuse within an institution (e.g., hospital or care home) or care provided in own home
- This may range from one-off incident or ongoing ill-treatment

Possible signs and indicators:

- Poor professional practice, policies, or structure of organisation
- Individual needs are ignored in favour of blanket policies which makes things easier for staff

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- Lack of personal effects, ID documentation
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Fear of law enforcers
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
 - Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care
 - Providing care in a way that the person dislikes

Possible signs and indicators:

- Poor environment – dirty or unhygienic
- Inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care organisations

- Self Neglect
 - Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
 - Inability to avoid self-harm

Possible signs and indicators:

- Poor personal hygiene, unkempt appearance, malnutrition, pressure sores (where the person lives alone)
- Alcohol/drug dependency
- Hoarding
- Lack of basic facilities such as gas, electricity
- Dangerous deterioration of living conditions
- Smoking in bed or dangerous disposal of smoking materials

C.3 Which Groups of Adults might have Additional Care Needs?

We can all need extra care and support at times for any of the following reasons:

- Dementia
- Learning capabilities
- Physical or sensory capabilities
- Bereavement, grief, or loss
- Dependent on others due to age or illness
- Homelessness
- Drug, alcohol, or substance abuse

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- Mental health issues
- Domestic Abuse
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker

C.4 Action to Take if Neglect or Abuse is Suspected

- Don't ask questions, simply reflect back
- Show acceptance and keep calm
- Say that you need to share information with the Safeguarding Coordinator and ask if consent is granted to share the information with external parties who may be able to help.
- Explain that they have a choice to refer themselves directly to the adult protection agencies or to seek advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- Write detailed notes as soon as possible.
- You must report concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Coordinator or one of their deputies (hereafter "the coordinators").
- Get help and support for yourself.
- If suspicions in any way involve one of the Coordinators, then the report should be made to the Lead Pastor. If suspicions in any way involve the Coordinators and/or the Lead Pastor then the report should be made in the first instance to
Thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ. Tel: 0303 003 1111
- **You should not discuss your suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.**
- If a third party makes allegations the church member contacted should take as much information as possible, including the referrer's details unless the person wishes to remain anonymous. The referrer needs to be told that the information given will be passed on to the appropriate person(s).

If it is thought that a Coordinator and/or the Lead Pastor have not responded to concerns appropriately then, if the adult at risk has given consent, it is always open to the reporter to take the matter further with an appropriate organisation.

C.5 Additional Factors

If a person does not give consent for you to share the information, consider:

- Is anyone else at risk?

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- Has a serious crime been/will be committed?
- Does the person appear to understand the implications of not doing anything?
- How likely is it that the person or someone else will come to serious harm?
- Can you provide them with more information to help them understand the risk and are there any other services that could help?

C.6 Good Practice

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for adults at risk in our care and using our premises.

We believe good practice means that:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a adult at risk where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept noting the date, time and place of visit.
- The church premises will be assessed for the safety of adults at risk and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Trustees in written form where necessary. This will include fire safety procedures. The Trustees will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable. Any church-organised transport of adults at risk will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate.

C.7 Pastoral Visitors

In terms of safeguarding, Pastoral Visitors will be appointed/commissioned by the Church Leaders or Ministry (Pastoral Care Coordination Team) Leader on behalf of the church and will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment. All Pastoral Visitors, who may be visiting adults at risk alone in their own homes must have a satisfactory DBS check before carrying out such visits.

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Part D: Keeping our Children and Young People Safe

D.1 Intent

The Leadership recognises that children and young people today can be victims of neglect or physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. The section sets out guidelines for all BEC children and youth-related activities, and the purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that the church is actively working:

- To safeguard, care for, and nurture children and young people in our church and community.
- Raise awareness of the issues involved in protecting children in the church.
- Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including those made against leaders or members of the church
- To ensure as far as possible, that those with responsibilities for children and young people can undertake their tasks confidently and without feeling unduly vulnerable to unfounded allegations.

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- To inform those involved with children and young people in our church of the behaviour expected of them.
- To set out the procedure for background checks of those involved with children and young people in our church.

D.2 Categories of Child Abuse

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.

Physical Abuse is a form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

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

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, of a child, though it may occur alone.

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It is vitally important to recognise that abuse of children is much broader than sexual abuse and that all abuse is a betrayal of trust and a misuse of authority and power. Church communities must be particularly vigilant to identify the inappropriate use of any religious belief or practice, which may harm somebody spiritually, emotionally, or physically.

Any child or young person under the age of 18 can suffer abuse. The abuse may be perpetrated by an adult, male or female or by another child. It is also important to protect those aged 16 to 18 who are legally able to give their consent to sexual activity, but who may nevertheless be harmed by those who are responsible for them and whom they trust.

Child abuse takes place in all areas of society, within all cultures, and within all socio-economic groups.

D.3 Recognising the Possibility of Abuse

The following MAY be indications of child abuse, but they should not be taken in isolation:

Physical Signs

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given to them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games, swimming, etc.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc., which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cutting/slashing/drug abuse

Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play, or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults

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- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

Emotional Signs

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, look for depression/aggression
- Nervousness/frozen watchfulness
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse HAS taken place but should be considered as indicators that abuse is possible.

D.4 Action to Take if Abuse is Suspected

- You must report concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Coordinator or one of their deputies (hereafter “the coordinators”).
- The Church is rolling out the use of *Cause for Concern* forms. These forms are used for logging a concern about a child’s safety and welfare and are helpful for recording certain information. The forms must be handed to one of the Coordinators.
- If suspicions in any way involve one of the Coordinators, then the report should be made to the Lead Pastor. If suspicions in any way involve the Coordinators and/or the Lead Pastor then the report should be made in the first instance to: Thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent BR8 7UQ. Tel: 0303 003 1111.
- **You should not discuss your suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.**
- If a third party makes allegations the church member contacted should take as much information as possible, including the referrer’s details unless the person wishes to remain anonymous. Information such as family members’ names, addresses, name and date of birth of the subject child, ethnic origin, etc., should

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be taken. Finally, the cause for concern/nature of the injuries should be included. The referrer needs to be told that the information given will be passed on to the appropriate person(s).

- Members of the church should follow the procedures specified in this Policy. However, it is always the right of the individuals, as citizens, to make direct referrals to child protection agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight. If it is thought that a Coordinator and/or the Lead Pastor have not responded to concerns appropriately then it is always open to the individuals to take the matter further with an appropriate organisation.