



GATEWAY CHURCH

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**LAST UPDATED:** January 2024

## SECTION 1

### **Our Details**

Name: Gateway Church

Office Address: 133 Alder Road, Poole, BH12 4AA

Tel No: 01202 746938

Email address: info@gatewaychurch.me

Charity Number: 1135330

Company Number: 7189544

Alder Road Site meets: 129 Alder Road, Poole, BH12 4AA

Ashley Road Site meets: 502 Ashley Road, Poole, BH14 0AD

Insurance Company: Public liability with Ansvar Insurance

We are a church working in association with Advance (a Newfrontiers group) and affiliated to the Baptist Union and The Evangelical Alliance. We run a wide range of activities engaging with people of all ages and a variety of backgrounds.

### **Our commitment**

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinators in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

## SECTION 2

### **Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse**

#### Understanding abuse and neglect

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

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Definitions of abuse – Appendix 1 & 2

Signs and symptoms of abuse – Appendix 3

How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse – Appendix 4

#### Safeguarding awareness

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults at risk are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

### **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Make a note of evidence of possible abuse, stating only the facts. Speculations and opinions should not be included. Follow the procedures below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Becky Bertrand (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") tel no: 01202 746938 who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Jon Clark or Julie Barnett (Alder Road Site Deputies) or Sandy Carter (Ashley Road Site Deputy) (hereafter the "Deputies ") tel no: 01202 746938. If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputies, then the report should be made in the first instance to Children's Social Care or if advice is needed from Thirtyone:eight or if regarding adults at risk contact Social Services or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services.
- Thirtyone:eight can be contacted on 0303 0031111 where advice is needed. The local children's social care are also happy to give advice including on an anonymous basis.

- If you have a concern about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, contact the BCP Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Telephone – 01202 123334. (For Bournemouth and Poole Children's Out of Hours Service, telephone 01202 738256)
- If the concern is regarding an adult, call: Borough of Poole Adult Social Care help desk on 01202 123654 or Bournemouth Care Direct on 01202 123654. If it is outside of normal office hours, please call the Adult Social Care Emergency Duty Service on 01202 1239895.
- If you feel that a child or young person is not at risk of harm, but needs support, please contact the BCP Early Help team on 01202 123334 or [childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) / [childrensOOHH@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:childrensOOHH@bcpcouncil.gov.uk) (out of hours)
- Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinators as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a *child*: ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

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

- Contact Children's Social Services (or Thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm. Discuss with Children's Social Care if in doubt about this as they will give advice about responding at the correct level.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.

- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children’s Social Services.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

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

- Contact the Children’s Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Abuse investigation Team on 01202 123334 or 01202 738256 out of hours. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children’s Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

**The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:**

## **SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT, EMOTIONAL ABUSE OR SEXUAL ABUSE**

If an adult at risk has a physical injury or symptom of neglect or abuse the Safeguarding Coordinator/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life unless this discussion will increase the risk to the adult (eg they live with the alleged abuser).
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility to the Care Act 2014 to lead enquiries into allegations of abuse or neglect. Alternatively the Police can be contacted for advice.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN OR ADULTS AT RISK**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Coordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and SAB procedures will need to liaise with Children’s Social Services/ Adult Social Care in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## SECTION 3

### **Prevention**

#### **Safe recruitment**

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have had a face to face discussion where safeguarding has been covered
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate

- A DBS has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided
- The worker has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

## **Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults (See appendix 5). The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust 'guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

### SECTION 4

## **Pastoral Care**

### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the church.

### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

### SECTION 5

## **Practice Guidelines**

As a place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for various activities we are involved in and these continue to be developed.

Ratios:

<i>Age</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
0-2 yrs	1 adult to 3 children
2-3yrs	1 adult to 4 children
3-12yrs	1 adult to 8 children
13-18yrs	1 adult to 12 children

(Note: it is expected that there will be a minimum of two adults with children at any time)

## Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own policy that meets CCPAS' and LSCB and SAB safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults at risk and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding and will be reviewed annually

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Leadership representative)

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

## APPENDIX 1

### Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

#### What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

#### Physical abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued

only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious

bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse:**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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

### **Neglect:**

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

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

## APPENDIX 2

### **Statutory Definitions of Abuse for adults at risk**

Care Act 2014

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met) is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs they are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.



**Physical Abuse:**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Including assault, hitting, slapping. Pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions

**Domestic abuse:**

Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial,, emotional abuse and honour based violence

**Sexual Abuse:**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent. Including rape, indecent exposure, inappropriate touching or looking, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography subjection to pornography, or witnessing sexual acts or sexual acts which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological or Emotional Abuse:**

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. .

**Financial or Material Abuse:**

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Modern slavery:**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Neglect or Act of Omission:**

including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Discriminatory Abuse:**

including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment, because of race, gender, and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Organisational Abuse:**

including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as hospital or care home for example or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies processes and practices within an organisation.

## **Self neglect:**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. This comes under safeguarding in extreme cases but should always be raised with professionals involved with the adult and with Social Care where concerns remain.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

#### **Physical:**

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation\*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse\*

#### **Sexual:**

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia\*

#### **Emotional:**

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

#### **Neglect:**

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses,
- Inadequate care, etc

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

## APPENDIX 4

### **Effective Listening:**

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

### **HELPFUL RESPONSES**

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

### **DON'T SAY**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

## APPENDIX 5

### **Code of conduct for workers**

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the church unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.



# SAFEGUARDING AT GATEWAY

We are committed to creating safer places by following statutory guidelines on good working practice.

If you have any safeguarding concerns contact one of the people below:

## Your Safeguarding team

Contact us on [safeguarding@gatewaychurch.me](mailto:safeguarding@gatewaychurch.me)

**Becky Bertrand**  
Designated Safeguarding Lead



**Sandy Carter**  
Deputy DSL



**Jon Clark**  
Deputy DSL



**Julie Barnett**  
Deputy DSL



A copy of our safeguarding policy is available upon request as well as on our website.