

## Safeguarding Policy – Longmeadow Church (reviewed May 2023)

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## INTRODUCTION

***“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another”.***  
***John 13:34.***

The fellowship at Longmeadow desires for all people to come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour by presenting them with Biblical teaching and showing them the love and reality of Jesus Christ. As part of this, it is important to ensure that the Church environment is happy, healthy and safe for everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This Safeguarding Policy shows the commitment of the Church Leadership to this vision and outlines the practical steps that we all can take to ensure both our own safety, and that of others. The existence of this policy is not an indication of a lack of trust in those who are involved with young people or vulnerable adults. Rather, it is an ongoing reminder of the need for the greatest degree of watchfulness and disciplined conduct on the part of all who lead and help in these areas of Church life.

There is much discussion as to the exact definitions of ‘children’, ‘young people’ and ‘vulnerable adults’ and it is beyond the scope of this policy to enter into this discussion. However, we have adopted the following definitions\*:

- A child or young person is **any** individual aged 17 or under.
- A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over, who:
  - i) is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; or
  - ii) is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Similarly, different definitions can be applied to the terms ‘volunteer’, ‘leader’, ‘helper’, etc, and each group will have its own setup in this respect. For simplicity, this policy document will use the term ‘worker’ to refer to all those who have regular contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, whether in a paid capacity or on a voluntary basis.

All workers must treat every child, young person and vulnerable adult equally, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Inevitably, there may be closer links with the children of other church members, but these must be set aside for the duration of the groups/activities. Every child has a right to our attention, and if we spend most of our time talking to those we know best, we create a barrier between ourselves and the children who don’t fall within this circle.

**It is very important that everyone at Longmeadow aged 18 and over who has regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adult as part of the church’s ministries or has oversight of others who have regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, reads and agrees to this policy in full. It should be signed using the sheet at the end and returned to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators (see page 6). In addition, a Disclosure and Barring Check should be undertaken for all individuals who have contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, in accordance with the procedures outlined in section 4 of this policy.**

*\* These definitions are primarily taken from the NSPCC’s factsheet, ‘Legal definition of a child’ (July 2013), and the guidance published by the Department for Health and the Home Office entitled ‘No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse’ (2000). They are definitions which have also been adopted by other Church denominations (e.g. Church of England and Methodist, as outlined in their combined publication, the ‘Protection of Freedoms Act 2012: Information Sheet’ May 2012).*

## **SECTION 1: PLACE OF WORSHIP / ORGANISATION DETAILS**

<b>Name of Place of Worship / Organisation:</b>	Longmeadow Evangelical Church
<b>Address:</b>	Oaks Cross, Stevenage, SG2 8LT
<b>Telephone number:</b>	01438 369257
<b>Email address:</b>	info@longmeadow-church.org.uk
<b>Membership of Denomination/Organisation:</b>	Affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) and Evangelical Alliance
<b>Charity Number:</b>	1188950
<b>Insurance Company:</b>	Public liability insurance with Ansvar Insurance Co Ltd, 31 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne, BN21 3UR

### **The following is a brief description of the Church and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and vulnerable adults:**

Longmeadow aims to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to its community, to lead men, women and children to faith and repentance in Christ, to their public declaration of faith in baptism, to nurture faith through God's Word, prayer, the Lord's supper and fellowship, and prepare members for Christian service, all in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

The church regularly runs a number of groups for children and young people throughout the week and at weekends. In addition, there are occasional 'one-off' events such as family fun days, Holiday Bible Club and youth services. The regular groups that meet in the Church building are:

- BRAG! for children aged between 5 and 11, every Friday in term time from 6:15pm to 7:30pm.
- Straight Up for young people aged between 11 and 18, every Friday in term time from 8pm to 9:30pm.
- Sunday School groups run for children and young people of various ages (Sunday School for age 3 – school year 9). These groups, as well as a creche facility, will be reviewed regularly dependent on demand and volunteer availability.
- B-Cubed for young people in yr 9 and above on Sunday evenings

Activities which may potentially involve working with vulnerable adults include:

- Visits to individuals who are part of the Church, undertaken by the Pastors, Elders and Pastoral Care Workers, to provide pastoral and practical help (including shopping or cash handling). This may be in their home or other place of residence, at hospitals, the Church building, etc.

Please contact one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators or Elders for further details of any of the above groups/activities. Their contact details can be found on page 6.

## **SECTION 2 – THE LEADERSHIP’S COMMITMENT**

The Leadership of Longmeadow Church, namely Ben Epps, Russell Knell, John Cooper, Wayne Campbell and James Thompson (hereafter referred to as the Leadership) recognises the importance of its ministry / work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The Leadership recognises that appointing Safeguarding Co-ordinators is an effective way to ensure that child protection and vulnerable adult policies are kept up-to-date, fit for purpose, and implemented, and that any allegations or signs of abuse/concern are dealt with in the correct manner. Therefore, the following statement was reviewed and agreed again by both the Leadership and the Safeguarding Coordinators on: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023. All people within the Church who have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults must also make a commitment by signing the appropriate form in Appendix 1, which summarises the points below.

This Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being. Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a moral and legal responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people 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, discriminatory, spiritual 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 and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of public life within the Church, unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

### **We are committed to:**

- Supporting parents and families.
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people.
- Respecting the rights of children, as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Following the requirements of UK legislation and good practice recommendations in relation to safeguarding children, people with disabilities and vulnerable adults.
- Adopting and following the ‘Safe and Secure’ safeguarding standards developed by the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (Thirtyone:eight).
- Ensuring that Workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our Safeguarding Policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Co-ordinators in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this Church.
- Taking any allegations or disclosures of abuse seriously

- Ensuring that children and vulnerable adults 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.
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Supporting everybody in the Church who is affected by abuse.
- Referring any significant concerns about a child's, young person's or vulnerable adult's safety to Children's Services or Adult Social Care.

**We recognise:**

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually. Date of next review: May 2024**

- Ben Epps, Pastor/Elder (07504 437534) \_\_\_\_\_
- Russell Knell, Pastor/Elder (07711 664673) \_\_\_\_\_
- John Cooper, Elder (01438 355178) \_\_\_\_\_
- Wayne Campbell, Elder (07928 006294) \_\_\_\_\_
- James Thompson (07884 135908) \_\_\_\_\_
- Gemma Campbell, Safeguarding Coordinator (07928 083724) \_\_\_\_\_
- Miriam Ansell, Safeguarding Coordinator (07585 121338) \_\_\_\_\_
- Andrew Brown, Safeguarding Coordinator (07531 693521) \_\_\_\_\_

If anyone has any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, or any general questions relating to this policy, then speak to one of the above Safeguarding Coordinators in the first instance.

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Safeguarding Coordinators, and a summary on the Safeguarding noticeboard in the Old Hall of Longmeadow Church.

### **SECTION 3: RECOGNISING ABUSE**

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult 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. Often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

The definitions below build on Article 19 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, and Article 5 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These state that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, and that all appropriate measures shall be taken to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from such mistreatment.

#### **Definitions and signs of Abuse (children and young people):**

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

**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. Signs to be aware of include:

- 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\*

**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. Signs to be aware of include:

- 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

**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. Signs to be aware of include:

- 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\*

**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. Particular signs to be aware of include:

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

**Child on child abuse:** Child on child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children’s relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. Child on child abuse can take various forms, including (but not limited to): serious bullying (including cyberbullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence and abuse, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and/or prejudice-based violence including, but not limited to, gender-based violence.

Workers must understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are actually abusive in nature. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as “just banter”, “just having a laugh”, “part of growing up” or “boys being boys” can normalise abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Signs could include:

- absence from school or disengagement from school activities
- physical injuries
- mental or emotional health issues
- becoming withdrawn – lack of self esteem
- lack of sleep
- alcohol or substance misuse
- changes in behaviour
- inappropriate behaviour for age
- harmful towards others

*\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming.*

### **Definitions and signs of abuse (vulnerable adults):**

**Physical Abuse:** This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Signs to be aware of include:

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

**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. Signs to be aware of include:

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

**Psychological or Emotional Abuse:** These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or negate the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty. Signs to be aware of include:

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

**Spiritual Abuse:** Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, rather than God's, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say



that God has revealed certain things outside the Bible to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

**Financial or Material Abuse:** This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

**Neglect or Act of Omission:** This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired. Signs to be aware of include:

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

**Discriminatory Abuse:** This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse. Signs to be aware of include:

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

## **SECTION 4: PREVENTION**

Workers have an obligation to ensure the safety and welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom they have contact. The Leadership recognises that there are a number of practical measures which are effective in preventing incidents occurring of a potentially concerning nature. A number of these are outlined in detail below, although this is by no means an exhaustive list.

### **Recruitment and the Disclosure & Barring check process**

The Leadership is thankful for those who spend time working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. They are a wonderful provision from the Lord and their contributions are invaluable. The Leadership hopes that all Workers recognise that the measures put in place are as much for their benefit and safety, as well as the benefit and safety of the people they work with.

As a general rule, a Worker should be a formal Member of the Church, aged 18 or above. At the discretion of the Leadership, and with a solid justification, it is possible for a non-member to become a Worker. Any person wishing to become a Worker should approach one of the Elders, Safeguarding Co-ordinators, or a leader of the group/activity that the person wishes to be a part of.

There are 3 key stages in Worker recruitment:

1. A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
  - Every volunteer and paid worker who has regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults must be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. A 'standard' check will disclose spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings. An 'enhanced' check includes the same information as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that is reasonably considered relevant to the position being applied for.
  - It should be noted that a criminal conviction does not automatically rule out a person's suitability for working with children or vulnerable adults. Under such circumstances, the Leadership will assess the nature of the conviction in relation to the role(s) being applied for, with due consideration to the responsibilities that both the individual and the Church has towards its young people and vulnerable adults. Similarly, a 'clean' DBS check does not automatically mean the person is suitable as a Worker. Step 2 below considers this further.
  - A DBS check has no official expiry date, and any information included will only be accurate at the time the check was carried out. The government has left it to organisations to decide if and when a new check is needed. The Leadership has taken the decision that it is good practice to carry out checks on each individual every 3 years if possible.
2. Consideration by the Leadership and References
  - The Leadership will consider the suitability of any person wishing to become a Worker. In some cases, the Leadership may identify potentially suitable people and approach them to ask if they would consider becoming a Worker for a particular group or activity.
  - Those wishing to become a Worker but who have been a Member of the Church for less than 3 years (or known to the Church Leadership for less than 3 years) will need references. This means prospective Workers will need to provide the contact details of two people who know them well, and can answer some simple questions as to the suitability of the person to work with

vulnerable groups. The Referees should not be family members, and ideally should be people who know the person in a professional capacity, such as a current/previous employer, or a previous Church Minister. Appendix 2 provides suggested questions and a reference template.

- If the person has been a Member of the Church (or known to the Leadership) for more than 3 years, then it may not be necessary to complete a Reference Form. Under this circumstance, the Leadership will look at each case on its own merits.
- If a paid position is being applied for, then a Reference Form must be completed regardless of the length of time an individual has been a Church Member or known to the Leadership.
- References may be followed up if clarification or further information is considered necessary.

### 3. Worker's Declaration Form

- All Workers will be given a copy of the full policy and will need to read through it in full. The relevant form in Appendix 1 must be signed to show their commitment to the principles and measures outlined in the policy, and the form returned to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators. This declaration also demonstrates that the Worker understands that they have a serious commitment to the Lord and to the work among children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Paid Workers will also usually be subject to an interview to determine their suitability for the post, and Safeguarding issues should be discussed as part of this process.
- The Leadership recognise that some people under the age of 18 also have much to offer in the running of certain groups/events, and that being a part of this work can help to develop their own skills and abilities for the future. Generally, these individuals will be aged 16 or 17 and a Church Member, however, others may be considered suitable at the discretion of the Leadership. A DBS check is not required for these individuals, however, they should always be accompanied by an adult Worker who is DBS checked, and will still need to complete the relevant form in step 3 above.
- Martin Hodder (07818 452337) is the DBS Administrator for Longmeadow and will help guide everyone through the DBS process, as well as provide copies of this Safeguarding Policy to them. When the need for references has been identified, this will be administered by one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

### **Safeguarding Training**

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. The Church will hold regular safeguarding training and ensure workers receive the updated policy annually. Safeguarding Co-ordinators will keep up to date with current legislation.

### **Physical Contact**

In the current social climate, we can expect that a number of children will come from unenviable and difficult home backgrounds. These children may have suffered some sort of emotional upset as a result of their home circumstance (e.g. separated parents), and may seek affection from those in leadership to make up for a lack of affection at home. As leaders and helpers, no matter how well intentioned our actions may

be, it is not appropriate to make up this affection to them. Workers may also have to deal with bad behaviour of all kinds. Again, our response to such behaviour must be appropriate and proportionate to the situation at the time.

Physical contact should:

- not be behind closed doors:
  - Make sure that any physical contact is in front of other children and/or Workers.
  - If you do need to speak to a child away from others choose somewhere close by, leave doors open and tell other Workers where you are going.
- be age appropriate.
  - Babies (<1 year)- Appropriate to pick up, cuddle, sit on lap.
  - Toddlers (1-3 years) - They might still need hugs when hurt or upset.
  - Infants/Juniors (4-9 years)- May still need hugs when upset but try to hug from the side and encourage them to sit next to you rather than on your lap.
  - Seniors (>10 years) – Hugs should be avoided. Kissing and sitting on laps are inappropriate.
  - Special Needs – They may need more physical contact than other children of the same age, but this should purely be to assist with activities which they may find more difficult than others of their age, and ideally a care plan should be arranged with parents/guardians beforehand. Also, this must:
    - be initiated by the child to meet their needs, not yours.
    - not be regularly ongoing with the same child.
    - be appropriate to the person's past experiences - extra care should be taken with those who have experienced abuse before, as they may read physical contact differently. They may alternatively seek out adult contact and attention which needs to be dealt with sensitively, and personal boundaries set.

## **Discipline**

Under no circumstances should any form of corporal punishment be administered to any child, young person or vulnerable adult. This extends to physical restraint. We do have a right to defend ourselves and/or other people using minimal force, but a written record should always be kept of any such incident (see Appendix 6). Groups may find it helpful to establish rules for expected behaviour, and appropriate penalties if these are broken (e.g. not able to attend the group the following week).

## **Online Meetings**

This guidance set out in this policy also applies to online meetings. Workers should not be alone in a gathering with only one or two children and parental consent needs to be gained for the activity. Workers still require DBS / references checks to be completed. Specific guidance and best practice for online meetings include:

- Meeting links should not be publicly advertised on the website or social media
- Enable the use of a waiting room feature
- Screen sharing can be disabled for guests
- There are options for 'expelling' a participant and putting people on hold

## **Social media and e-mail**

As part of our outreach activities, we try to form relationships with children and young people to help share the gospel with them. In the current age it may be unrealistic to abstain from forms of social media and e-mail, but we must be as open as possible. The following tips may help in this respect:

- Only contact young people in 'groups' (e.g. on Facebook, Facebook Messenger, email) rather than on an individual basis, so everyone can see what is written. All Workers of that group need to be responsible for checking this.
- Many social networking sites have age restrictions and you should not communicate with young people through those channels if they are below that age (Facebook- 13yrs, WhatsApp – 16 years)
- Platforms such as Snapchat should not be used as these do not keep a record of the conversation
- Workers or the Leadership Team should not accept 'friend requests,' or requests to 'follow' on their personal accounts from children or young people under the age of 18 that they have regular contact with through church groups or activities (a conversation with the young person to explain your reasons for not accepting their request is encouraged).
- Do not send information to children/young people at unsociable hours (e.g. after 9pm or before 8am) unless absolutely necessary.
- If something requires a private conversation on social media, messenger services, or by e-mail check with parents/guardians first and give them a general description of what the conversation is about and why it is being undertaken privately (e.g. "Johnny asked me some questions about the talk we gave at youth group last week. Can I respond via e-mail?"). A record of these conversations should be kept.
- Remember that you are an 'Ambassador of Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:20) and have a responsibility to positively lead the people you are working with into a relationship with Him. Whilst we must not put on a false persona to suggest that we are perfect, it is imperative that we think carefully before posting anything on social media which could have a negative influence on those with whom we have contact. Even if you are not friends with people on social media, they may still be able to see content you post if it is shared publicly.

## **Photographs, videos, and use of mobile phones**

As a general rule, taking photographs and videos of children, young people and vulnerable adults at groups, activities, events should be avoided. It is acknowledged however that photographs and videos can provide a nice reminder and record of past events, especially 'one-off' activities.

Workers should ask themselves why photos and videos need to be taken, and how they might they be used by others who later have access to them. For example, giving young people a CD containing photos of a weekend away is a nice memento, but it is possible that they could end up being publicly viewable on social media sites.

For this reason, consent needs to be sought from parents/guardians before photos are taken (see Appendix 4b). It is also good practice for the person taking photos/videos to inform the rest of the Workers in the group, and gain everyone's agreement.

Many mobile phones now have camera and video facilities and ideally Workers should turn off mobile phones and only use them in an emergency. Children and young people attending the groups should also be encouraged to switch off their mobile phones if they have brought them along. It is, however, good practice for one designated mobile phone to remain switched on in case a parent/guardian needs to contact the group urgently.

## **Registration details**

It is imperative that we have a registration form for all attendees of children/young people groups, which could be gathered online or in paper form. It should contain the following:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Address
- Telephone number
- Alternative contact
- Relevant medical conditions, including allergies

This information could change, and parents should be informed when completing the registration that it is their responsibility to keep us up to date with changes. Information on all registration forms should be rechecked at least once a year. All the information must be strictly confidential, stored securely in line with our privacy policy and be readily available when the group meets so that details can be found immediately.

It may not be as practical to collect such details in groups which cater for vulnerable adults, and the need for a registration form in this case should be decided on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

A suggested form is included in Appendix 3.

## **Building Security**

It is important to ensure that all points of entry into the building are either locked or supervised at all times when groups/activities are in progress. This includes the times before and after the groups when Workers will be setting up or tidying up. An unattended open door means that strangers may be able to enter the building.

All groups are advised to allocate a time at the start of their meeting (for example the first 15 minutes) where at least one Worker is present at the door to welcome and register those who arrive. After this time, that Worker should lock the doors. Likewise, at the end of meetings, it is good practice for Workers to ensure that doors are not left unattended.

As a general rule, anyone who has not been DBS checked should not be present within the building during groups/activities, unless they are events which are specifically open to the wider congregation or public. It is recognised that cleaning, administrative tasks, building repairs, etc, are essential for the smooth running of the Church, however, individuals involved in these should try to avoid undertaking their duties at the same time as groups/activities. If this is unavoidable, the individual should contact one of the group/activity Workers in advance and work out suitable measures to ensure that their safety, and others within the building, is not compromised. This includes other organisations who may have permission to use the Church building.

## **Parental relationships**

It is important to build up good relationships with the parents/guardians of the children and young people in the groups. As mentioned above it is good practice to have Workers on the door to meet parents/guardians at the beginning and the end of the session, and this provides a good opportunity to speak with, and get to know the wider family of the children / young people. It is also important to know exactly who the parents/guardians are, and to be aware if one parent doesn't have a right of access. Always

ensure you know who will be collecting the child/young person at the end of the meeting, and that this is agreed with the person who brings them. If the child is to make their own way home, we should be confident that the parent/guardian knows about this beforehand.

### **Parental permission and risk assessments**

It is important to have full parental permission for every occasion that the children are taken off the Church premises (e.g. to Shephalbury Park), or if an event is outside of regular group hours, e.g. Saturday outings. A risk assessment form is provided in Appendix 4 and this should be completed in full and added to the groups' administration documents.

### **Supervision**

NSPCC states that there is no specific guidance around supervision ratios for organisation that are not in the education or early years sectors. They *recommend* the following adult to child ratios:

- 0–2 years, 1 adult for every 3 children
- 2–3 years, 1 adult for every 4 children
- 4–8 years, 1 adult for every 6 children
- over 9 years, 1 adult for every 8 children
- over 13 years, 1 adult for every 10 children

During meetings where parents are present in the building, such as Sunday School, there may be times where there are no concerns around these ratios being exceeded. Where this is the case, the safeguarding coordinators should be consulted first. During meetings where parents are **not** present within the building, these ratios should be adhered to as a minimum.

If it is necessary for a worker to be alone with one or two children, they should make sure that another worker / safeguarding coordinator is aware and ideally visible. Never invite individual children to your house. Invite a group, and make sure that there is another DBS checked adult in the house.

It is inadvisable to offer a child a lift in your car without parental permission. If this is necessary (e.g. a child is unwell and the parent is uncontactable) try taking other people in the car also. If the child is alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car.

Other than in the event of illness, the role of accompanying children to the toilet should be purely supervisory. If a child needs a nappy change whilst in the care of a Worker the parents should be asked to do this.

### **Accident procedures**

There should always be a complete first-aid box immediately available, even on outings, and any use carefully recorded. Appendix 6 includes a template form to record accidents/injuries.

Arrangements should be in place so that everyone knows what their role is should a more serious accident occur. Someone should be appointed to contact the parents. Someone should be appointed to drive to the

hospital, if necessary. Someone should be appointed to comfort siblings and friends in the club, if necessary. There should also be a plan of action to deal with the rest of the group in whatever way is appropriate.

The Leadership recognise the importance of ensuring that each group has at least one person who is trained in first aid, and therefore offer such training from time to time, with a recognised organisation.

In the case of a fire, make the other adults aware promptly, but calmly. The children should be led out by the nearest exit and round to the front of the building, meeting at an agreed point. It is important that you check all the children are out using the register. Inform the fire brigade as soon as they arrive if any children are missing.

Reference should be made to the Church's Health and Safety policy, available from the Safeguarding Co-ordinators

### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the Church is known to have abused children, is being investigated for an offence against 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 or vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

### **Personal Finances and Financial Integrity**

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 or other evidence of what has been done.
- Workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- Workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Gifts received (with a value of more than £10) should be reported to the Leadership, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the Leadership Team.
- Workers should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.
- Expert legal advice should be sought on matters such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.



## **SECTION 5: RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

### **How to deal with a child or vulnerable adult wishing to disclose abuse**

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable 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 include: i) You have done the right thing in telling me; ii) I am glad you have told me; iii) I will try to help you
- Don't say: i) Why didn't you tell anyone before? ii) I can't believe it!; iii) Are you sure this is true?; iv) Why? How? When? Who? Where?; v) I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

### **Responding to allegations of abuse**

Under no circumstances should a Worker carry out their own investigation beyond that outlined above, into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. One of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and the nature of the allegation or suspicion reported in accordance with the procedures below. It is the job of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator 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. Follow the procedures below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to one of the Safeguarding Coordinators, named on page 6. These Safeguarding Coordinators are 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.
- If the suspicions in any way involve one or more of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, then the report should be made to another Safeguarding Co-ordinator who is not linked to the suspicions, or to one of the Pastors – Ben Epps (07504 437534) or Russell Knell (07711 664673). If none of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators are available, then one of the Pastors should be informed. If the suspicions implicate in any way all the Safeguarding Co-ordinators and both Pastors, then the report should be made in the first instance to Thirtyone:eight, Greenbox Storage, College Rd, Swanley BR8 7LT Telephone 0303 003 11 11. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- If an accusation is made against a Worker, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the Worker.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

- 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. A 'record of disclosure / concern' form is included in Appendix 5 of this document and some blank forms are available on the safeguarding board in the Old Hall.
- Where the concern is about a child, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should:
  - Make an assessment as to the severity of the allegations or suspicions, and proceed with the most relevant course of action below. However, it is good practice to seek and follow advice from Thirtyone:eight at the earliest opportunity (telephone 0303 0031111). Indeed, if there is any uncertainty as to whether Social Services or the Police need to know about allegations or suspicions, thirtyone:eight must be contacted for advice.
  - Refer the matter at the earliest opportunity to the relevant authority if thirtyone:eight advise that this is the best course of action, or if it is clear that the allegation/suspicion is of a sufficiently severe nature that the relevant authority needs to know immediately. Children's Social Services can be contacted 24 hours on 0300 1234043. Alternatively, the Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit can be notified by calling the non-emergency number 101 (24 hours). If it is clear that there is a situation of immediate danger to a child or any other individual linked to the suspicions (i.e. a seriously illness or injury, or life is at risk) then call 999.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- Where the concern is regarding a vulnerable adult, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should:
  - Make an assessment as to the severity of the allegations or suspicions, and proceed with the most relevant course of action below. However, it is good practice to seek and follow advice from thirtyone:eight at the earliest opportunity (telephone 0303 003 11 11). Indeed, if there is any uncertainty as to whether Social Services or the Police need to know about allegations or suspicions, thirtyone:eight must be contacted for advice.
  - Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
  - Refer the matter at the earliest opportunity to the relevant authority if the thirtyone:eight advise that this is the best course of action, or if it is clear that the allegation/suspicion is of a sufficiently severe nature that the relevant authority needs to know immediately. Adult Social Services can be contacted 24 hours using the telephone number (24 hours) 03000 616161. If it is clear that there is a situation of immediate danger to a vulnerable adult or any other individual linked to the suspicions (i.e. a seriously illness or injury, or life is at risk) then call 999.
- Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company and other strategic personnel within the denomination.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinators 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 hopes that members of the Church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinators have 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.

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

The Leadership and Pastoral Care Workers are committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those within, or in contact with, the Church who have been affected by abuse This support will be in partnership with statutory agencies if appropriate.

**APPENDIX 1a: Declaration form for Workers aged 18 and over who have regular contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults**

I confess that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Saviour and it is my intention to obey His Word in all things and to put Him first in my life.

I acknowledge my fellowship with the elders and members at Longmeadow Evangelical Church, and am determined to express this by making a high priority of my commitment to the church's teaching, prayer, sharing of bread and wine, and fellowship.

I commit myself to the work of teaching and leading children and young people, and vulnerable adults, with the ultimate aim of introducing them to Christ and then nurturing them in Him. To this end and with God's help, I:

- Will live and talk in a way that will attract children, young people and vulnerable adults to Christ.
- Will treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally and with respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status
- Recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults.
- Recognise that I have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people, and to report any such abuse that I discover or suspect.
- Recognise that I 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 I discover or suspect.

I have read in full, and understood the terms of the Safeguarding Policy, and the principles that apply to my group/club/activity. I will strive to see them upheld in every way for the protection of children and young people, and vulnerable adults, and also for the protection of the Leaders and the Church.

Signed:

Name (capital letters):

Date:

**APPENDIX 1b: Declaration form for Workers aged 17 and under, who have regular contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults**

I will treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally and with respect, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status

I have read in full, and understood the terms of the Safeguarding Policy, and the principles that apply to my group/club/activity. I will strive to see them upheld in every way for the protection of children and young people, and vulnerable adults, and also for the protection of the Leaders and the Church here at Longmeadow.

Signed:

Name (capital letters):

Date:

**APPENDIX 2 – SUGGESTED REFERENCE QUESTIONS / REFEREE CONTACT INFORMATION (for one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators or Church Leaders to administer)**

Dear Referee / [Name]

[Name of prospective Worker] has recently joined Longmeadow Church, Stevenage, and wishes to become involved with some of our youth work activities / work with vulnerable adults [delete as appropriate, and provide very brief details as to what group/activity the Worker will primarily be involved with, and what role they might have within this. Pages 3 and 4 of the Safeguarding policy provide an overview of the main groups, and further details can be obtained from the group leaders or Safeguarding Co-ordinators].

They have given your name as a referee and we would be very grateful if you could spend a few minutes answering the questions below as fully and honestly as possible to indicate whether you think [Name of prospective Worker] is suited to this work. Thank you for your willingness to help us in this way.

1. How long have you known [Name of prospective Worker] and in what context?
  
2. Do you consider [Name of prospective Worker] to be suitable to work with children and young people / vulnerable adults in this context outlined above? If no, please state reasons.
  
3. Please give brief details of any similar work in which [Name of prospective Worker] has been engaged in recent years, and your impressions.
  
4. In your view what are [Name of prospective Worker]'s main strengths (e.g. temperament, reliability, response to pressure), and why do you consider this to be the case?
  
5. Are there any weaknesses / issues / concerns that you think we ought to be aware of?

[If referee is a Christian related contact then the following questions could be included:

6. Please comment on the applicant's spiritual life (e.g. Christian commitment, church attendance etc.)
  
7. Do you have any other comments to make, or is there anything else about [Name of prospective Worker] which you feel we should be aware of?

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For paid positions, a different approach to seeking references may be adopted, and this will be decided at the time of appointment.

**Example of registration form (this could also be an online form)**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

**Re: Registration at *[name of group]***

We are glad that your child wishes to attend *[name of group]* Please complete the form on arrival below and hand it to a leader the first week your child attends. If you have any further questions, please ask!

Regards,

*[name of group]* Leaders

<b>Name of Child</b>			
<b>Date of Birth</b>		<b>Current School Year</b>	
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Parent or Guardian primary contact</b>		<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<b>Alternative contact</b>		<b>Telephone Number</b>	
<p><b>Does your child have any allergies, food allergies or medical conditions we should be aware of?</b>  <b>YES / NO.</b> <i>If YES please include details below:</i></p>			
<p><b>We organise occasional trips off site. Please can you confirm your permission for your child to attend and be given a lift in a leader's car if necessary?</b>  <b>YES / NO</b></p>			
<p><b>Can we contact you occasionally by email about events happening at the church?</b>  <i>(We don't share your email address with anyone else. You can also choose to 'unsubscribe' at any time in the future)</i>  <b>YES / NO.</b> <i>If YES please include your email address below:</i></p>			
<p>The section below must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I hereby give permission for the above named child to take part in activities at Straight Up</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I give my consent for medical treatment or first aid arising out of illness or accident.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> I am happy for Longmeadow Evangelical Church to securely hold this information</li> </ul>			
<b>Signed</b>	<b>Date</b>		

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT **[NAME OF GROUP]**

### **The Basics**

*[Name of group]* runs during term time on Friday evenings between 8 and 9.30pm. The club is for boys and girls between school years 7 to 13, although those in the final half term of year 6 are also invited to try it out.

### **What do we get up to at *[name of group]*?**

On a standard night we will start with some warm up games as young people arrive for the first 15 minutes, followed by soft drinks and crisps / sweets. One of the leaders will then lead a 30 minute discussion based on a passage or story from the Bible. We will then usually have a team activity for around 35 minutes.

### **Why do we run *[name of group]*?**

Our main purpose for running the club is for young people to hear the good news about the Lord Jesus Christ from the Bible and how it can impact on our lives today. We also want to ensure that everyone has a safe, fun and enjoyable time whilst they are with us. You are most welcome to come along on any evening to observe.

### **Leaders at *[name of group]***

All leaders over the age of 18 years old have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check carried out before they start helping out as leaders. All leaders are members of the Church at Longmeadow. We will never take photographs of your child, unless we have sought your permission first.

### **Data Protection Information**

- The information you provide us is only used by Longmeadow Evangelical Church for the purposes of running the club and safeguarding your child. (With the exception of asking for your permission to keep in touch via email about other church events and services on occasion.)
- We do not pass any of the information provided to third parties.
- You have a right to know what data we hold about your child. In summary this is the information you give us on the registration form, an attendance register, and an accident record if any treatment (even just a plaster!) is required. If at any time you want this information please ask a leader.
- We will ask you on an annual basis in September if you are content for us to continue to hold your data for a further year and ask that you review the information we have to ensure it is still correct.
- All old information that we hold will be disposed of using cross cut shredder. This will usually be when a child no longer attends a club or out of date information.
- The Church has a **Data Protection Policy** and a **Privacy Notice**\*\*. These can be viewed on the Safeguarding Noticeboard in the Church Hall or on our website at [www.longmeadow-church.org.uk](http://www.longmeadow-church.org.uk).
- If you have any concerns about how your data and information is being processed, stored or managed please speak to a leader who will put you in contact with the Data Protection Compliance Manager.

\*\* The privacy notice is a more detailed version of this section – it tells you what to expect us to do with your personal information when you provide it to us.



**APPENDIX 3: REGISTRATION FORM TEMPLATE (to be tailored to suit need of group/activity)**

[NAME OF GROUP]

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Current address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> Contact telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Contact telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any medical condition(s) we need to be aware of?:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any allergies?: \_\_\_\_\_

Any other information we need to know that may be relevant?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent / Guardian (BLOCK LETTERS): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**APPENDIX 4a: RISK ASSESSMENT FORM TEMPLATE (to be completed for activities off-site before leaving)**

Group Name (if relevant):	
Activity/Event:	
Description of activity/event:	
Date of activity/event:	
Start & finish times (including travel)	
Where will the activity/event take place?	
Name of group organiser:	
Contact details for organiser:	Tel: Mobile: Email:
Emergency telephone contact No for group:	
Names of all leaders:	
Health & Safety responsibilities:	Include transport, premises, equipment, activities and catering
Have all Workers got current DBS checks?	

ACTIVITY	Who might be harmed?	Identify the potential risks and provide a score (e.g. 1 = low risk, 2 = moderate risk, 3 = high risk)	How will the risk(s) be managed? Will these measures make the risk acceptable?	Action by whom?	Check when done & signature of who did the check

Risk assessment form completed by:	
Risk assessment form check by:	
Signatures:	
Date completed and signed:	

**\*Please ensure your church's child protection policy & guidelines have been followed.**

**APPENDIX 4b: PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION SLIP TEMPLATE FOR OFF-SITE TRIPS/EVENTS**

**EVENT TITLE & DATE**

On the **DATE** we will be running a trip to **TRIP VENUE/TITLE** which will start from **TIME** at **VENUE** and finish at **TIME** at **VENUE**.

To attend this event please fill in the form below and hand it to a leader before the event. Without a permission slip you will be unable to attend.

Contact name and telephone number for further details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Permission Slip – To return to a leader**

Name of child / young person: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian contact telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Any Allergies / Disabilities? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***I give permission for my child to attend this event: YES / NO***

***I give permission for photographs and videos of my child to be taken as part of this event\*: YES / NO***

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

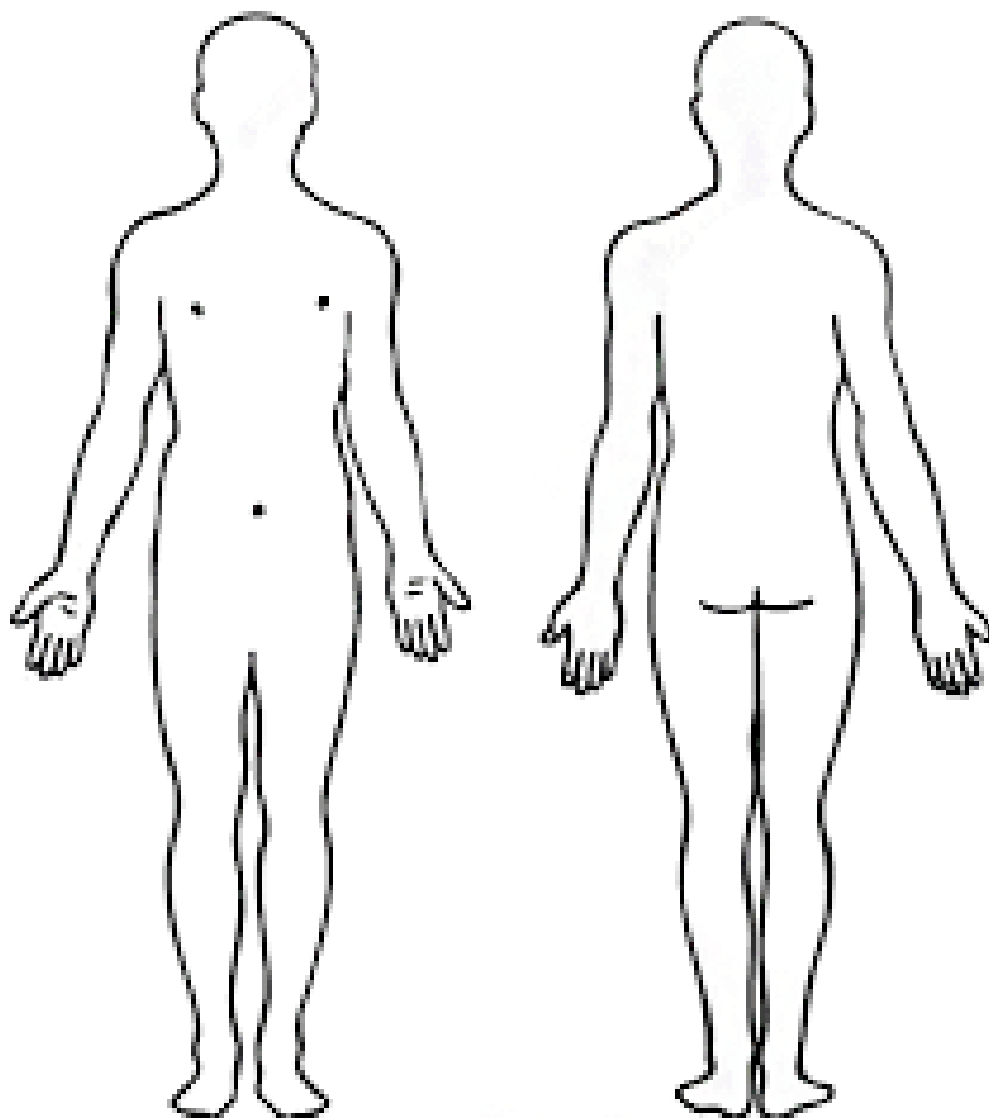
*\*Photos and videos will not be placed on any social media networks by the leaders of the group, although it cannot be guaranteed that other children attending this event will not upload media to the internet. The purpose for taking photos and videos is [provide reason, e.g. for each child to keep a CD / DVD of the event as a memento).*

## APPENDIX 5: RECORD OF DISCLOSURE / CONCERN FORM

To be completed by the person to whom the disclosure was made, or the person who initially raised the concern, **at the earliest opportunity**. If other people need to also provide information, then they should fill out a separate form and explain their involvement in the disclosure or concern.

Your name	
The group/activity/event where the disclosure or concern was raised	
Your role at this group/activity/event	
Date of disclosure/concern	
Time	
Location	
Person(s) involved	
Record as many details of the disclosure or concern here.	

Please mark any injuries sustained on the following body maps, indicating location of injury and type of injury e.g. graze, cut, bruise.



Details of Safeguarding Lead follow-up

**APPENDIX 6: RECORD OF ACCIDENT/INJURY OR AN INCIDENT REGARDING DISCIPLINE**

To be completed by any persons who were involved with the accident/injury or incident, or person who witnessed the accident/injury or incident, **at the earliest opportunity.**

Your name	
The group/activity/event where the accident or incident happened	
Your role at this group/activity/event	
Date of accident / incident	
Time	
Location	
Persons involved	
Record as many details of the accident/injury or incident here, the action taken (including any medication given), and the reason for this action. Was professional medical advice sought?	

## APPENDIX 7: SHORT SUMMARY OF LONGMEADOW SAFEGUARDING POLICY, (Reviewed April 2022)

Please note, this summary is intended to provide a convenient reminder of the key points from the main policy. It is not intended to replace it, and all Workers should ensure they have read through the full policy and signed the Declaration Form.

### Some Definitions:

- A **child or young person** is any individual aged 17 or under.
- A **vulnerable adult** is a person aged 18 or over, who:
  - i. is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; or
  - ii. is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- A **Worker** is anyone who has regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- The **Leaders** of the Church are the elders:

Ben Epps (07504 437534)

Russell Knell (07711 664673)

John Cooper (01438 355178)

Wayne Campbell (07928 006294)

James Thompson (07884 135908)

They are committed to this Safeguarding Policy and ensuring all Workers are fully signed up to it.

- **Safeguarding Co-ordinators** have been appointed by the Leaders and are responsible for dealing with any suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing general advice on Safeguarding matters. They are:

Gemma Campbell (07928 083724)  
Miriam Ansell (07585 121338)  
Andrew Brown (07531 693521)

### Key Principles:

- All Workers must treat every child, young person and vulnerable adult equally, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment, and all appropriate measures shall be taken to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from such mistreatment.



## Possible Signs of Abuse to be aware of:

- Physical abuse - e.g. bruises, cuts, burns, and any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Emotional abuse - e.g. bullying, conveying sense of worthlessness / unloved which may result in changes in mood or behaviour or nervousness, depression, anxiety.
- Sexual abuse - can be physical or non-contact activities and may result in age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing, or excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Neglect - failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, with possible signs including under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, and untreated illnesses.
- Child on child abuse – Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships
- Financial or Material Abuse - Inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.

*Please note, the above are indicators only and section 3 of the full policy document provides further information which must be taken into account.*

## Preventing Abuse

- With the help of one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, all Workers will need to:
  - ✓ Have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Martin Hodder is the DBS Administrator for this and will guide you through the process.
  - ✓ Have references from two contacts who know you well, if you have been at the Church for less than 3 years.
  - ✓ Read through the policy in full and sign a Worker's Declaration Form.
- All Workers should be aware of the following practical tips
  - Ensure **physical contact** is not behind closed doors, is age appropriate, and is initiated by the child to meet their needs, not yours.
  - **Discipline:** Under no circumstances should any form of corporal punishment be administered to any child, young person or vulnerable adult. This extends to physical restraint. We do have a right to defend ourselves and/or other people using minimal force, but a written record should always be kept of any such incident (see appendix 6 of the full policy)
  - **Social media and e-mail:**
    - Use groups on social media rather than contacting individuals
    - Do not accept friend requests from those under the age of 18
    - Send messages at reasonable times of the day
    - Do not communicate with someone you know is too young to use social media

- **Photographs, videos, and use of mobile phones:** It is generally a good idea to turn off all mobile phones except for one in case parents/guardians need to contact the group/activity in an emergency. Photos and videos of groups/events need parental permission and a clear reason explained to them. They should have the option of ensuring their child can opt out of being in photos and videos. Appendix 4b of the policy includes a permission slip to this effect.
- **Registration details:** Make sure you have the contact details of children's parents/guardians in case of emergencies. Relevant medical conditions, including allergies, should also be disclosed. Keep this information up to date! Appendix 3 in the policy provides a registration template.
- **Building Security:** Keep unattended doors locked at all times. As a general rule, when a group/activity is running, every adult in the building should be DBS checked.
- **Parental relationships:** Get to know the parents/guardians of the children. Be aware if one parent doesn't have a right of access. Know who will pick each child up at the end of the session, or if they make their own way home, ensure their parent/guardian knows this.
- **Parental permission and risk assessments:** Permission should be sought in writing from parents/guardians before any off-site trips take place. A risk assessment should be carried out long before the trip takes place. See Appendix 4b of the full policy.
- **Supervision/ratios:** NSPCC recommends the following ratios:
  - 0–2 years, 1 adult for every 3 children
  - 2–3 years, 1 adult for every 4 children
  - 4–8 years, 1 adult for every 6 children
  - over 9 years, 1 adult for every 8 children
  - over 13 years, 1 adult for every 10 children
- If it is necessary for a worker to be alone with one or two children, they should make sure that another worker / safeguarding coordinator is aware and ideally visible. Never invite individual children to your house. Invite a group, and make sure that there is another DBS checked adult in the house.
  - It is inadvisable to offer a child a lift in your car without parental permission. If this is necessary (e.g. illness and the parent is uncontactable), try taking other people in the car also. If the child is alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car.
  - Other than in the event of illness, the role of accompanying children to the toilet should be purely supervisory, to stop the toilets turning into a playground.
- **Accident procedures:** There should always be a complete first-aid box immediately available, even on outings, and any use carefully recorded. Appendix 6 of the full policy includes a template form to record accidents/injuries. Ideally a trained First Aider should be present at every group/activity.

### **Responding to abuse or concerns:**

- How to deal with a child or vulnerable adult wishing to disclose abuse:

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- Listen without interrupting.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality.
- Helpful responses include: i) You have done the right thing in telling; ii) I am glad you have told me; iii) I will try to help you.
- Don't say: i) Why didn't you tell anyone before? ii) I can't believe it!; iii) Are you sure this is true?; iv) Why? How? When? Who? Where?; v) I am shocked, don't tell anyone else.
- Remain calm!
- If you have a genuine concern about anything related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult (whether they have made a disclosure to you or not), you should **not** investigate this yourself. One of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators should be contacted at the earliest opportunity:
- Miriam Ansell (07585 121338)
- Andrew Brown (07531 693521)
- Gemma Campbell (07928 083724)
- They will talk through with you your concerns, possibly in consultation with thirtyone:eight, and you may be asked to fill out a 'record of disclosure / concern' form (see Appendix 5 of the full policy).
- If the suspicions in any way involve one or more of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, then the report should be made to another Safeguarding Coordinator who is not linked to the suspicions, or to one of the Pastors.
- Anyone has the right to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies (Children's Social Services, Adult Social Services, the police), or to seek advice from thirtyone:eight (0303 003 11 11).

**If you have any questions, please ask one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators**