

# **Swarcliffe Baptist Church**



## **Swarcliffe Baptist Church Safe to Grow Manual**

A set of agreed policies and procedures for ensuring a safe environment for children and young people within the care of our church.

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## **Introduction**

Swarcliffe Baptist Church welcomes children and young people into our midst in the same way as Jesus demonstrated in His life on earth.

Safeguarding policies and procedures cover the ways that we act, monitor, care, recruit and show accountability. They are a guide and protection for volunteers, paid workers and for the whole church community.

“Team member” refers to anyone working with children and young people, whether volunteer or paid.

## Definitions of Abuse

Abuse of a child or young person may occur by someone inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. There are four types of abuse.

- Physical Abuse – physical acts of ill-treatment that cause or are intended to cause physical harm or injury to a child or young person.
- Emotional Abuse – the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development.
- Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- Neglect – where adults fail to care for children and young people and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries.
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- a child discloses behaviour that is harmful to them.
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper.)
- inappropriate sexual awareness.
- signs of neglect such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses,
- inadequate care.

It should be recognized that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is most important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring.

## **Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children and Young People in Swarcliffe Baptist Church**

The purpose of this church is to lead those within our fellowship and community to a loving, intimate and developing relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and to actively share the Good news of Christ throughout our area and the world.

In fulfilling this purpose the church has a programme of activities with children and young people and welcomes them into the life of our community.

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Safe from Harm (HM Government 1994) and Working Together To Safeguard Children (HM Government 2010)

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people associated with this church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

### **Prevention and Reporting of Abuse**

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

### **Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

## **Respecting children and young people**

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them.

## **Safe working practice**

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

## **A safe community**

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children and young people. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

## **Responsible person**

The church has appointed Maureen Ruddle as the Safeguarding Deacon to oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees.

The church has also appointed Maureen Ruddle as the Designated Person for Safeguarding. She is available to advise the church on any matters relating to the safeguarding of children and young people and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

A copy of this Policy Statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the vestibule. Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be required to follow them.

A full copy of the Policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually and a report on the outcome given at the AGM.

# Procedures: Reporting and Responding to Concerns

## Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people. It is also their duty to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected.

### What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed?

If the behaviour of a child or young person gives any cause for concern,

If an allegation is made in any context about a child being harmed,

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children and young people cause you concern

- Do not dismiss your concerns
- Do not normally confront the adult about whose behaviour you have concerns.
- Do not take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is taking place
- Do not investigate allegations
- Do not act alone
- Do not take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have
- Do follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns.

### If a child (or an adult) expresses concern to you:

<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Listen and clarify	Minimise what is said
Give support	Show shock, alarm or disapproval
Explain what happens next	Question or push for information
Take action	Offer false reassurance

## **Should I Report Something?**

The 3 Stage process that follows forms the basis for responding to all concerns regarding the welfare of children and young people within the church. If anyone in the church believes that the behaviour of anyone is placing children or young people at risk of harm there is a fundamental duty to record and report it.

(There is much more detail and advice about the 3 Stage Process in the BU Safe to Grow manual 11.0 following.)

## **What should trigger a formal report to the Designated Person?**

All occasions where a child or young person discloses that they have been or are being harmed

All occasions where indicators are observed giving concern that abuse or neglect may have occurred

All team members should feel able to make a report if they feel uncomfortable about the behavior of another team member

All occasions where a team member causes harm or potential harm to a child or young person.

All occasions when a team member repeatedly breaches the code of conduct, whether or not it is thought to be willful.

**If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the police or social services**

## Responding to Concerns – the 3 stages

### Stage 1

A team member/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child / young person or the behaviour of an adult.

The person who has the concern has a duty to

#### RECORD AND REPORT

A written record must be made of the concern using a standard incident report form and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.



### Stage 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern then has a duty to

#### REVIEW AND REFER

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.



### Stage 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken the Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee/Deacon and the Minister may have a duty to

#### SUPPORT AND REPORT

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the local association, the Independent Safeguarding authority and the Charity Commission.

## **Procedures: Recruitment, support and Supervision of team members**

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people whether paid or voluntary. All team members will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children and young people. The degree of formality applied will be proportionate to the responsibility of the position involved and previous knowledge and direct experience of an individual applicant.

All team members should have a calling to work with children and young people which should be recognised by other leaders and the church. Team members should give a high priority to their own spiritual welfare through involvement in the life of the church. All team members should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.

Without being intrusive team members are encouraged to assist one another in developing good practice and maintaining a culture of good practice.

### **Young Team Members under 18 years of age**

In law young team members under the age of 18 cannot be regarded or treated as adult members of a team. They should be closely supervised at all times and cannot be included as part of the ratio of staff to children. They are counted as a child not a leader. The safeguarding Policy and Procedures applies to a young team member just as it does to any other person.

# Procedures: Code of Behaviour

## Code of Behaviour

The church has agreed the following Code of Behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them. The Code of Behaviour set out below applies to team members at all times, regardless of whether they are actually “on duty” or not.

*Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.*

1. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice.
2. Be aware of your body language and invading a person’s personal space.
3. Be aware of the effect you are having on an individual child.
4. Listen well to children and young people.
5. Be careful not to assume you know what a person is thinking or feeling.
6. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time observe body language to better understand what is being said.

*Do not engage in any of the following:*

1. Invading the privacy of children and young people when they are using the toilet or showering. (Exceptions may be necessary in the case of pre-school children needing to be taken to the toilet during a session when parents are not present. Team members should stay outside the toilet if possible, only assist the child where necessary and share this duty between them.)
2. Rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child.
3. Sexually provocative games.
4. Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even “in fun.”
5. Scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing or rejecting a child.
6. Responding to or encouraging excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

## *General*

1. Team members should not work with children and young people if they are not fit to do so through illness, effect of medication etc.
2. Team members should plan their work in such a way that they will not normally be alone with children or young people.
3. When transporting children, whenever possible two adults should be present in a vehicle. Where this is not practicable, giving regular lifts to children or young people on their own should be avoided.

## **Procedures; Health and Safety**

### **General**

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people and to adopting ways of working that promote safety and wellbeing. A sensible culture of safety is required when working with children and young people that involves having procedures and practices that become second nature to those working with them.

For example

- Access to the building should be safe and well lit.
- There should be adequate heating and lighting in the venue.
- Ensure there is enough space and appropriate activities for all children.
- Have a First Aid Kit and phone available.
- Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc.)
- Check equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- No smoking should be permitted.
- Fire procedures should be briefed at least annually.
- Any food should always be prepared carefully and hygienically and in accordance with the food preparation and handling procedures.

### **Parental Consent**

A key component in developing safe practice with children and young people is to work in partnership with parents/carers. Where children and young people are in the care of church organisations it is important:

- ✓ To have the consent of the parent/carer.
- ✓ To have a point of contact in an emergency
- ✓ To have key information about the child that may impact on their well-being.
- ✓ All children and young people attending should be registered and parents/carers asked to complete and sign a Parental Consent Form.

## **Additionally explicit consent should be obtained for the following:**

- Emergency medical treatment
- Travel arrangements when transport is being organised
- Taking the child/young person off the church premises for occasional activities
- Use of the child or young person's photograph in publicity material, displays and the web-site.
- Electronic communication with the child or young person
- For children under 7, consent regarding who is entitled to collect the child from a group.

## **Risk Assessment**

For each regular group or activity a risk assessment must be carried out and recorded by the Youth and children's workers.

1. Identify the Hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your risk assessment and update if and when

necessary.

Please consult the BU Safe to Grow Manual 14.4 for more details.

## **Staffing Ratios**

Age Range	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities; (slightly less adults needed for indoor activities)
0-2y	1:3 (minimum 2)
3y	1:4 (minimum 2)
4-7y	1:6 (minimum 2) 1:8 indoor
8-12y	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) 1 extra adult for every 10 additional. 2:20 indoor
13+y	2 adults for up to 20 young people (preferably one of each gender) 1 extra adult for every 10 additional

## **Procedures; A Safe Community**

### **Photography and Video**

Should be anonymous, suitable, screened for opt-outs and only used for church purposes. If in doubt check with parents and don't use or share for any other purpose without checking. Parents and young person consent is needed.

### **Texting and social media**

Texts should usually be to a group for information-giving. Individual conversations should be avoided or someone else copied in or review with someone.

Do not have young people i.e. any under 18s as friends on social networking sites when the primary reason for the relationship is through church and you have a position of trust in relation to that young person.

### **Opting-out**

Parents/carers will be given opportunity to opt out of photographs and/or videos being taken of their child at church activities. This will usually be at registration of their child for a group or activity, and will allow opting-out for different purposes (for example, a parent might be happy for photographs of their child to be included in a display or video in church but not on the church website).

### **Storage**

Photographs and videos taken must remain anonymous on the photographer's camera or phone and any computer or storage system to ensure that they have limited use if lost or stolen. Copies of photographs must not be distributed to other individuals without the permission of a parent/carer, including digital images. More advice BU Safe to Grow 14.10 and on the BU website: [www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk) (Top tips 07 Photography at church)

### **Prevention of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

The children and young people themselves should be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. More Information BU Safe to Grow 15.2

It is impossible in a document such as this to cover every scenario and "what if". Further guidance is available from Safe to Grow (BU guidelines on Safeguarding) This document is available from the Designated Person for anyone to read if they so desire. This document is based on the model Safe to Grow policy available from the Baptist Union and is available on the Safe to Grow website [www.safetogrow.org.uk](http://www.safetogrow.org.uk)

## **Contact Numbers**

Designated person and deacon for Safeguarding  
Maureen Ruddle: 0113 225 2534

Safeguarding Support and Advisor (from Moortown Baptist Church)  
Margaret Brownlee 07538 716475

Children's Social Work Services (Mon-Fri 9-5)  
0113222 4403

Out of Hours Duty Emergency Team  
0113 240 9536

Yorkshire Baptist Association  
0113 278 4954