



# Safeguarding Policy

**Date approved by directors:  
December 2025**

ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION
Issue 1	2005	Document Created
Issue 2	February 2010	Update and general review
Issue 3	April 2015	Update and general review
Issue 4	July 2015	Updated ages for Sunday sign-in
Issue 5	February 2016	Update & general review. Details of key contacts added
Issue 6	June 2018	Update & general review. Advocates and appointment process updated.
Issue 7	July 2018	Update to DBS and registration of children
Issue 8	September 2018	Update to terms used, registration of children and format
Issue 9	September 2019	Update to address details, removal of repetition and changes in line with changes to how administration for Sundays works.
Issue 10	Nov 2021	Total rewrite of policy to reflect changes to church structure. Safeguarding Children and Adults now combined in to one overarching policy.
Issue 11	Oct 2022	Update to 4.3 – how to access the Safeguarding Record of Concern. Update to 4.4-4.7 - wording around disclosures. Update to Appendices relating to churches and Emerge to reflect where practices have changed.
Issue 12	Aug 2023	Update following thirtyone:eight update to model policy. Update to new CC policy template. Clarity around concerns, suspicions and allegations.
Issue 13	Aug 2024	Full review. Update to Safeguarding Co-ordinator role, requirements for applicants and appendices. Addition of Appendix A3, A4, J and M. Removal of Pastoral Care.
Issue 14	Oct 2025	Amendments to policy and procedures following introduction of Churchsuite. Addition of Shenley Community Church.

## CONTENTS

<b>List of Appendices .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. Policy Statement .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Roles and Responsibilities .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1    Everyone's responsibilities include:.....	5
2.2    The Directors' responsibilities include: .....	5
2.3 The CC Overall Safeguarding Lead/Deputy responsibilities include: .....	5
2.4 The Safeguarding Co-ordinators responsibilities include:.....	5
2.5 Elders, staff and ministry/activity/event/team leaders' responsibilities include: .....	6
2.6 Volunteers' (ministry/activity/event team members) responsibilities include: .....	6
<b>3 Safeguarding Processes and Procedures .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3.1 Prevention .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Understanding abuse and neglect.....	6
Safer Recruitment.....	7
Making an appointment .....	8
DBS Checks .....	8
Training .....	8
Management of Workers .....	9
Practice Guidelines .....	9
Partnership working .....	9
<b>3.2 Responding to concerns or suspicions and allegations of abuse .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Who is responsible in the church.....	9
What to do if a child/adult shares an allegation of neglect or abuse.....	11
What to do after a child/adult shares an allegation of neglect or abuse.....	12
Detailed procedures where there is a suspicion or allegation of neglect or abuse from a child .....	13
Detailed procedures where there is a suspicion or allegation that an adult is in need of protection .....	14
Concerns around harmful behaviour or suspicions or allegations of abuse involving a person who works with children/young people.....	14
Concerns around harmful behaviour or suspicions or allegations of abuse involving a person who works with adults-at-risk.....	15
<b>3.4 Safe Pastoral Care .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.5 Supporting those affected by abuse .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.6 Working with known offenders and those who may pose a risk .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4 Review .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## List of Appendices

- A.1 Types and Signs of Abuse in Children and Young People
- A.2 Types and Signs of Abuse in Adults
- A.3 Brook Traffic Light Tool Sexual Abuse
- A.4 Self Harm and Suicidal Thoughts
- B. Safer Recruitment Flowchart**
- C.1 Code of Conduct and Good Practice Guide – Children
- C.2 Code of Conduct and Good Practice Guide – Young People
- C.3 Code of Conduct and Good Practice Guide – Supporting Adults
- D. HCC Procedures and Flowchart, Parent Letter
- D. North Procedures and Flowchart, Parent Letter
- D. South Procedures and Flowchart, Parent Letter
- E. Emerge Procedures and Flowchart
- F. Activity Planning Form and Consent Form, including Transport Consent
- G. Safeguarding Co-ordinator Role Descriptor
- H. Steps for Record Keeping
- I. Supporting those who have Suffered Abuse
- J. Supporting Known Offenders
- K. Behaviour Risk Assessment Template
- L. Useful Resources

## 1. Policy Statement

This Safeguarding Policy exists because Churchcentral (CC) strongly believes that safeguarding and protecting all individuals is important, and we strive to create a culture where everyone feels safe, secure, and valued. We are committed to the nurturing, protection, and safeguarding of all our members and associates. As part of this, we believe everyone should be treated with dignity, respect and listened to.

CC recognises that safeguarding is an important principle outlined in the Bible and we seek to uphold this in all we do. Furthermore, safeguarding is an important requirement for organisations set in legislation and guidance within the UK. As a result, we are committed to following the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Care Act 2014.

CC understands that some people may be more vulnerable to, or at risk of, experiencing harm or neglect, due to their age or a specific circumstance, adults, and children alike.

Throughout this policy, when referring to adults who may be more at risk of harm, we will use the term adult at risk. In UK law, the terms “Vulnerable adult” and “Adult-at-Risk” are used to identify those aged over the age of 18 who may be more at risk of harm or abuse. These individuals may identify with any of these examples:

- Needs care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, harm, abuse, or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect
- They are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights, or other interests
- They are affected by a disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, and are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

This policy applies to all those attending CC events, especially those who are working directly with children and/or adults at risk, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

We recognise that we are a family together and every member of the church shares in the responsibility for keeping one another safe. Part of this responsibility is to protect others from harm and abuse in all its forms, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

We have dedicated teams who work with particularly at-risk groups or individuals, and we seek to ensure that all involved in these areas go through our safer recruitment process and are familiar with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures. We are committed to providing additional support and training to all those, whether staff or volunteers, working with individuals at risk.

For us to effectively create an environment where people are safe, we are committed to work with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding,

This policy and any attached procedures and practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

The ultimate responsibility for safeguarding lies with the Directors of the Churchcentral (CC) Trust. However, the churches are governed by teams of elders, supported by a staff team, and volunteers, who are responsible for ensuring all church activities comply with safeguarding legislation and this policy.

### 2.1 Everyone's responsibilities include:

1. Acting in a way that ensures people feel nurtured, safe and valued.
2. Protecting children and adults at risk from harm and abuse.
3. Reporting any safeguarding concerns or abuse discovered or suspected.

### 2.2 The Directors' responsibilities include:

1. Being familiar with safeguarding legislation and other relevant developments that may impact the church, ensuring personal training is up to date.
2. Confirming that clear safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and being complied with.
3. Appointing an Overall Safeguarding Lead and ensuring that they fulfil the duties assigned to them under the policy.
4. Ensuring that adequate resources are made available to meet the requirements of the policy.
5. Ensuring that all employees have access to such training and refresher training as is adequate to enable them to carry out their responsibilities assigned to them under this policy.
6. Periodically reviewing and amending the policy as necessary.

### 2.3 The CC Overall Safeguarding Lead/Deputy responsibilities include:

1. Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and other relevant developments that may impact the church, including ensuring personal training is up to date.
2. Writing the Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
3. Promoting a positive safeguarding culture within the church.
4. Appointing and leading a team of Safeguarding Co-ordinators across the churches.
5. Working with the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, elders, staff, and volunteers to ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is consistently implemented.
6. Obtaining specialist safeguarding advice and guidance where necessary.
7. Monitoring concerns raised to ensure patterns are identified and responded to.
8. Ensuring concerns, suspicions and allegations are recorded and followed up on as appropriate.
9. Ensuring relevant safeguarding documents and records are maintained.
10. Supporting with the training of elders, staff, and volunteers to ensure they are aware of and can fulfil their responsibilities.
11. Keeping the directors informed of any safeguarding information, including but not limited to training, actions, concerns, and accidents, and completing the Safeguarding Annual Report to Directors for submission once a year.

### 2.4 The Safeguarding Co-ordinators responsibilities include:

1. Promoting a positive safeguarding culture within the church.
2. Being a link person between the Central Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead and the individual churches/ministries.
3. Knowing and understanding the Churchcentral Safeguarding Policy and relevant church/ministry procedures.

4. Supporting with the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and relevant church/ministry procedures.
5. Being a point of contact for church/ministry members in the event of a suspicion or allegation of abuse.
6. Clarifying and collating the basic details of suspicions or allegations, seeking advice and passing this information on to statutory agencies where appropriate.
7. Submitting appropriate records and discussing suspicions and allegations raised with the Central Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.
8. Providing feedback on the effectiveness and success of the Safeguarding Policy and relevant church/ministry procedures.

## **2.5 Elders, staff and ministry/activity/event/team leaders' responsibilities include:**

1. Promoting a positive safeguarding culture within the church.
2. Knowing, understanding, and complying with the Safeguarding Policy and other related relevant policies, documents, and guidance.
3. Attending any training required to ensure duties can be carried out in a way that keeps everyone safe.
4. Ensuring team members made are aware of safeguarding procedures during their induction.
5. Suggesting ways of improving safeguarding procedures within their area.

## **2.6 Volunteers' (ministry/activity/event team members) responsibilities include:**

1. Promoting a positive safeguarding culture within the church.
2. Knowing, understanding, and complying with the Safeguarding Policy and other related relevant policies, documents, and guidance.
3. Attending any training required to ensure duties can be carried out in a way that keeps everyone safe.

## **3 Safeguarding Processes and Procedures**

### **3.1 Prevention**

#### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

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

To safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

- 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.***
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those***

***who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.***

For adults we use the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:  
***No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.***

CC requires all workers to understand the various forms of abuse and neglect that impact children and adults-at-risk, as relevant to the area they are working within. Specific details about the forms of abuse and neglect and symptoms are provided for all workers (*Appendix A.1 – Signs of Abuse in Children and Young People, Appendix A.2 - Signs of Abuse in Adults, Appendix A.3 Brook Traffic Light Tool – Sexual Abuse, Appendix A.4 Self Harm and Suicidal Thoughts*).

## **Safer Recruitment**

Within CC there are clear and set teams where we expect all leaders and workers to follow a specific recruitment process, for example our children's work and youth work. All workers will be appointed, trained, supported, and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment. This includes:

### **Role Descriptor**

A simple role descriptor is written for each of these positions, both paid and voluntary, and each person taking on any such a role within CC will be provided with the relevant role descriptor and welcome pack.

### **Requirements for applicants**

All prospective workers must:

Have been a committed follower of Jesus for at least 6 months.

Show commitment to the vision and values of CC, ideally having been part of a CC congregation or another church within the New Frontiers family, for at least 6 months.

Be able to provide the name of a reference from another member of CC or a leader from a previous church.

### **Appointment procedure**

1. A trial within the ministry can be offered (no more than 2 sessions) to ensure the applicant fully understands the requirements and expectations.
2. The applicant must be given a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and relevant appendices, know how to report a concern, suspicion, or allegation of abuse, and agree in writing, via the internal application form, to adhere to its requirements.
3. The applicant must complete an internal application form and Self Declaration Form.
4. An informal interview (with a church elder/Emerge leader/Kidz/Totz Champion) to find out the suitability of the applicant and discuss safeguarding.
5. CC will request a written character reference from the member of CC or another church leader if have begun attending CC within the last 6 months (as named on the internal application form).
6. Completion of an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where necessary, this may be through the update service facility.
7. Formal approval of appointment from elder at the church following the receipt of the application form, Self-Declaration Form, written reference and enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## **Making an appointment**

The decision to make an appointment will lie with the elders of the relevant church. All appointments will be reviewed when necessary.

A person will not be appointed if:

- They do not meet the requirements of the appointment process.
- They have previously abused a child.
- They are known to have a record of inappropriate sexual behaviour or violence.
- Elders have any reservations about the appointment.

CC reserves the right to ask workers to step down from their role if it is felt to be in the best interests of the children/young people/team/worker. However, decisions regarding removing a worker from their role must be made with two or more elders.

## **DBS Checks**

### **Staff**

DBS Checks will be carried out when someone is appointed to a position where their role description meets the eligibility criteria for a DBS check. Following a DBS check, the certificate will be registered on the Update Service, paid for by CC, and checked, as a minimum, every 3 years for the duration of their employment within that role. If a member of staff leaves CC or changes role and is no longer eligible for a DBS Check the Update Service payment will be terminated.

### **Volunteers**

DBS Checks will be carried out when someone is appointed to a position where their role description meets the eligibility criteria for a DBS check. Our Safer Recruitment Flowchart provides more details of the process (*Appendix B.1*). This can be done as a new application or through checking an eligible certificate on the Update Service, in which case the Update Service Initial Recruitment Form must be completed. In both circumstances an ID check is required. This must only be done by those registered as Recruiters with Thirtyone:eight. It is acceptable for the Recruiter to see the documents via a video call before uploading to the application; however the Recruiter must physically see the original documents before the individual commences their role.

We encourage all volunteers for whom we make a new DBS application to register the certificate on the Update Service and notify the administration when this is done. This is free for volunteers, but the certificate must be registered within 30 days of the certificate being issued.

As a minimum we will carry out a new check on all workers every 3 years, or earlier if there is a concern. Where workers have registered their previous certificate with Churchcentral as the employer on the update service we will request permission to check the certificate using the Update Service Permission Form. If a worker has started a new role somewhere else with an eligible certificate registered on the Update Service, the Update Service Initial Recruitment Form must be completed. Where no suitable certificate is registered on the Update Service a new application will be made.

## **Training**

Training in CC safeguarding principles and the Safeguarding Policy is provided annually for elders and all those working in specific ministries, and all in these positions are expected to attend. This includes

an overview of the policy and an explanation of how to handle concerns and disclosures or suspicions of abuse.

There may be specific times when it is appropriate for us to work in partnership with external agencies, and seek additional training and advice from them, recognising their experience and expertise, and acknowledging the limitations of working alone.

We will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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. A list of Useful Resources is also available for all workers and church members (*Appendix L*). *This contains agencies and resources that people can be signposted to for more support in specific areas.*

## **Management of Workers**

At CC we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they have access to advice, guidance, and suitable training. All workers are issued with a Code of Conduct and Good Practice Guide and are given clear expectations about what is expected of them in their role. These are devised for the specific groups:

Children (*Appendix C.1*)

Young People (*Appendix C.2*)

Supporting Adults (*Appendix C3*)

## **Practice Guidelines**

As places of worship working with children, young people and adults at risk, CC wishes to operate and promote good working practices, as outlined in the Code of Conduct and Good Practice Guide. These will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

In addition to the above, we have prepared the following documents that should be used as relevant by all workers to fully ensure the safeguarding of all users is appropriately met:

Church based procedures and flowcharts (*Appendix D*)

Emerge specific procedures, flowcharts, and consent forms (*Appendix E*)

Activity Planning Form and Consent Form, including Transport Consent (*Appendix F*)

We would also expect all workers to be aware of our Health and Safety Policy, follow relevant risk assessments, and seek advice from the named responsible people if unsure. This includes an Incident Reporting form, which can be completed to report any wider Health and Safety Incidents, including near misses.

## **Partnership working**

Where we work in partnership with others, we ensure that those organisations hold the same threshold of safeguarding principles as CC, for example in policies and safer recruitment.

## **3.2 Responding to concerns or suspicions and allegations of abuse**

### **Who is responsible in the church**

#### **Directors**

**Safeguarding Team:**

<b>Overall Safeguarding Lead</b>	Chris Yeo	No number on web version
<b>Deputy Safeguarding Lead</b>	Kate Watkins	No number on web version

We also have a structure of Safeguarding Co-ordinators who support across our churches and ministries, with a clear role descriptor (*Appendix G*). These people are nominated by the Leadership of CC 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.

<b>Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator</b>	Rich Pitt	No number on web version
<b>Hope Community Church</b>		
Safeguarding Co-ordinator Adults	Liz Brown	No number on web version
Safeguarding Co-ordinator Children	Misha Martin	No number on web version
Elders	Tim Brown	No number on web version
	Marc Cottrell	No number on web version
<b>CC North</b>		
Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Cathy Opong	No number on web version
Elders	Chris Yeo	No number on web version
	James Mellor	No number on web version
	Dave Williams	No number on web version
<b>CC South and Shenley Community Church</b>		
Safeguarding Co-ordinator Adults	Helen Bell	No number on web version
Safeguarding Co-ordinator Children	Sarah Clark	No number on web version
Elders	Jonathan Bell	No number on web version
	Jonny Mellor	No number on web version
	Rich Pitt	No number on web version
	Andrew Edmondson	No number on web version

If you think a child or adult is in immediate danger you should call **999 (the police)**.

**Thirtyone:eight 24 Hour Helpline** **0303 003 1111**

**Church Safeguarding Advisory Service** - Churchcentral's membership no. is 3395)

**Birmingham CASS** **0121 303 1888**

**Children's Advice and Support Service.** This is the service that deals with concerns about the welfare of children and young people on a day- to-day basis (Monday to Thursday 8:45am to 5:15pm, Friday 8:45am to 4:15pm)

**Emergency out –of-Hours** **0121 675 4806**

**Birmingham Adult Social Care** **0121 303 1234**

This is the service that deals with concerns about the welfare of adults with care and support needs on a day- to-day basis.

**Birmingham Adult Social Care Emergency** **0121 675 4806**

This is the service that deals with concerns about the welfare of adults with care and support needs in an emergency and outside of office hours (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm).

### **Recording a concern**

Any person with a safeguarding concern about any children or adults within the church, must report this by completing the Safeguarding Record of Concern Form available through MyChurchsuite or on

the Churchcentral website. All concerns received will be assessed and record kept detailing any actions and responses as per the Steps for Record Keeping (*Appendix H*).

## **Reporting a suspicion or allegation of neglect or abuse**

The person who holds a suspicion or receives an allegation of neglect or abuse about any children or adults within the church, must immediately contact the relevant **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator**. A detailed written recording should also be made using our Safeguarding Record of Concern Form, ideally within 1 hour. Please see the Church Reporting Flow Charts for who to report to within each church (*Appendix D*) or Emerge (*Appendix E*).

If you are unable to get hold of any of those named (they do not need to be within the specific church the concern is related to) then please contact thirtyone:eight or the statutory agencies directly. If the suspicions or allegations in any way involve one of the people listed, please contact another person from the list.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into any suspicions or allegations of neglect or abuse. The people listed above hold designated roles with regards to safeguarding, and any volunteer or worker should contact these people, following the guidelines below.

## **What to do if a child/adult shares an allegation of neglect or abuse**

It is important that the person with whom the child/adult at risk shares recognises that the child/adult at risk has placed them in a position of trust.

### **General Points:**

- Reassure the child/person that it is good to talk about things that worry us and that you want to help. Reassure them that what they are saying is being taken seriously.
- Accept what the child/person says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm - acknowledge that it is hard to talk about this.
- Look at the child/person directly (indicates acceptance).
- Listen carefully to the child/person, reflecting back using the language they are using.
- Don't be judgmental.
- Avoid leading questions and only prompt the child/person where necessary with open questions – who, where, when, what, how. It is OK to ask if they have been harmed and what the nature of that harm was.
- Don't promise confidentiality if the child/person wants you to keep a secret. (Remember though, that it takes a lot of courage for an individual to disclose abuse, so don't frighten them off - choose your words carefully i.e. tell the individual that you may have to report what has happened to specific people who want to help when this happens).
- Never make false promises i.e. that the abuse will stop, as that cannot be guaranteed.
- Even when a child/person has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Find out if the child/person has been sworn to secrecy. Never ask for the secret to be disclosed. There could be threats attached to telling.
- Tell the child/person that if they want to tell you more at another time, you will gladly listen.
- Do not give your opinion.

- Do not interrogate the child/person about the abuse - pass the information to the designated Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- Helpful things to say or show:

*"I believe you"* (or showing acceptance of what the child says)

*"I am glad you have told me"*

*"It's not your fault"*

*"I will help you"*

- Avoid saying:

*"Why didn't you tell anyone before?"*

*"I can't believe it!"*

*"Are you sure this is true?"*

*"I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"*

Let the child/person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.

## **What to do after a child/adult shares an allegation of neglect or abuse**

After responding to and ensuring the individual is safe the worker must immediately contact the relevant **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** and write a detailed recording of the allegation using our Safeguarding Record of Concern Form, ideally within 1 hour.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the nominated person as per the Church Reporting Flow Charts, inability to get hold of them, or another suitable nominated person, should not delay referral to CASS, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

**You must NEVER discuss the details of a suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect with anyone other than those nominated in this policy  
(Safeguarding Co-ordinators and Elders)**

### **What details should be recorded:**

The record should be made on our Safeguarding Record of Concern Form. This can be accessed through My Churchsuite or the Churchcentral website. The record should contain:

- Name and role of person recording, dates, and times of these events.
- Names of any other individuals involved.
- Detailed information of the concern (i.e. exactly what the child/person said, when they said it) including the context in which the suspicion or allegation arose (what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity).
- Action taken and by whom.
- Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed up, and pass to the Overall Safeguarding Lead for storage.
- All information recorded should be factual and objective.

### **What happens next:**

Once shared with the **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator**, it is the responsibility of the **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** to clarify and collate the basic details of the suspicion or allegation and pass this information on to statutory agencies, where necessary, who have a legal duty to investigate.

The **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** will contact thirtyone:eight for advice and speak to the relevant external Safeguarding agencies. The **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** will also inform the **Overall Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead and an Elder**, who will notify others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the suspicion or allegation, including:

- Trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Information will only be shared with people on a need-to-know basis, however all records of concerns, suspicions or allegations, even when no action is taken must be shared with the **Overall Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead** to enable a clear overview of the safeguarding picture across the whole of CC. A record of all concerns, suspicions and allegations will be kept centrally and reviewed regularly by the **Safeguarding Team** so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, CC will decide on a suitable course of action.

If an individual feels that appropriate action has not been taken by those nominated in the Churchcentral Safeguarding Structure, they are able to contact an outside agency directly.

## **Detailed procedures where there is a suspicion or allegation of neglect or abuse from a child**

### **Suspicions or allegations around physical injury, neglect, or emotional abuse**

If a child/young person makes an allegation of physical abuse, neglect, or emotional abuse, or where there are suspicions about these the worker concerned should contact the relevant **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** who will:

- Contact CASS (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- If the suspicion or allegation is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care, having contacted CASS.
- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.

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 CASS direct for advice.

Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to CASS.

## **Suspicions or allegations around sexual abuse**

If a child/young person makes an allegation of sexual abuse, or where there are suspicions about possible sexual abuse, **the worker concerned should contact the relevant Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** who will:

- Contact the CASS and the Police Child Protection Team.
- Consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child, depending on the circumstances. If unsure about this, contact Thirtyone:eight. If the suspicion or allegation is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care, having contacted CASS.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact CASS/the Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.
- The role of the **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** is to clarify and collate the basic details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to CASS, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

## **Detailed procedures where there is a suspicion or allegation that an adult is in need of protection**

In the event of allegations of abuse or harm, or suspicions that an adult is being abused or harmed, including physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse, the worker concerned should contact the relevant **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** who will:

- Contact the Birmingham Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any concerns.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse the relevant **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator** will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.
- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support.

## **Concerns around harmful behaviour or suspicions or allegations of abuse involving a person who works with children/young people**

In the event of safeguarding concerns happening within the children's or youth work settings, or suspicions or allegations of abuse, **the person should contact the relevant Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator**. This could be an ongoing safeguarding concern (e.g. a worker making snide comments to a child/young person on a regular basis), or a short incident of neglect (e.g. the workers left the children/young people alone in the room, or did not leave enough responsible adults, and someone got injured), or a suspicion or allegation of abuse. The person making the report of concern or allegation of abuse does not need to be a volunteer, it could be a concerned parent/guardian, church attendee or child/young person themselves.

If an accusation of specific abuse that meets the harm threshold is made against a worker whilst following the procedures outlined above, the **Church/Emerge Safeguarding Co-ordinator**, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will also:

- Liaise with CASS in regard to the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team, whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.
- CC will pastorally support any worker who is subject to an investigation or allegation.

## **Concerns around harmful behaviour or suspicions or allegations of abuse involving a person who works with adults-at-risk**

In the event of safeguarding concerns happening within the within work with adults-at-risk, or suspicions or allegations of abuse, the person should contact the relevant **Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator**. This could be an ongoing event of abuse or a short incident of neglect. The person making the allegation of abuse does not need to be a volunteer; it could be a church attendee or person themselves.

If an accusation of specific abuse that meets the harm threshold is made against a worker whilst following the procedure outlined above, the **Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator** will also:

- Liaise with Birmingham Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. following the advice of Birmingham Adult Social Services.
- CC will offer pastoral care to the adult who is at risk ensuring they have clearly explained the processes and responsibilities it has to keep them safe.
- CC will pastorally support any worker who is subject to an investigation or allegation.

The Care Act places the duty upon Birmingham Adult Social Services to investigate situations of harm to adults at risk. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the victim chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Birmingham Adult Social Services to decide not the church.

## **3.4 Safe Pastoral Care**

CC is committed to providing appropriate pastoral care to all its members, whilst keeping members and workers safe. We recognise that whenever there is a safeguarding issue there will be pastoral care required, however we also acknowledge that pastoral care does not always require a safeguarding response.

Those providing and those in need of receiving, pastoral care can both be put in a vulnerable position, and one where there could be an imbalance of power and responsibility. CC has pastoral care guidelines for those providing general pastoral care for others in the church. We also have a Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Plan template that can be used to collate all care being provided.

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

Many adults in the church may be suffering from the effects of abuse – abuse they suffered in childhood or as adults, abuse of different kinds. The church has a responsibility to support those people who may feel very vulnerable and whose vulnerability may open them up to further abuse. Some abuse may seem trivial to an onlooker, but the severity of abuse needs to be seen in terms of how the victim responded to the abuse both at the time and later.

We are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and supporting all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the church. Guidance is available on the effects of abuse, and how to provide this support (*Appendix I*).

### **3.6 Working with known offenders and those who may pose a risk**

CC is committed to supporting all its members and attendees achieve the safest and most fulfilled life as possible. As such we recognise our need to support both those who have experienced abuse and those who have perpetrated abuse in our membership.

Where an offender is known, befriended, and helped by a group to lead a fulfilled life without direct contact with children, or vulnerable adults the chances of re-offending are diminished, meaning the Church has an important role in preventing abuse.

We recognise the challenges this can present practically in the social setting the church exists within. Guidance is provided around requirements in supporting known offenders, and the requirements we hold for those who are known offenders to adhere to whilst under the care and responsibility of the church (*Appendix J*).

When someone attending CC is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is considered to be a risk to children or adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment approach and through consultation with appropriate parties and will be recorded on our Behaviour Risk Assessment Template (*Appendix K*).

## **4 Review**

This policy will be reviewed every year or as required/considered appropriate by the Directors following any significant changes.