

St Paul's

Church•Worcester

Safeguarding Policy

Document history		
Version 1	Draft	25/02/2014
Version 2	Final	01/09/2014
Reviewed		14/01/2016
Reviewed		22/01/2018
Version 3	Final	05/04/2023

St. Paul's Church

St Paul's Street

Worcester

WR1 2BH

01905 22022

info@stpaulschurch.co.uk

In fellowship with the Assemblies of God

Member of the Evangelical Alliance

Senior Leader:	Dot Burnett
Senior Leader contact:	07988 858636
	Dot.burnett@stpaulschurch.co.uk
Safeguarding Co-ordinator:	Anthony Goodman
Safeguarding Co-ordinator contact:	07934 073723
Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator:	Doreen Porter
Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator contact:	Doreen.porter@stpaulschurch.co.uk
Charity Number:	1159042
Company Number:	08983424
Regulators:	
Insurance Company:	Congregational RC01200677/0 Public Liability
	Aviva 100729638BDN/41324348

No part of this publication may be shared, distributed, or transmitted to any party outside of the member organisation, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

Our commitment

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

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

The CC undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the CC agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Section 2

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 adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order 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.

Also for adults 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.

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

Safer recruitment

The CC will ensure all workers with children, young people and adults with care and support needs will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

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

The CC 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.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a CC we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

Section 3

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

Working in Partnership

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

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

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Section 4

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- Documenting a concern

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") Anthony Goodman

Tel: 01905 22022

Email: a.goodman@stpaulschurch.co.uk

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: (hereafter the "Deputy") Doreen Porter

Contact: doreen.porter@stpaulschurch.co.uk

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator Deputy; then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first call the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact Social Services in the area the child or adult lives.

-

Name of local authority: Worcestershire County Council

Children's Social Services – Family Front Door - Mon-Thur = 09:00-17:00 Fri = 09:00-16:30

Tel: 01905 822666

Out of hours Tel: 01905 768020 - weekday evenings & all weekends & bank holidays

Website Address: [Contact | Worcestershire County Council](#)

Adult Social Services:

Tel: 01905 768053 - Mon - Thur = 08:30-17:00 Fri = 08:30-16:30

Out of hours Tel: 01905 768020 – weekday evenings & all weekends & bank holidays

Website Address: www.worcester.gov.uk/community-safety/safeguarding#!

Police Protection Team Tel: if a child is in immediate danger call 999 otherwise call 101

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending upon the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:
 - Chair or 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.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that

the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

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

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

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

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

Allegations of sexual abuse

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

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact the 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 suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

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

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people:

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker

- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 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.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. 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 Adult Services to decide not the church.

Section 5

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse:

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

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk:

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to 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 an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

Section 6

Social Media Policy for contact with children and young people

This policy offers guidelines that help guide and protect young people and leaders in their interactions using digital technology regarding their involvement with St Paul's church Worcester. If in doubt, contact the youth leader or a member of the safeguarding team.

Permission and Contact

- Parents and carers will need to give permission for direct contact with their young people and supply the young person's phone number after consultation with their young people. Parents will be advised that direct messages will always be monitored by the youth team and St Paul's Leadership team to safeguard both the young people and leaders.
- Direct one to one contact will only be permitted between the young people of St Paul's Church and the youth designated phone. This phone number will be shared between two devices across the youth team so two members of the team will have access to messages. No messages or call-records or anything received from young people will be deleted from this phone. The youth phone will be checked by other members of the leadership team at St Paul's Church on a regular basis (bi-monthly).

- Communication will always be encouraged via text message. If a young person asks to speak, then Teams or Zoom will be suggested as a platform. The youth leader must be informed and an outline of the conversation should be written up by the leader after the session. This is the same practice as when a leader meets with a young person in-person for a 1-2-1 mentoring session.
- Young people that have permission will be given the youth phone number and will be told they can text leaders on it anytime between 3pm and 9pm on Mon-Fri during term time and 8am and 9pm at the weekend and outside of term time. The leaders who hold this phone number will only respond directly to messages between these times.

Teams

- All youth who are given permission from parents will be sent the St Paul's Church, Worcester Youth Microsoft Teams code – this is for group identity and dissemination of information and reminders as well as facilitating life groups.
- Young people (with permission) will also be put in various Youth Life Group Teams chat. This will be a smaller group with always two life group leaders. The youth phone will also be added to this group as a way to monitor the chat and protect leaders and young people. This group will be used for ongoing communication between youth life group, sharing of prayer requests and as a reminder of life group meeting times and dates of either in-person or Zoom life group gatherings.

Zoom

- Zoom calls and meetings will be used to gather young people. A designated link will be sent to the parents/carers of the young people and young people will have access through that link. Teams and direct text message will be used as a reminder for the sessions but not used to disseminate zoom links. Parents must give permission for their young people to be contacted via zoom in writing.
- Leaders must not record Zoom session but are required to keep a register of who attended the session and fill out the life group form that gives an overview of what was discussed during the session and send this back to the youth leader.

Social Media

- Facebook and Instagram
- St Paul's Youth Leaders can post video and post info and reminders about events on St Paul's Youth Facebook and Instagram. Permission from parents will be obtained in advance before their images are posted. Content uploaded will always be in line with the ethos of St Paul's church Worcester and of a Christian character. Posts will always be encouraging and supportive of young people and their faith journey. Volunteers should not follow youth on personal accounts. See Youthscape / 318 advice. Staff and volunteers should never link a young person on their personal Facebook, Instagram, or other social media accounts. Staff and volunteers should refer to their line manager if a young person messages them on private accounts.

- Team members should only like young people's public posts when they represent the values of St Paul's Church, Worcester Youth. Any comments on posts should always be encouraging and again represent the values of St Paul's Church, Worcester youth.
- Interaction on these platforms is public and therefore any messaging should be redirected to the youth phone or "teams" group. If individual team members receive private messages from young people on these platforms they should not respond. They should alert the youth team leader and the youth leader will respond on Team or through the St Paul's Youth phone.

St Paul's Youth Facebook and Instagram - these are just public pages/accounts, so anyone can follow them and we post video content as well as post info and reminders about activities. It is possible for young people to message these accounts privately, but this rarely happens and if/when it does we only reply on the public account. If young people are on these platforms and haven't edited their privacy settings anyone in the world can follow them and message them, but this is through the actual platform and nothing to do with a

St Paul's Church group.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the Leadership and will be reviewed annually in April

Signed by:

Position: Senior Leader

Signed by:

Position: Safeguarding Lead

Date: 05/04/23

A copy of this policy is also lodged with:

Hard Copy in Church Office

NAS drive - General: Policies

NAS drive - Safeguarding