

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY: INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to read this Safeguarding Policy. The policy is intended to shape the way that we think and act in relation to supporting those most vulnerable around us. Whether you are a children's or youth worker, a trustee, ministry leader or staff member, we want you to be aware of, and comply with this policy.

We recognise that safeguarding the vulnerable is a gospel issue, and reflects the nature of Jesus, and as such is central to our mission and ministry.

The policy and procedures have been divided into five sections covering all 10 safeguarding standards developed by the Thirtyone:eight

The 10 standards are as follows:

1. Safeguarding Policy
2. Training and Awareness
3. Safer Recruitment
4. Managing Workers
5. Working Safely
6. Governance
7. Responding to Concerns
8. Culture
9. Managing Those who may Pose a Risk
10. Working in Partnership

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: SECTION 1

Details of the place of worship / organisation

Name of Organisation:	THE WELLS CHURCH
Address:	Town Centre: Hanover Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1EY Broadmead: Broadmead, TN2 5RW
Tel No:	01892 521320
Email address:	office@thewellschurch.org
Charity Number:	1208051
Denomination/Membership	Assemblies of God (GB)
Insurance Company	Congregational, Public Liability Insurance, Policy No. RC01300182

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:

The church has a children's and youth ministry, catering for all ages from birth to 18 years. These groups include age related groups during Sunday services for ages: (0-2), (2-4), (5-11), (11-18). Our Sunday activities are open to all, including adults who have care and support needs.

Additional groups and activities run for various ages of children and youth:

- Weekly Parent and Toddler Groups
- Weekly Youth group (ages 11-18)
- Holiday clubs for children (ages 5-11)
- Family Events
- Mission Trips
- Taking children and young people to Children's and Youth Camps.

Church Council Commitment to Safeguarding

As the Church Council, we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults with additional care and support needs. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

As a Church Council 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 appendices are based on the ten ‘**Safe and Secure**’ safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service) and have been prepared in line with the AOG National Leadership Team’s commitment to Safeguarding. Each section title contains reference to the relevant standard within ‘Safe & Secure’ for further information.

The Church Council undertakes to:

- nominate a Church Council member to be Church Council Lead for Safeguarding
- 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 no less than every three years will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with additional care and support needs.
 - support the Safeguarding Coordinator in receiving, monitoring and retaining records securely.
- undertake an annual review of the policy and its implementation
- ensure that a copy of the policy is available upon request for quality assurance purposes
- file a copy of any amendments subsequently published in the same manner.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: SECTION 2

RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE

DEFINITIONS (UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS ABUSE & NEGLECT)

NB. Detailed definitions of abuse are included at appendix 4 of this policy.

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult with care and support needs is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or by 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 who has care and support needs.

In order to safeguard those in our place of worship and organisation 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 which states:

1. 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.

Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 5, UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

POLICY STATEMENT (TRAINING AND AWARENESS)

The Church Council is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, and developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake appropriate regular safeguarding training every three years according to 'good practice' guidelines, and training should cover signs and symptoms of abuse and how to respond as a minimum. This may be provided either by the Safeguarding Coordinator (if confident and competent to do so) or by Thirtyone:eight via the 'Facing the Unthinkable' training, or another recognised body, organisation or qualified individual.

The Church Council 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.

PROCEDURES (RESPONDING TO CONCERNS)

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

Follow procedures as below and see the flow chart in Appendix 2:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Anne Martin and then make a written record using the Record of Concern Form:

Name of Safeguarding Coordinator:	Anne Martin
Contact Details:	

This person is nominated by the Church Council 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 Coordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name of Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator:	Helen Nevison
Contact Details:	

- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to Thirtyone Eight and then complete a Record of Concern Form:

Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone: **0303 0031111**

A 24 hour helpline is available for advice, but where the situation is an emergency, the police should be contacted.

- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services. As soon as possible on the day the concern is received.

The local Children's Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is	03000 411111
The out of hours emergency number is	03000 419191

- Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirtyone:eight as above.

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is	03000416161
The out of hours emergency number is	03000419191

The Police Public Protection Unit telephone number is	101
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- Where required, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform senior personnel within the organisation as follows:

Name:	Stuart Mayho	Helen Nevison	Bridget Hughes
Position:	Pastor	Operations Manager	Safeguarding Trustee
Contact Details:			

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

- A written record of the concerns (using the Record of Concern Form; see appendix 4) should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised in accordance with these procedures and kept in the secure 'Safeguarding' folder within Google Team Drive.
- The Church Council will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis. These records will be monitored and retained on a secure system.
- The Church Council must consider any duty regarding informing the church's insurers and the charity commission (if a registered charity) of offences committed by staff and volunteers.
- If the person against whom an allegation is being made is in a position of trust, the Designated Officer (DO) needs to be contacted within 24 hours. It may also be necessary to inform the DBS if the person is engaged in 'regulated activity'.
- 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 Church Council expects that members of TWC will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly. This would also apply if the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy were not available. We believe by making this statement that the Church Council demonstrates 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. **It is not necessarily the role of the Safeguarding Coordinator to investigate allegations and concerns.**

DETAILED PROCEDURES FOR WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A CHILD

See the flow chart in Appendix 2

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:

- Seek medical help if needed urgently via phoning 999.
- 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. If the issue is urgent, the Police Protection Unit and/or the Out of Hours Children's Services must be contacted without delay.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- 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 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 FOR WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT THE WELFARE OF AN ADULT WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEED

See the flow chart in Appendix 2

SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

The Care Act 2014 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.

If an adult with additional care and support needs has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life. Advice needs to be sought from the statutory agencies if it is felt that their choice might contradict their welfare needs.
- If the adult with additional care and support needs is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the appropriate Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 2015 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse.
- The Police Public Protection Unit will also provide advice and will need to be contacted where the concerns are of a serious nature. Alternatively Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

¹ Adults who have care and support needs*.

**This is the up to date terminology regarding working with adults. These were previously referred to as vulnerable adults and although that term may be used at times, the 2014 Care Act refers to adults with care and support needs. These are adults over the age of 18 who need care and support for their daily living. Churches often have groups dedicated to adults such as lunch or meeting clubs, pastoral visitors etc and it is important that there is good practice in the organisation and running of these activities.*

PROCEDURE FOR WHEN THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT ABUSE BY THOSE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN

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 or Deputy, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures, will need to:

- liaise with Children’s Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Designated Officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Contact the Operations Manager at AOG National Office (if the allegations concern a status or probationary minister or other Senior Minister responsible for the church in question regardless of status);
- the Designated Officer (DO) will be contacted within 24 hours as follows:

Name::	Jinder Kaur (one of a team of 5)
Phone::	03000 410888
Email::	kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
Online form link (child)::	https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/local-authority-designated-officer-lado
Online information page and links (adult)::	https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/information-for-professionals/adult-safeguarding/adult-protection-forms
Post::	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Contact & Referral Officer, LADO Team, Kent County Council, Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU
Opening Hours::	9am-4pm
In an emergency outside of these hours, contact::	Central Duty Team: 03000 411111

In addition to this, whether or not there are such mechanisms in operation, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs.

Where we are liaising with a Designated Officer we will discuss with them about the need to refer to the DBS. If a Designated Officer is not involved, we will contact the DBS if the situation is that the nature of concern leads us to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have made this decision in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

DO Role:

The role of the Designated Officer (DO) is set out in the HM Government guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#). Chapter 4 Organisational responsibilities lays out the procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children, for example, those in a position of trust, including volunteers.

The DO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The DO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. They capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. The DO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.

They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: SECTION 3

PREVENTION

3.1 SAFER RECRUITMENT

POLICY STATEMENT (SAFER RECRUITMENT)

The Church Council will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring for paid staff 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 shortlisted 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
- Where appropriate 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 code of conduct and knows how to report (using the Record of Concerns Form) concerns

For volunteer posts we will ensure that:

- Those applying have completed an application/ self-declaration form
- Those applying provide a referee from within the church, and one from outside it. Where the candidate is relatively unknown to the church leadership, written references are obtained for the candidate.
- Safeguarding is discussed with each new worker
- 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 where necessary
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and code of conduct and knows how to report (using the Record of Concern Form) concerns
- Every applicant for every ministry area (not just for children's work or where adults with additional needs are involved) has their name passed via the Safeguarding Team before being allowed to join their ministry.

3.2 MANAGING WORKERS (CODES OF CONDUCT)

POLICY STATEMENT

As a Church Council 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, as follows:

As Church Council, we take child safety very seriously. This means that we want all our volunteers to understand the nature of our 'Duty of Care' and what this means for the conduct of all staff and volunteers who may come into contact with children, young people and other people who have care and support needs. Our 'duty of care' is in part exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships but also by staff and volunteers taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of those they have responsibility for, particularly in relation to safeguarding them from sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Before individuals start working in positions that have contact with children, young people and adults who have care and support needs, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent to their role.

All adults working in roles where there is contact with children, young people and adults who have care and support needs are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital to ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately.

Staff and volunteers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult and a child is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, this should be recorded (using the Record of Concern Form; appendix 4) and reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator immediately. The trusting relationship between volunteer and child, young person or adults who have care and support needs means the worker

should never:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- use their status and/or standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

Due to the nature of many of the activities that we provide, children and their parents/carers feel safe and children are often given a lot more freedom than they would in other settings. They are therefore in a vulnerable position. In the context of this environment everyone who carries out a role as a part of these activities is in a unique position of trust, especially in the eyes of a child and it is therefore possible because of this position of trust for someone to have unsupervised access to children (the definition of a child is anyone under the age of 18).

The best way to protect the children we come into contact with is by following good practices that promote and protect the safety of children and young people. These would include:

- Not spending time alone with a child.
- Not putting yourself in a situation that may lead to allegations being made against you.
- Not maintaining contact with a child outside of agreed activities without the knowledge of the child's parents/legal guardians - if such contact is agreed with the parents/carers, it needs to be made clear that you are no longer acting on behalf of the church.
- Being vigilant - if you witness any behaviour by someone else at an event, whether a team member or a guest that causes you to be concerned about the welfare of a child, please speak to the Safeguarding Coordinator immediately.

Adopting this code of conduct towards children, young people and adults who have care and support needs and ensuring all workers are made aware of its content and agree to follow it is essential. It is important that there is a culture of dignity and respect towards those being cared for. This can be achieved by workers:

- understanding the organisation's safeguarding policy and good working practice
- listening to children, young people and adults who have care and support needs
- respecting boundaries and privacy of those being cared for
- knowing how to deal with issues of discipline in line within the organisation's code of conduct
- developing an awareness of disability issues as well as issues of equality and inclusion

Management of Workers – Training and Supervision

All workers, paid or voluntary, should be provided with appropriate training and given the opportunity to develop their skills as well as feel supported and valued by the organisation for which they work. When this happens workers will be more inclined to express concerns over issues that arise and it will also help to ensure a high level of care, professionalism and expertise towards those being cared for.

As a Church Council, we commit to ensuring all workers are supervised (where possible by a named individual who arranges regular meetings) where concerns or issues can be raised, work related or personal. It is also the role of the supervisor to ensure all training needs are met. Where supervision with a named individual is not possible, or impractical, group supervision may be used as an alternative as this can maximise resources and allows for the sharing of issues and concerns.

Management of Workers - Team Meetings

The Church Council recognises the importance of team meetings. These should be convened on a regular basis and should provide an opportunity for ideas and issues to be aired, concerns expressed and feedback given.

Management of Workers - Whistleblowing

In addition to effective management of allegations against staff, there needs to be a mechanism in place for workers to be able to raise legitimate concerns (e.g. improper actions or omissions) about other workers, with impunity.

Commonly known as 'whistleblowing', the reporting principles are contained in the Public Disclosure Act 1998. Further information can be obtained from Public Concern at Work at: www.pcaw.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: SECTION 4

CULTURE & PASTORAL CARE (SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE)

POLICY STATEMENT

The Church Council 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.

Pastoral care is varied by nature and you will ensure that you have appropriate support and permissions before you embark upon supporting somebody with the often complex issues created by past abuse. If you are concerned about your ability to provide appropriate pastoral care and/or counselling to individuals in these circumstances, you should contact the Thirtyone:eight 24 Hour Helpline on 0303 0031111. Thirtyone:eight are able to provide limited support and may be able to suggest organisations or individuals who may be able to assist further.

Alternatively, you should contact the Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC) who will be able to put you in contact with trained individuals who may be able to offer support. ACC also produce a Pastoral Skills training course that can be delivered in your church/organisation by somebody experienced in pastoral care.

WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults who have care and support needs the Church Council will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults who have care and support needs, it will set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

This may involve the use of risk assessments and supervision agreements. Pastoral care will be offered without prejudice to all those who require it. This may also include a known offender. Where pastoral care is offered to both the person affected by abuse and the known offender, this should be offered by different people who are able to support those concerned impartially and effectively.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: SECTION 5

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

POLICY STATEMENT (PRACTICE GUIDELINES)

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs the Church Council wishes 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 listed below. Further information is found in our Code of Conduct.

Group	Age	Consent Form	Supervised by TWC approved workers	Comment
Radiant Kids	5-11s	Yes	Yes	Parents are in neighbouring room/building, and are contacted if children need their care. Groups are supervised by a minimum of two adults, with additional teenage helpers. Children are never alone with a solo adult. Children are accompanied to the toilets. Access is open to other areas of the building, so the leader waits outside in full view of other leaders. Children have full privacy but supervision is provided to ensure they do not wander off or interact with anyone else. A register of children and helpers is taken.
Sparklers	2-4	No	Yes	Parents are in the neighbouring room and are contacted if children need their care. Children are supervised by a minimum of two adult helpers. Children are never alone with a solo adult. Toilet facilities are adjacent to the activity room, and children are encouraged to toilet themselves. Leader assistance is available in an emergency, but not shut in with the child in question. A register of children and helpers is taken.
Crèche	0-2	No	NO	Parents supervise their own children.
Youth	11-18	Yes	Yes	Groups are supervised by a minimum of two adults. Young people are never alone with a solo adult. A register of children and helpers is taken.
Little Stars at both sites	0-3	No	Yes	Parents/carers supervise their own children. THE WELLS CHURCH team provides support. A register of children is taken.

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 regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises to provide services for children or adults who have care and support needs, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets Thirtyone:eight ' safeguarding standards.

GOOD COMMUNICATION

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.

CHURCH MISSION OVERSEAS

Policy Statement

This safeguarding policy applies to all our Mission workers and volunteers overseas and any members of our church that participate in locally-driven missions activity; whether planting/establishing churches within indigenous communities, visiting on short-term mission or placed as a long-term missionary in our many locations around the world.

Prevention of abuse

It is recognised that the cultures within which international missions are often working may adopt different standards to the care and treatment of children and young people. Nevertheless, the standards and principles adopted within the UK are expected to apply in international mission situations. The maltreatment of children and young people is contrary to biblical values and practices and therefore cannot be tolerated.

Due regard will need to be given to the cultures within which activities are taking place, however under the expectation of applying UK standards to the practice of missions workers, some guidance may be useful.

Procedures

Our Workers/Missionaries should:

- be able to recognise situations which may present risks
- plan and organise the work and workplace so as to minimise risks as far as possible and be visible to other adults when working and talking with children
- take particular care for the needs of disabled children and other vulnerable children as research has shown that abuse can often go unrecognised and unreported due to people's attitudes and assumptions about disability
- ensure that they are not alone with children, young people or adults with care and support needs
- ensure they only communicate with children, young people or adults with care and support needs in appropriate ways whether face to face, verbally or using digital technology and in adherence at all times to the safeguarding guidelines and code of conduct

Our Workers/Missionaries should not:

- take children to their personal home, or to stay overnight, especially where they will be alone with you
- leave any person under 16 in charge of any children of any age. However, some local/national legislation may require this to be 18 years of age
- hit or otherwise physically assault children
- develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse, discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others

Responding & Reporting Mechanisms

THE WELLS CHURCH has a Mission Support Team which is responsible for safer recruitment of both staff and volunteers/visitors (including DBS disclosures where these are necessary) and for ensuring that applicants are fully appraised of this safeguarding policy. All incidents, allegations or concerns identified during overseas missions activities must be reported to the church Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who will then liaise with the appropriate authorities to ensure good practice is facilitated in relation to the reporting of any allegations of abuse within the relevant country.

If an allegation is made against a worker/missionary, that person must be removed from their duties or prevented from having any further contact with children and young people or adults with additional care and support needs immediately whilst necessary action is taken. Due account must always be taken of the laws and frameworks in place within any country in which the mission operates. In many cases, practice, values and beliefs in relation to safeguarding the vulnerable will be different to the UK. However, care must always be taken to ensure that the rights of the individuals concerned are upheld (see the UN Convention on Human Rights and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPROVALS

Signed by: _____
Print Name:
Position (On behalf of the Church Council): Trustee
Date: _____ 23rd March 2022 _____

Signed by: _____
Print Name:
Position (On behalf of the Church Council): Trustee
Date: _____ 23rd March 2022 _____

Signed by: _____
Print Name:
Safeguarding Coordinator
Date: _____ 23rd March 2022 _____

Signed by: _____
Print Name:
Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator
Date: _____ 23rd March 2022 _____

This policy will be reviewed annually and amendments made as necessary.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 1

Church Council Safeguarding Statement

The Church Council 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 following statement was agreed by the Church Council on: **4th September 2024**

This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect using the Record of Concern Form..
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs and to report (using the Record of Concern Form) any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation 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 adults with care and support needs.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/ adults who have care and support needs

- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.

- Supporting all in the place of worship/organisation affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service now known as Thirtyone:eight.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult with care and support needs then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this place of worship/organisation.

Child Safeguarding Coordinator:	Anne Martin
Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator:	Helen Nevison
Adult Safeguarding Coordinator:	Anne Martin
Deputy Adult Safeguarding Coordinator:	Helen Nevison
Lead Safeguarding Trustee	Bridget Hughes

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Church Office.

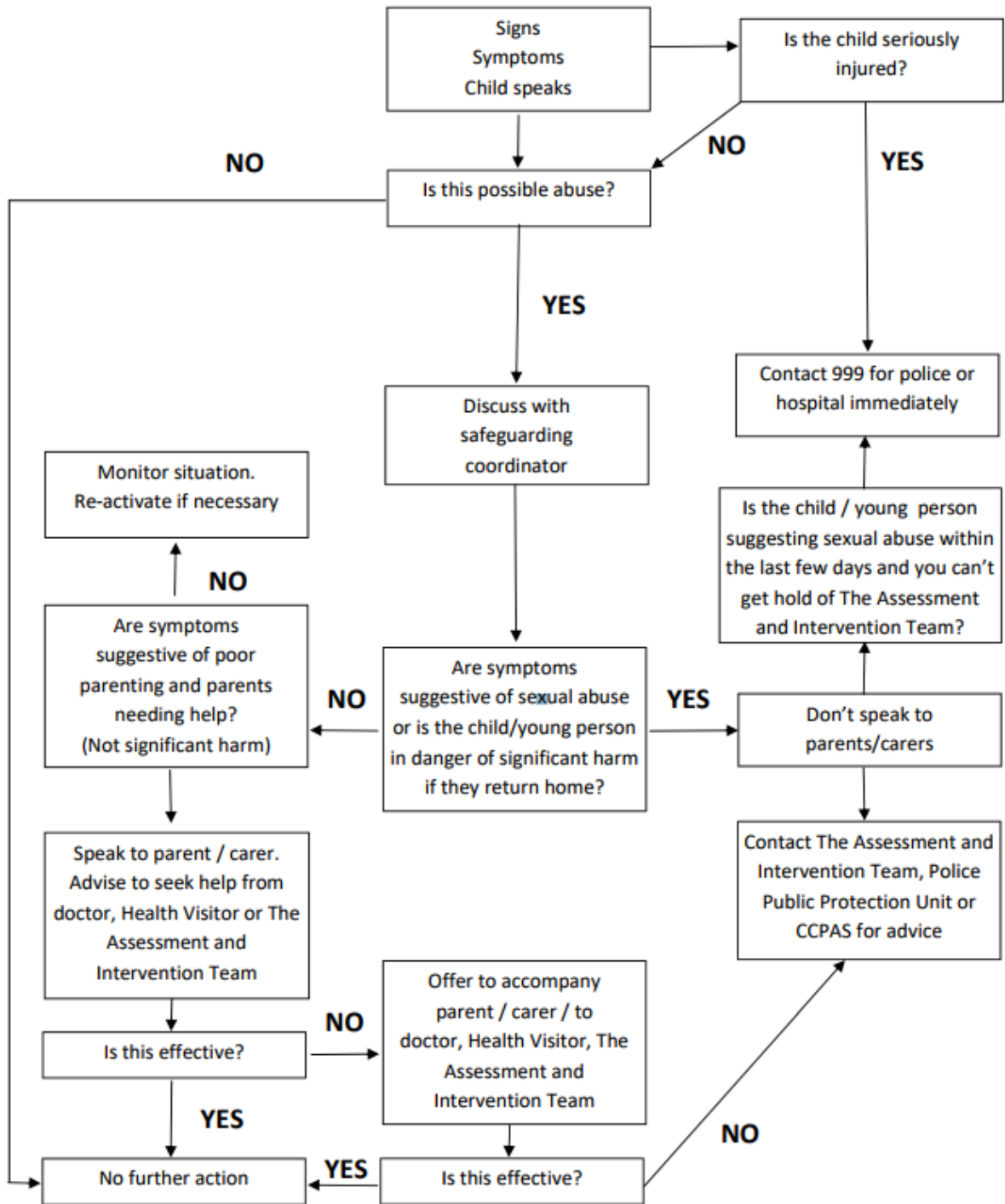
Signed on behalf of the Church Council of THE WELLS CHURCH

Signed _____(Chair)

Date 4th September 2024

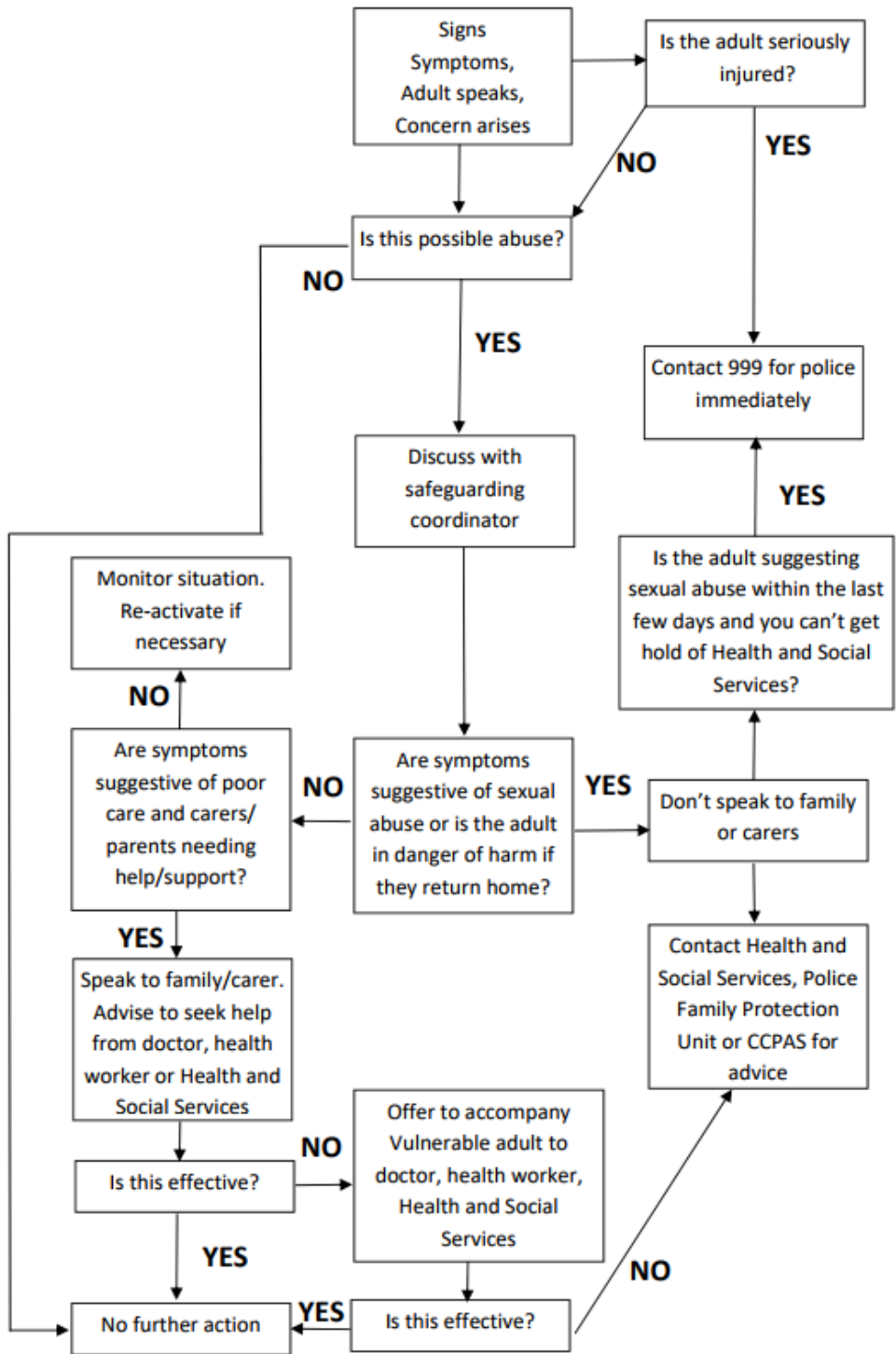
SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 2

FLOW CHART FOR ACTION: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



APPENDIX 2:

FLOW CHART FOR ACTION: ADULTS WITH ADDITIONAL CARE & SUPPORT NEEDS



SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 3

STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (CHILDREN)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

ENGLAND

The five definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

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

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

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

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the

perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Neglect

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

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

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

STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (ADULTS WITH ADDITIONAL CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS)

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect adults with additional care and support needs from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'.

Physical Abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

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.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult who has care and support needs. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty on the adults who have care and support needs

Financial or Material Abuse

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

Neglect or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the adults who have care and support needs requires for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult who has care and support needs or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

Discriminatory Abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult who has care and support needs 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.

Institutional Abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of an adult who has care and support needs by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

DEFINITIONS OF SPIRITUAL ABUSE

In recent years the concept of Spiritual Abuse has become one that has gained greater understanding amongst those in the faith community. Spiritual abuse has many similarities to the other categories of abuse and indeed may include the identification of those categories as abuse is often multi-faceted.

Although not recognised as a category of abuse in its own right by the statutory authorities, Spiritual abuse will often co-exist with those accepted forms of abuse (described above). A number of definitions have been given to this type of abuse in an attempt to adequately describe what often amounts to an abuse of trust and power to the detriment of others. Johnson and VanVonderen ('The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse', Bethany House Publishers, 1991) have described it as follows:

"Spiritual abuse is the mistreatment of a person who is in need of help, support or greater spiritual empowerment, with the result of weakening, undermining or decreasing that person's spiritual empowerment"

This view is shared with a similar definition offered by Ken Blue ('Healing Spiritual Abuse', IVP, 1993) as follows:

"Spiritual abuse happens when a leader with spiritual authority uses that authority to coerce, control or exploit a follower, thus causing spiritual wounds"

Thirtyone:eight have defined Spiritual Abuse as follows:

Spiritual abuse is linked with other forms of abuse, and 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, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things 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.

Additional information

In addition to the above, in relation to adults and children, there needs to be an understanding of other forms of harm such as Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic Abuse, Forced marriage and trafficking of adults and children. All these are included in various pieces of legislation and all those concerned with safeguarding need to be aware of the issues.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 4

RECORD OF CONCERN FORM

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of Church: THE WELLS CHURCH

Name of Child/Young Person/ Adult with care and support needs:

Address (if known):

.....

Date of Birth (if known):/...../ Age:

Name of Person Reporting Incident:

Date:/...../ Time of incident:

Sequence of Events/Actual Words Used/Observations:

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Action Taken (including person(s) contacted) (eg Safeguarding Coordinator):

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Date:/...../.....

Time:

Notes:

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.....
.....
.....

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: APPENDIX 5

Safeguarding Incident and Action Log

No	Date Reported	Incident (Brief Description)	File/Folder Reference	Action ongoing	Action completed
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

Safeguarding is a priority here

We are committed to following government and Thirtyone Eight guidelines on safeguarding children and adults with additional care & support needs, and good working practice, including safe recruitment of workers.

We work to formal safeguarding policy and it can be seen on request from:

Rosemarie Jolley

Office@thewellschurch.org

If you have any concerns regarding safety or welfare of a child or adult requiring support, you can speak to:

Anne Martin

anne.martin@thewellschurch.org

HelenNevison

helen.nevison@thewellschurch.org

They have been appointed by the leadership to respond to any safeguarding concerns.

Signed _____ Safeguarding Lead
Anne Martin 4th September 2024

Useful Contacts

Thirtyone Eight
0303 003 1111

Childline (for children)
0800 1111

NSPCC
0808 800 5000

Kidscape
0845 120 5204

Stop it Now
0808 1000 900

Mind infoLine
text 86463

Through the Roof
01732 737041

Action on Elder Abuse
0808 808 89141

On behalf of
THE WELLS CHURCH
Church Council

THE WELLS CHURCH

Amendments and Revisions

02 02 2023 For Volunteer Posts:

- Every applicant for every ministry area (not just for children's work or where adults with additional needs are involved) has their name passed via the Safeguarding Team before being allowed to join their ministry. This is appropriate for example for serving coffee as well as giving a bible reading on a Sunday morning.

27 04 23

RECORD OF CONCERN FORM for recording allegations / concerns of abuse

has been changed to

RECORD OF CONCERN FORM

19.7.24 Policy renamed 2024 The Wells Church Safeguarding Policy

Church name was changed to THE WELLS CHURCH

Poster was changed to reflect name change and to include email address

Email addresses were changed from twcf.org to thewellschurch.org

HM Government Guidance on Working Together to Safeguard Children was updated to 2023

31:8 10 safeguarding standards categories have been updated

Church address no longer says The Christian Centre.

Church Council acceptance date changed to 4th September 2024