



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Date Policy written: August 2017

Reviewed: September 2025 next review Sept 2026

Person(s) Responsible:

Luke Andrews, Senior Leader, Life Church Wirral. Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Mrs Lynn Roberts, Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Coordinator and Lead Recruiter.

Alyson Field-Baines, Location Pastor.

Jonathan McIlveen, Chair of Board, Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility.

Literature base:

Working together to Safeguard Children. March 2015.

CCPAS Model Safeguarding Policy - CCPAS 2009.

E-Safety and Acceptable use policy - CCPAS

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Updated, September 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Introduction:

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (2)', HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, within or outside of the home and including online
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health and development
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents or otherwise their family network through a kinship care agreement, wherever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes inline with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

As a Christian Organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we want to operate in and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

Life Church recognises its legal duty under the Children's Act 2004. It follows 'Working together to

Safeguard children 2015'. We take seriously our responsibilities to safeguard, protect and promote the interests of all children.

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.'

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the Ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS*) and prepared in consultation with Assemblies of God.

The Leadership undertake 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 where possible, 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 coordinators in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

This document provides the basis for good practice within the activities run by Life Church in our Bebington and Neston locations and our Youth and Children's activities and Youth Hub provision. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

Underpinning values:

- A child, young person and vulnerable adult's welfare is paramount. Each has a right to be protected from harm and exploitation and to have their welfare safeguarded.
- Each person is unique. Action taken by child welfare organisations should be child centred taking into account a child's cultural, ethnic and religious background, their gender, orientation, individual ability and any special needs.
- Each person has a right to be consulted about actions taken by others on his or her behalf. The concerns of the child, young person and vulnerable adult and their families should be listened to and due consideration given to their understanding, wishes and feelings.
- Children, vulnerable adults, parents and other carers should be made aware of their responsibilities and their rights, together with advice about the power of professionals to intervene in their family circumstances.
- Personal information is confidential and should only be shared with permission of the individual unless the disclosure of confidential personal information is necessary in order to protect a child.

In all circumstances, information must be confined to those people directly involved in the professional network of each individual child on a *strict* need to know basis.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

We all have a part to play in preventing abuse and maltreatment or responding appropriately to it if and when it comes to our attention. Assemblies of God (GB) has committed to providing as much assistance as it can to all churches in fellowship to build firm foundations however, the National Leadership Team are clear that this should not be interpreted as an opportunity locally to reduce any sense of responsibility or duty of care that must be taken to uphold the principles and practices of safeguarding within the local church. To strengthen our commitment to safeguarding within the church the National Leadership Team have developed partnership with 31:8*, which enables us to gain expertise and assistance nationally regarding safeguarding matters and have a consistent point of reference available. 31:8* is a respected Christian safeguarding charity in the UK and they exist to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. They have a 24 hour helpline, support for policy development, professional training and advice, undertake DBS checks, provide resources and regular training and updates.

Data and Statistics - Local and National:

NSPCC estimated that in 2021 1 in 20 children in the UK had been sexually abused. 2,800 children in the UK were the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

Over a third of all police recorded sexual offenses were against children.

In England, in the year between 2021-2022 there was a 5% increase in the number of concerns of abuse with Safeguarding enquiries increasing by 7% in the year up to March 2021 33,954 cases of coercive control cases in England and Wales with 758 in Merseyside region alone, up from 24,856 the year previously.

Domestic Abuse and Neglect are increasing profiles on Wirral.

In 2021 the most common type of risk was neglect with 50% of risks being in the person's home.

2022 saw the highest rate in Safeguarding referrals since records began in 2014.

Nationally the absence rate of children from school in May 2023 was 8.9% with persistent absence at 22.1%

Safeguarding concerns on Wirral between April 2022-2023 saw 587,970 concerns of abuse made - an increase of 9% 1,553 per 100K adults which is above national average.

The most common abuse type is 'Neglect and Acts of Omission' which reflects the national picture, a slight increase in sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of 1.9% from the previous year.

Wirral Safeguarding Board have some excellent 7 minute briefings which can be found here:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

We must be aware that; '**these things can happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned and we must be vigilant.

Life Church (all locations and activities) will foster an ongoing culture of vigilance to maintain a safer environment for all children and young people by:

- Checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers during the recruitment process by following guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Formulating an Induction policy for new staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring the Designated Safeguarding Lead has undergone suitable training and that it is refreshed regularly. (Level 2 &3 Safeguarding)
- Arranging regular Safeguarding training and refreshment courses for all staff and volunteers.
- Raising awareness of Child Protection issues and equipping children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Supporting any child, young person or vulnerable adult who has been abused by cooperating with other professionals.
- Never tolerating bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism or any other forms of discrimination.
- We will ensure that our staffing ratios are adequate at all times; up to 2 years old 1 adult to 3 children, up to 3 years of age at least 1 adult to 5 children, up to 8 years old 1 adult to 8 children. Although for children over the age of 8 there is no official guidance the suggested ratio is two adults for every 20 children with an additional adult for each 10 thereafter. Wherever possible we will have a mix of both male and female adult workers on the team.

To establish a safer environment we at Life Church (all locations and activities) will:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults know who they can go to and talk if they are worried.
- Ensure every member of staff and all volunteers know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead person(s) is and a culture of Safeguarding and Risk Assessment is developed.
- Adopt a code of conduct for all staff.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the Whistleblowing policy.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required regarding safeguarding matters.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, young people and vulnerable adults to enable appropriate support to be targeted effectively. These records will be kept securely, in the safe.

Guidance on 'Whether this is a Child Protection matter.'

If staff or volunteers have significant concerns about any child, young person or indeed a vulnerable adult, they should immediately make them known to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The definition of 'abuse' has been changed to clarify that harm can include witnessing ill-treatment of others and that this is particularly relevant when children see, hear or experience domestic abuse and its effects.

Concerns may include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Domestic abuse

- Cyber bullying/Trolling
- Child Sexual Exploitation/Trafficking
- Grooming
- Child on child abuse
- Contextual Safeguarding
- County lines (Criminal Exploitation CCE)
- 'Honour' based Abuse including FGM and Forced Marriage
- Upskirting

However, this list is not exhaustive. Links to more information can be found:

<https://www.wirralsafeguarding.co.uk/7-minute-briefings/>

Confidentiality:

Never guarantee confidentiality to a child who discloses information to you, some kinds of information will need to be shared to keep them safe. Let the child know that you will keep them safe but may need to tell others who can help them:

'There are some secrets I can't keep but I promise that if someone is hurting you or frightening you I will help to keep you safe. I cannot do that on my own and will need to talk to ... about it.'

Talking and listening to children or vulnerable adults:

A child or young person may not necessarily feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused.

If a child chooses to disclose, you SHOULD:

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully and uncritically, at the child's pace.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell.
- Tell the child you **MUST** pass the information on.
- Make a careful record of **EXACTLY** what was seen and said - in the child's own words.

You should NEVER:

- Take photographs or examine an injury.
- Investigate or probe aiming to prove or disprove possible abuse
- never ask leading questions.
- Make promises to children or vulnerable adults about confidentiality.
- Assume someone else will take the action.
- Confront a person or accuse anyone.
- Jump to conclusions or react with shock, threat or horror.
- Forget to record what you have been told.
- Ask a child or vulnerable adult to sign a written copy of the disclosure.

Record Keeping:

Well-kept records are essential, they should state who was present, time, date and place. They should use the child's words whenever possible, and be factual. Forms should be completed in pen.

Responding to allegations of abuse:

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

They will follow the procedures as stated below:

1. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns on the attached form immediately to : Luke Andrews **Designated Safeguarding Lead** Tel: 078040004117 (or to **Location leaders**; Bebington - Luke Andrews. Neston - Aly Field-Baines, who will contact a DSL immediately.)

2. In his absence, Mrs Lynn Roberts: **Deputy Safeguarding Lead**. Tel: 07809690770, email: lynn@mylifechurch.co.uk

Who are the Designated Leads nominated by the Leadership and Trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with allegations or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referral to statutory authorities.

3. If the suspicions implicate both the safeguarding coordinator and or the Deputy coordinator then reports should be made in the first instance to ThirtyOne:Eight (formerly CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Tel: 0845 120 4550. Alternatively contact Social Services or the Police. The Chair of Trustees should also be informed.

4. Where the concern is about a child the safeguarding coordinator should contact: **Jonathan McIlveen** who is the **Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility** or Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of Protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from CCPAS as above.

5. **The local Children's Social Services Office telephone number is 0151 606 2008 (9am - 5pm)**
The Out of Hours Emergency number is 0151 677 6557

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number is 0151 606 2006 (9am - 5pm) **The out of hours Emergency number is 0151 677 6557**

The Police Child Protection Team number is 0151 777 2683/2684/2685/2686 In Emergency situations call: 999

6. Where required, the Safeguarding Lead should then immediately inform the insurance company and other strategic personnel within the denomination.

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

8. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

9. Absence of the Safeguarding or Deputy Safeguarding Leads should in no way delay the referral to Social Services, Police or taking the advice from 31:8.

10. The Senior Leadership and Trustees will support the Safeguarding Lead /Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared on a strict need to know basis.

11. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or to seek advice from 31:8 (quoting member number 6836), although Leadership and the Trustees hope that members of this organisation will use this procedure.

12. If, however, the person with the concern feels that the Safeguarding coordinator/ Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding coordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside

agency directly.

13. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership and Trustees demonstrate a commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

Early help:

We should be vigilant and report to DSLs and other professionals (such as Social care, police or medical staff) the potential need for early help support for a family or child who:

- ☐ Is frequently missing/ goes missing from education, home or care
- ☐ Has experienced multiple suspensions and is at risk of being excluded from an educational setting
- ☐ Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending
- ☐ Is disabled, and/ or has SEND
- ☐ Is a Young Carer
- ☐ Is bereaved
- ☐ Is showing signs of anti social or criminal behaviour including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups, serious violence including knife crime
- ☐ Is at risk of being radicalised
- ☐ Is viewing problematic and or inappropriate content online or developing inappropriate relationships online
- ☐ Is in a family situation presenting challenges for the child (drugs, alcohol, mental health, domestic abuse)
- ☐ Is a privately fostered child
- ☐ Is suffering with their own mental health
- ☐ Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- ☐ Has returned home to the family from care

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult:

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 coordinator will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or 31:8*) for advice in case of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parent/guardian/carer unless it is 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 and support but not if this places the child at risk or in significant harm.
- Where a parent/carer is unwilling to seek help or support, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services directly for advice. - Seek and follow the advice given by 31:8* - who will confirm this 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 coordinator will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker and families or Police Child Protection Team directly.
- They will not speak to the parent/ carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by 31:8* if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/ Police. 31:8* will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS 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 coordinator, 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 safeguarding adviser (SA)/ Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Supporting those affected by abuse:

The Leadership and Board of Trustees are committed to offering Pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate and offering support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of LIFE Church in either location.

This will be achieved through our Pastoral Care Teams, through our small group network and by offering referral to appropriate counselling bodies.

Guidelines for Discipline: (Please see our Behaviour Management Policy)

Working with children, young people or vulnerable adults is a rewarding ministry. We want all our workers to enjoy the time they spend in our children's and youth ministry and we want our children and young people to develop a Christian faith which will mature into adulthood. We include awareness of Trauma informed practice and ACE's in our Safeguarding training.

However, working in this field does present its challenges. These guidelines offer assistance in how to respond to such challenges.

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement.

Discipline brings security, produces character and prepares for life. It is evidence of love and is God's heart.

The Do's and Don'ts of discipline in children's and youth work and in working with vulnerable adults:

- Never smack or hit a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Discipline out of love - never anger, call on the support of another children's worker if you feel you may deal with the situation reactively rather than responsively.
- Do not shout or put down a young

person.

- Lay down ground rules, have a code of conduct and make it clear.
- Make sure children and young people are aware of the consequences of not following the rules. - Never reject a child, just the behaviour that is causing the offense "the behaviour you have displayed is unacceptable." "You made a wrong choice but I know you can turn this around." - Ask yourself why!... Why is the child behaving this way? Is there a situation, circumstance, or additional need?
- Work on each individual child, young person or vulnerable adult's positives, catch them being good and praise them for that - encourage and build them up.

Responding to inappropriate behaviour:

1. A quiet word with the individual to encourage them to make the right choice.
 2. Verbal warning to change the way they are behaving.
 3. Challenge any children, young people or vulnerable adults who are displaying provoking or unsafe behaviour or encouraging such behaviour.
 4. Praise others for doing the right thing.
 5. Distract and redirect the child or young person discreetly to another activity or to an opportunity to help you or another adult.
 6. Time out - ask the individual to take a minute or two away from the activity to calm down and think about their behaviour - this should be at the side of the room, in sight of the team and only for up to 5 minutes for children, a team member should attempt to chat to the child or young person to support them or offer advice.
 7. If the negative behaviour continues, refer to the Leader who will then speak to them and if appropriate their parent/carer to best support them going forward.
 8. If regular inappropriate behaviour occurs or a serious breach of discipline has taken place then the Team Leader should contact parents as soon as possible and discuss the way forward with them, regular behavioural issues from the same child should be noted as a cause for concern with the SENDCO. (See Incident Form) a 1:1 may be put in place to support the child.
 9. Removal of the child or young person from the group for the day/session.
- *Periods of exclusion or Permanent exclusion with parental knowledge should only be used when all other options have been exhausted and only after discussions with Senior Leadership.

Unaccompanied Children and young people under 18:

On occasions children playing or passing by outside church without an adult or teenagers, may want to take part in church activities. If this occurs the following steps should be taken:

On arrival the child should be welcomed by the Team Leader however, due to Health and Safety requirements the child should be made aware that s/he will be unable to attend the group until the appropriate forms have been filled in and signed by a parent/carer.

The visiting child should be given registration forms with a leaflet about the church and its activities with contact numbers to pass on to their parent/carer enabling them to contact the Leader.

The child should then be sent home and encouraged to pass on the information, should the child live locally they may return the forms and join in the activity on the same day.

A courtesy call should be made to the parents to introduce yourself and the Church to them.

The child's name should be added to the register only when all forms are completed, and they are attending the activity.

The child should be introduced to other children and made aware of acceptable behaviour rules for the group/activity.

Registration, Consent and other forms: (Please see Data Protection policy and Privacy Notice)

All children and young people should fill in a registration form before joining a group. Consent forms should be given to children before taking part in activities and trips with the appropriate advice for parents/carers included in its information.

Information should be sought as to any allergies, medical information and special requirements the child may have. (See Consent form proformas or database)

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998 and GDPR (05/18), organisations have to be extra vigilant should they wish to take photographs or film footage of people and must take care as to how those images are used. Certain legal protocols must be followed to safeguard children and young people:

- Permission must be obtained in writing before a photograph is taken or film footage is recorded.
- When using photographs of young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or give other personal details.
- Written permission from a parent/carer must be obtained before using images on any publicity whether it be online or on publications.

Personal Care:

Every child and vulnerable adult is entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity. The level of personal care must be appropriate to and related to the age of the child or adult whilst also acknowledging that some children and vulnerable people have additional special needs.

For young children:

- One children's worker should accompany a minimum of 2 children to the toilet and should wait outside the toilet room whilst children are inside the children should be encouraged to close but not lock the cubicle door.
- If a child is unable to manage a zip, button or belt the children's worker can assist with the child's permission but this should be done outside of the cubicle space with the toilet room door open and with at least one other child in the room.
- Workers/volunteers under the age of 16 years or any occasional volunteer without a DBS check in place should not accompany a child to the toilet.
- If the child is unable to go to the toilet unassisted then it is the parent's responsibility to take the child to the toilet. The parent/carer should be called upon if this happens during a session/activity.
- If the baby/toddler is still in nappies then the parent should be called upon to change the nappy: leaders/workers should not change nappies.

For children, young people and adults with Additional Needs:

We recognise that all children, young people and vulnerable adults should have the opportunity to be included as much as possible in all sessions and activities, should they have a toileting issue or need additional support when changing a separate Health Care Plan should be put into place and agreed upon by Senior Leadership with the parent/carer. This will need to be recorded on a written form.

Touch: (See also Guidelines for Prayer Ministry Document)

The following guidelines are intended to provide clarification for all children's and youth leaders and all who are in a position of trust within the organisation:

- ❖ Leaders and workers should ensure that any contact with a child or young person is kept public. Physical contact within the context of a group can be perceived as very different from physical contact behind a closed door.
- ❖ Any physical touch between a leader/worker and a child should be related to the needs of the child, never the leaders.
- ❖ The leader/worker should avoid any physical contact that may be thought to be sexually stimulating to either the adult or the child.
- ❖ The leader/worker should respect that every child has the right to decide how much physical contact s/he has with others. This does not apply to exceptional circumstances where medical intervention may be needed.
- ❖ If the leader gives First Aid he or she should encourage the child or young person to do as much as possible for themselves. However, due consideration should be given to the child's best interests and appropriate help should be given where necessary. Always complete an accident form as soon as possible after administering First Aid and obtain a signature from parent/carer upon collection of the child. (See Accident Form)
- ❖ Every leader is a team member and therefore a team member should be free to help and support another leader by constructively challenging any action or behaviour which could be misunderstood or misconstrued. If any leader has any concerns, they should always be reported immediately to the Senior Leader or Designated Child Protection Officer.

Transport:

Drivers and vehicles must comply with all aspects of the applicable sections of the current Road Traffic Act. Drivers must have an appropriate driving licence and insurance and comply with the law in relation to seat belts, child seats and booster seats. Further information can be found: www.gov.uk/highway-code

Transporting children, young people or vulnerable adults on behalf of the church is a regulated activity and DBS registration is required. Drivers should also complete an Approved Driver Form.

When transporting children there should always be two adults present (preferably a male and a female leader) and a minimum of 2 children. Written consent from a parent/carer must be obtained. Workers should not drive young people or children home alone and the child/ young person should sit in the rear of the vehicle with the appropriate safety harness.

Working with Children, Young people and Vulnerable adults with Additional Needs:

Some children, young people and adults will need extra help to feel fully included in the life of the church, group or activity.

The registration form that is filled out by all children and adults prior to taking part in any group or activity will help to identify any additional/special needs a child may have. Workers should be aware that any child or young person attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need additional help in areas such as communication, mobility, or personal care. Children may have developmental delay or may be suffering from conditions or syndromes, or sensitivity disorders which will require individual plans to be put into place to allow the child to participate as fully as possible whilst maintaining independence and dignity.

Once an additional need has been identified the Team Leader should approach the parent/carer for a discussion around any support that could be put into place for the child/young person. This should be noted on a Health Care Plan ensuring all workers involved with the child or young person are fully aware of what is expected of them. Ensure that a worker of the same gender is able to assist with toileting should they need this.

The Team Leader along with the SENDCO, Designated Health and Safety Officer and Senior Leadership will identify how to make the meeting place of the group accessible and safe (e.g. ramps, hearing loop, disabled toilet) They will also identify and arrange appropriate training where possible for staff.

E-Safety and Acceptable use

E-Safety (or electronic safety) is the collective term used for safeguarding involving the use of mobile phones, computers, laptops, tablets, netbooks and other electronic devices including; games consoles, to communicate and access the internet, emails, text messages, SMS messages, Instant messaging, Social networking sites and other social media often referred to as Information Communications Technology. This policy will provide guidance on both fixed and mobile internet technologies including digital cameras, digital video equipment. Online safety also includes disinformation, misinformation and conspiracy theories. Disinformation is the deliberate creation and spread of false or misleading content, such as fake news. Misinformation is the unintentional spread of this false or misleading content.

We will regularly filter, review and monitor the effectiveness of our filters and exercise our right to monitor the use of our computer systems. We will use filters and delete inappropriate material where we believe unauthorised use of the computer system is or may be taking place. Wifi codes and passwords should only be given to the authorised persons for use of church laptops and devices, it is the responsibility of those authorised persons to monitor anyone they allow to use their devices.

People using our Computer system will agree to and adhere to a Code of Conduct (see appendices) violations to this will result in a ban - temporary or permanent on internet use and in addition disciplinary action may be added. If necessary police or local authorities may be informed.

Photographic/Video Images:

Only agreed members of our Media team should take pictures and images during Church activities under the leadership of Will Kell.

We will aim to give clear guidelines which must be operated when taking photographic and video images of young people, children and vulnerable adults in church activities.

Photographs that include children and young people will be carefully selected and will not enable individual children to be clearly identified. Where possible groups of children should be used rather than individuals.

Children's full names will not be used in association with photographs.

Permission must be sought before images are taken and/or displayed, this includes the parent and the child/ young persons consent. Images should only be used for the specific purpose agreed in the consent.

Written consent should specify how images will be destroyed or stored.

Occasionally, during events digital photographs or clips are taken for website or social media use - these images must adhere to this policy and permission must be sought before posting to the public. Memory cards must be stored securely on the premises and wiped after use and editing should take place on passworded computers only by authorised and DBS checked persons.

Staff and volunteers should not use mobile phones to take images of children, young people or vulnerable adults and should use cameras and video recorders obtained specifically for this purpose. Staff should never keep images of children or young people on their mobile phone or electronic devices.

Communication:

Social Media and Electronic communication:

Social media and electronic communication covers networking sites such as Instagram, Facebook, TIKTOK, Twitter, Snapchat and Telegram and messaging applications including email, Facebook Messenger, MSM, WhatsApp, Skype, FaceTime and Snapchat. This list is not an exhaustive list and new forms of electronic communication are added daily.

The overriding priority is that the leader remains accountable in every communication sent to young people:

X formerly known as Twitter: This is an open forum, X should not be used for contacting young people or posting information about an event specifically aimed at children and/or young people.

FACEBOOK and Instagram: Young people under the age of 13 years old should not have a Facebook or Instagram account. If you discover an under 13 who has you should challenge the parents, not the young person. You can also report the account anonymously via Facebook. Any contact with a young person via Facebook or Instagram should be via a group page and another leader should be linked into the conversation. If it is necessary to communicate details of an event with a young person via personal inbox messages or DMs then this should be done in the presence of another leader or by copying another leader or parent into the message. Be aware of this turning into a conversation and end it immediately.

Friend requests must not be sent to young people; if a request is sent to you, it is not advisable to accept in every case, you should consult the young person's parent/carer for permission before accepting it.

Inbox messaging should not be done on an individual one to one basis; always copy another leader into your messages or use a group page.

As Christian leaders we have a constant responsibility to ensure that posts on our profile are never those which would bring the Christian Faith, the Church or ourselves into disrepute. This is regardless of whether it is visible to the young people in our care or not. This includes pages we 'like' and the comments and photographs/videos we post. If 'friends' post inappropriate items which appear on your timeline or you are tagged in, they should be hidden and deleted as soon as possible. We must be at all times, as much as possible, beyond reproach in every respect. As a part of our Safer recruitment and due diligence checks we reserve the right to consider online searches for staff and volunteers wishing to serve.

EMAIL: Email should only be used to communicate details of an event or activity and not for one to one conversations. Send to the whole group and copy another leader into the mail. Similarly if you receive a personal email always copy another leader into the reply. Preferably send mail via the Churchsuite database and management system used by the church.

Chat and Personal Messaging apps: Like email these should not be used for personal chat, if a young person sends you a personal message you should forward it to another leader and copy them into the reply. You should not give details of your private messaging accounts to young people. If you have the facility, text messages should be sent via the church's message service Churchsuite or via a designated work phone.

We will respond appropriately and sensitively to all E-safety concerns, where a person is concerned there may be an e- safety concern this should be reported to the church's Safeguarding Lead in the same manner as reporting any other Safeguarding concern (pink safeguarding form found in office) the designated Safeguarding officer will then determine if the matter should be reported to statutory authorities or other appropriate agencies.

Gifts to young people and children:

It is recognised that there are occasions when gifts or rewards will be given to young people for example Christmas, birthdays or to reward particularly good effort or behaviour. The overriding principle is that these gifts are made on behalf of the church via the particular group and not from the individual leader. This is particularly important when the gift is given to an individual young person rather than to the whole group and such presentations must always be made in public or group settings.

The following guidelines apply when choosing the item to give:

- The item should be one which encourages or supports the Christian Faith of the recipient - The item should be age appropriate
- The item will not contain language or image which is or could be interpreted as attitudes which are contrary to a Christian lifestyle.

This policy was agreed on behalf of the Leadership and Trustees by:
Name:

Signed:

Date:

Reviews:

This policy was amended on behalf of the Leadership as follows:

Date	Reviewed by	Amendments made
12.01.2017	L. Roberts	Updated e-safety and media policy, written code of conduct for internet use and included in Safeguarding policy.
10.11.2017	L. Roberts	Updated layout, reference to Guidance on Prayer Ministry.
25.05.2018	L.Roberts	General review and inclusion of reference to GDPR.
07.09.2018	L.Roberts	Updated to include amendments to KCSinE 2018 and updated CCPAS name. *Now known as Thirtyone:eight. www.Thirtyoneeight.org
25.01.2019		
16.08.2019	L.Roberts	Updates of local profile and data
20.08.2020	L.Roberts	Updated in view of KCSIE updates, included reference to Upskirting and Local arrangements.
	L. Roberts	Updated inline with Coronavirus annexe and KCSIE updates.

04.02.2021	L. Roberts	Updated to add in details regarding Neston campus.
09/21	L. Roberts	Updated inline with KCSIE and inline with our updated Behaviour Management Policy. Addition of Wallasey campus.
06/2022	L. Roberts	Updates in regards to KCSIE and updated local and national statistics.
06/2023	L. Roberts	Lynn Roberts KCSIE updates and addition of filtering and Monitoring. Change to named Trustee.
September 2023	L. Roberts	Lynn Roberts - updated Definition of Safeguarding, Updated X(formerly Twitter), Update to indicators of abuse and neglect - domestic abuse.
July 2024	L. Roberts	added Appendix 7 what to do if a young person or vulnerable adult cannot keep themselves safe.
March 2025	L. Roberts	KCSIE updates and review, named DSL changes and contact numbers changed
September 2025	L. Roberts	

Appendix 1.

Guidance.

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.

Neglect:

Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development by:

Failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failing to ensure adequate supervision, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs or to children impacted by witnessing or experiencing Domestic abuse.

Emotional abuse:

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 as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve serious bullying, causing children to frequently 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 but it can occur alone.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activity, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Activities may involve physical contact or non-contact activity such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual online images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse includes Child Sexual Exploitation; where children receive 'something' (e.g.: food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, affection, attention, gifts,

money) as a result of them performing or others performing on them sexual act/activities.

Children and young people cannot consent to being sexually exploited or abused.

*Note: It may prove useful to have your child protection form on a specific coloured paper which will stand out clearly for the Designated Person and can be easily found. Also to make staff aware that this is the form to look out for.

For the purpose of the event only data will be protected and this document will be shredded securely after the event.

Parental Consent Form ([*edit for use](#))

Event

Date

Time

Venue

Full name of child

Date of birth

Parent/Guardian full name

Address

Contact number

Email

Does your child suffer from any illness or have any special needs which we need to be aware of including allergies and ongoing medication?

Emergency contact name

Relationship to child

Contact number

Family Doctor

Doctors Surgery number

In the event of an emergency, if I cannot be contacted, if to delay is against medical advice and permission to treat is required I hereby *authorise the designated leader to act on my behalf*.

Signature of parent/
carer _____ Print
name _____
Date _____

I understand that I am giving permission for my data to be held and used by Life Church
for this purpose []*tick

Appendix 3.

Consent Form for Transport. ([*edit for use](#))

Child's Full Name

Date of Birth

Address

Contact numbers of parent/carer

I give permission for my child to be transported via minibus or car
to/from _____

I am aware that s/he will be required to wear a seatbelt and that s/he will need to follow
the acceptable behaviour rules of the group at all times.

All drivers will hold a current driving licence and are insured to drive. All adults hold a
current DBS check and will be chaperoned.

I acknowledge that there must be a parent/carer present at the drop off point at
the designated time: _____

Signed:

Date:

I understand that I am giving permission for Life Church to hold and use my data for this purpose. [] *tick

Appendix 4.

First Aid Form

Name of Injured Person:

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Type of injury:

Area of body:

Treatment used:

First Aider name:

First Aider signature:

Witnessed by:

Parent/guardian signature if required:

Follow up:

Hospital visit? Yes/ No

Details:

Health and Safety Officer informed? Yes/No

Details:

Appendix 5.

Please see the Safeguarding Report Form, which should be photocopied on coloured paper.

Appendix 6.

Code of Conduct for Safe use of the Internet whilst on Church premises.

You are expected to read and agree to the following expectations for responsible internet use whilst on our premises:

- Where using a network or similar I will use only my own login and password which will be kept secret.
- I understand that I must not bring software into the church without permission.
- I am responsible for the e-mail that I send and for contacts made. I will only send messages which are polite, sensible and free from unsuitable language.
- I will ensure that they are carefully written. I will not send any attachments which are hurtful, harmful, abusive or offensive.
- If I receive anything, see anything or come across a website which may be unsuitable or makes me feel uncomfortable I will immediately tell a responsible person.
- I understand that (under 18 years) I must never give my home address, phone number, send photos, give out personal information or arrange to meet someone who contacts me over the internet.
- I will not send anonymous messages and I know that chain letters are not permitted.
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I will not be allowed to use the internet and or email and that (under 18 years) parents/ carers will be informed.

Signed:

Date:

Signed on behalf of Life Church:

Appendix 7.

Procedure to follow in the case a young person or vulnerable adult discloses they cannot keep themselves safe or you have concerns for their welfare.

If during the course of an activity or event a young person or vulnerable adult lets you know that they are not able to keep themselves safe, that they are self harming or have suicidal ideation or plans to commit suicide this must be taken seriously, let the person know that to keep them safe you will need to speak to someone from the Safeguarding team or a Senior Leader.

- Listen to them and try to establish if they have any need for medical assistance (have they taken medication, drugs or cut themselves, are there wounds that need attention?)
- Seek medical attention if required - call 999 for an ambulance
- Eliminate where possible, any triggers or overwhelming environmental triggers such as lights, sounds, people
- Bring another leader alongside you for support
- Establish if they have a plan to end their life, if not what protective measures do they have? (friends, family, children, faith etc)
- Ask if they have any plans for the day, evening, week ahead and encourage them that they have things to look forward to
- Signpost them to the agencies below, if you feel it is appropriate or necessary call the mental health crisis team for them while they are with you or call 999
- If a young person under the age of 18, or 25 with additional needs then contact a parent/ carer to collect them and relay that you have concerns about them, signpost the parents to the services and agencies for support
- If the person has a plan, or cannot see a way ahead and you are concerned for their safety, call the mental health crisis team for advice. Do not let them leave if possible, if they do leave and you are concerned then call the MHCT and explain what has happened giving them as much information as you can.
- Call 999 in the case of an emergency
- It may be wise to alert the train station in such cases so they can remain vigilant
- Report the incident as soon as possible to the Safeguarding team to follow up.

National Agencies and Services:

- Samaritans - call 116123 or email: jo@samaritans.org
- Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 for a text reply service
- Call CALM on 0800 585 858 5pm-12am everyday
- Papyrus - 0800 068 4141 or email: pat@papyrus-uk.org or text HOPELINE247 to 07860039967
- Childline - 08001111
- Mind - Call 0300 123 3393

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-worried-about-someone-else/supporing-someone-suicidal-thoughts/creating-safety-plan/>

Local Agencies and Services:

<https://healthwatchcwac.org.uk/coronavirus/cwp-updates/cwp-mental-health-crisis-line/>

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's dedicated 24/7 all age urgent mental health helpline has a new Freephone number. The new number for the service is **0800 145 6485**.

An online support hub is also available at: www.cwp.nhs.uk/contact/need-urgent-help

We're here for you when you need us. The Freephone helpline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is available to people of all ages, including children and young people, who require urgent support.

The updated Freephone number 0800 145 6485 will connect you straight to a dedicated team of local mental health professionals to provide help and support when you need it most.

Please note, A&E and 999 are not the best places to get help for the majority of mental health problems – call 0800 145 6485 to be directed to the best local service to support you.

You should still call 999 or go to A&E if you have an immediate, life-threatening emergency requiring mental or physical health assistance.