



Safeguarding Children, Youth & Vulnerable Adults Policy

29 Burrows Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

May 4th, 2022

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Duty of care statement

The Vine Church ("The Vine") acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The Vine is committed to ensuring its safeguarding practices reflect international best practice, uphold Hong Kong Legislation, and are founded on biblical

principles of God's care for and protection of children and vulnerable populations.

As a church we will communicate clearly our safeguarding commitments to everyone we are responsible for and to, including but not limited to our own employees and volunteers, children, youth, vulnerable adults, and their families, as well as visitors, partners, and the different congregations. We will make clear the behaviours we expect to be upheld to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and the action we will take to ensure their safety.

1.2 The Vine's statement (theological basis)

At The Vine we believe that safeguarding children, youth, and vulnerable adults begins with God's love and protection for everyone and God's desire for all to discover fullness of life. At The Vine, our purpose and mission are to build the Family of God by Growing Big People, and to this end we receive and welcome everyone. As a church we have a duty of care to safeguard our children, youth, and vulnerable adults so that they are free from any forms of abuse, including neglect. We are committed to safeguarding spiritual, mental, and physical wellbeing of children, youth, and vulnerable adults so that they may grow into responsible and fulfilled human beings. To this end, we are committed to creating a safe environment at The Vine, where safeguarding is an established culture and upheld by all.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is:

- to provide all members of staff (paid or unpaid), volunteers, and anyone working with or on behalf of The Vine (paid or unpaid), as well as our beneficiaries including children, youth, vulnerable adults, and their families with a clear and secure framework for safeguarding when attending activities and programs organized or run by any of the language congregations, ministries, or groups of The Vine;
- to allow all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific children's, youth's, and vulnerable adults' protection issues;
- to promote best practice in providing children, youth, and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection; and,
- to protect The Vine from the damage that can be caused by allegations of abuse.

1.4 Scope:

This policy recognizes that the welfare and interests of children, youth, and vulnerable adults are paramount. This policy applies equally regardless of the age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. At the same time, The Vine acknowledges that certain children, youth, and vulnerable adults may be particularly susceptible to abuse, and The Vine is committed to taking reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

This policy applies to all The Vine's staff and volunteers (paid or unpaid) including the Board of Directors, Elders, pastors, sessional workers, volunteers, student interns, contractors, or anyone working or serving in or on behalf of The Vine (paid or unpaid), collectively called "staff and volunteers". They must adhere to this policy to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults and report any concerns about their welfare. This policy aims to help them understand what they need to do, and what they can expect of one another with regards to safeguarding. It focuses on safety requirements and makes clear what should be done or not be done to keep children, youth, and vulnerable adults safe.

To promote the safety and wellbeing of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, The Vine endeavours to:

- inform everyone who visits The Vine's premises of our safeguarding commitment and thus set clear expectations on children's, youth's, and vulnerable adults' protection. This safeguarding statement will be displayed in a public and visible place;
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and have acknowledged this policy and completed and signed the Safeguarding Declaration Form in Annex;
- provide all staff and volunteers with appropriate learning opportunities of safeguarding concerns relating to children, youth, and vulnerable adults;
- take appropriate actions in the event of incidents and/or concerns/allegations of abuse and provide support to the relevant persons who raise or disclose the concern;
- maintain and securely store confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns;

- prevent the employment or engagement of unsuitable individuals and execute appropriate consequences or termination of employment or engagement for misconduct; and,
- protect all staff and volunteers from unnecessary risks of being accused of abuse.

2. Definitions:

For the purpose of this guideline the following general definitions apply:

- "Safeguarding" refers to promoting the welfare of children, youth, and vulnerable adults and protecting them from harm. It is the responsibility of those organizations and professionals whose work brings them into contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, as well as the responsibility of parents/guardians, caregivers, and the wider community, in caring for them. In the context of a church, "safeguarding" describes the policies, procedures, and measures that a church takes to promote the wellbeing of and prevent harm to children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- "Children" and "youth" are persons under the age of 18.
- "Vulnerable adults" are persons aged 18 or above whom, because of any disability, illness, learning difficulty, or any other reasons, have difficulties to take care of themselves and/or protect themselves against harm, abuse, and/or exploitation.
- "Disabilities" is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.
- "Staff and volunteers" refer to all The Vine's staff and volunteers (paid or unpaid) including the Board of Directors, Elders, pastors, sessional workers, volunteers, student interns, contractors, or anyone working or serving in or on behalf of The Vine (paid or unpaid), collectively called "staff and volunteers".

- “Safeguarding Officer” refers to the person allocated and trained to promote safeguarding, handle safeguarding issues, reports, and disclosures, make decisions, and manage the safeguarding situations that arise.
- “Deputy Safeguarding Officer” refers to the person allocated and trained to promote safeguarding, handle safeguarding issues, reports, and disclosures, make decisions, and manage the safeguarding situations that arise. The Deputy Safeguarding Officer takes over the responsibility of safeguarding in the absence of Safeguarding Officer.
- “Board of Directors/Elders” of the Vine refers to those who have a fiscal, spiritual, and overall responsibility to ensure The Vine is a robust and strong organization and meets its S88 requirements.
- “K4C” refers to The Vine’s children’s ministry and will forthwith be referred to as K4C.
- “Flight” refers to The Vine’s youth ministry and will forthwith be referred to as Flight.
- “Position of trust” is the position an adult has over a child, youth, and/or vulnerable adult if they regularly teach, supervise, or have sole charge of the child, youth, and/or vulnerable adult in certain settings or when in certain roles.

2.1 Definition of abuse

“Abuse” is any form of physical, emotional, mental, sexual, or spiritual mistreatment that leads to injury or harm. It more commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power and a breach of trust.

Abuse can happen to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult regardless of age, gender, race, or ability. Both men and women can perpetrate abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by someone of the same gender as the victim.

Disabled children, youth, and vulnerable adults can experience the same sort of abuse as others, but they may be more vulnerable to abuse because of their dependency on others or barriers in communication.

2.2 Types of abuse

Physical abuse

Using excessive force to make the child, youth, or vulnerable adult feel pain or uncomfortable, actual or likely physical injury, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This includes deliberate hitting, beating, slapping, shaking, throwing, burning, drowning, suffocating, poisoning, and corporal punishment.

Examples of physical abuse in The Vine's context: Hitting a child, youth, or vulnerable adult because of behaviour issues. Spanking as a form of discipline. Physical punishment as discipline is strictly prohibited at The Vine.

Mental/Emotional abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional, mental, and behavioural development of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult caused by and including persistent or severe emotional ill treatment, shaming, humiliation, taunting, isolation, or rejection. It may involve conveying that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, and cause them to feel frightened, in danger, and/or corrupted; acting in a way that is detrimental to the self-esteem of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

Examples of mental/emotional abuse in The Vine's context: Shaming as a form of motivation. Persistent failure to show any respect to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, e.g., continually ignoring or isolating a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Refusing to allow a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to participate in group activities.

Sexual abuse

Actual or likely exploitation, representing the involvement of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, and are illegal, or violate social taboos or family rules. Such as touching of genitals, being forced to watch or take part in pornography, or being coerced to have sexual activity of any kind. It is illegal and socially considered abuse whether the child consents, as children are not able to give informed consent.

Sexual grooming is defined as actions or behaviours designed to entice, encourage, or persuade a child, youth, or vulnerable adult into inappropriate and/or unlawful sexual activity and is also an abuse.

All online sexual exploitation activities come under this definition and will be addressed as a form of abuse.

Examples of sexual abuse in The Vine's context: Inappropriate touching. Exposure to sexually explicit language or material, including online. Showing children, youth, or vulnerable adults pornographic material or using them to produce such material. Sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, or the failure to protect a child, youth, or vulnerable adult from exposure to any kind of danger, including physical harm, cold, and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Examples of neglect in The Vine's context: Exposing a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to extreme weather conditions, e.g., extreme heat or cold. Failing to seek medical attention for injuries or illness. Exposing a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity. Failing to provide adequate nutrition and water when needed.

Bullying

Actions intended to intimidate and harm, causing physical, mental, or emotional abuse to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Verbal intimidation, such as racist and/or sexist remarks; emotional intimidation, such as isolating or exclusion, whereby the child, youth, or vulnerable adult experiences deliberate hostility. Abuse may be instigated by one or more adults and/or other children.

Examples of bullying in The Vine's context: Adults encourage bullying as a form of motivating a child to improve. Bullying behaviour is unacceptable at The Vine and will be addressed as a form of abuse.

Spiritual abuse

The misuse of power, authority, and/or trust by a spiritual leader or someone in a position of spiritual trust, power, or authority with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating, or dominating a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

The misuse of power within a framework of a spiritual belief or practice in order to meet the needs of the abuser (or enhance their position) at the expense of the welfare of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult. It results in spiritual harm to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult and can be linked to other abuse, such as physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.

Examples of spiritual abuse in The Vine's context: Using scriptures or beliefs to humiliate or embarrass a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Inappropriately use scripture to force giving/tithing. Humiliating/Embarrassing people with different religious views to maintain or emphasize their position as spiritual leader.

Abuse of trust

Abuse of trust is unacceptable. Sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust and the child, youth, or vulnerable adult in their care is deemed to be an abuse of trust and exploitation, even if the child, youth, or vulnerable adult is over the age of consent (i.e., 16 years old). The Vine regards all staff and volunteers as being in a position of trust.

Staff and volunteers should ensure they maintain healthy, positive, and professional relationships with all children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Staff and volunteers and others in positions of authority and trust, in relation to children, youth, and vulnerable adults, must not engage in sexual or romantic relationships with them. Doing so will be grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal.

Examples of abuse of trust in The Vine's context: Leveraging his/her position of trust to coerce or entice a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to have intimate or sexual relationship. Tricking a child, youth, or vulnerable adult into giving money for personal gain.

3. Implementation of the Safeguarding Policy

All staff and volunteers of The Vine must read and sign the Safeguarding Declaration Form before beginning any form of work (whether paid or unpaid).

All staff and volunteers must comply with the code of conduct. If during the duration of work of the staff and volunteers The Vine updates and/or revises this policy, The Vine may, where necessary, require such relevant persons to sign an updated Safeguarding Declaration Form acknowledging any changes to this policy and the code of conduct. Concerns and questions should be raised with the Safeguarding Officer.

3.1 Promoting best practice

Ethical framework

To promote positive behaviors and to provide children, youth, and vulnerable adults with the best possible experience and opportunities in The Vine's activities, all staff and volunteers must operate within an accepted ethical framework and core values of The Vine.

Risk management

When safeguarding children, youth, and vulnerable adults, particular attention should be paid to promoting a high level of awareness of the risks of harm and high standards of practice.

It is essential for staff and volunteers to be able to identify and manage risks to the safety and wellbeing of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, both in a planned risk assessment and in a dynamic risk assessment where situations and risks change.

To protect from harm and to foster resilience in children, youth, and vulnerable adults, it is also helpful to consider the protective factors that surround them. These may include a presence of a trusted adult in their lives, a skill or interest they are keen to develop and that keeps them focused on growth and brings hope, etc. This focus will help the staff and

volunteers with identifying positive factors to support, alongside of identifying risks and appropriate risk management.

Early intervention

Early intervention is best practice. It is not always easy to distinguish misconduct from abuse. It is, therefore, not the responsibility of The Vine's staff or volunteers to make judgements about whether abuse has taken place. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to identify and report any forms of misconduct and possible abuse or action that may lead to abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.

3.2 Behaviour & conflict management process

(For children's ministry "K4C", and youth ministry "Flight" behaviour protocols, contact the respective pastors.)

The Vine's staff and volunteers should model respectful, healthy, and safe relationships and treat children, youth, and vulnerable adults in their care as individuals and with respect.

When it comes to managing disruptive, dangerous or illegal behaviour of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers should refer to the specific behavioural protocols for K4C children and Flight youth to guide them through the outlined steps in order to resolve the conflict/disruption and keep them and others safe. The general guideline is to approach this process through restorative practice, from a relational stance and with the focus to prevent and restore the harm done to the individuals and to their relationship, where possible and appropriate. It is important to try understand the trauma-response behind the behaviour of children, youth and vulnerable adults and support them in regulating their behaviour and helping them to navigate the issues fuelling the behaviour. Where needed, signpost to specialised support available, and work closely with their family where possible and appropriate.

3.3 Code of conduct for staff and volunteers

When working with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults:

You should:

1. Treat children, youth, and vulnerable adults with respect and recognise them as individuals with their own right.

2. Create a safe and inclusive environment where children, youth, and vulnerable adults can be themselves and be supported to grow holistically.
3. Respect and nurture the trust of the children, youth, and vulnerable adults as well as the trust of their parents/guardians, taking all reasonable care to protect them from all forms of abuse while in your care.
4. Lessons and activities planned should always be risk-assessed and age-appropriate.
5. Ensure that all relevant dietary and health information, including any special needs, as well as emergency contact information, is collected upon new registrations and updates recorded in the respective database.
6. Dress and act professionally and appropriately for the situation at all times.
7. Be culturally aware and sensitive.
8. Inform and mentor children, youth, and vulnerable adults on the safety and behaviour protocols implemented for their wellbeing and safety, including online safety.
9. Encourage children, youth, and vulnerable adults to speak out about attitude or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable. Inform them of what they can do to keep safe, including online, and how to report concerns or abuse.
10. Be aware that children, youth, and vulnerable adults should have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention or when in danger. Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, rather than staff and volunteers. Avoid actions which could be misconstrued, such as tickling or rough playing.
11. Correct any person's inappropriate behaviour immediately if there is a safety risk (e.g., injury, immediate exposure to inappropriate material or danger of violence) and ensure that they and others around them are safe.
12. Follow the respective K4C and Flight behaviour protocols to manage disruptive/dangerous or illegal behaviour of children and youth towards themselves or others.

- 13.Ensure children, youth, and vulnerable adults are supervised appropriately during The Vine's activities, according to the specific guidelines for K4C and Flight and with appropriate female-to-male and adults-to-children/youth ratios.
- 14.Minimum-two-adult rule applies when working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- 15.Always be visible to other adults when working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults, e.g., do not talk to a child in a closed room.
- 16.Be accountable to each other and ask for help and support so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be addressed.
- 17.Report to the Safeguarding Officer if it is suspected that a child, youth, or vulnerable adult may be hurt by any inappropriate or abusive actions or attitudes of another person or if they may be at risk.

It is NOT appropriate to:

1. Give gifts of any kind to the children, youth, or vulnerable adults without the prior knowledge and consent of the parents/guardians.
2. Use abbreviations or language that could be misunderstood by others. For example, LOL.
3. Communicate after 10:00pm in order to maintain a safe boundary between work and personal life. The exception will be if a parent or a child, youth, or vulnerable adult needs urgent pastoral care, then the Children's and/or Youth Pastor will care with/for the family.

You must Not:

1. Act or speak in ways that is abusive towards a child, youth, and vulnerable adult or place them at risk.
2. Allow concerns and allegations to go unreported.
3. Hit, assault, or physically discipline a child, youth, or vulnerable adult in any way that is abusive. No physical punishment is allowed, including hitting, slapping, or spanking.
4. Verbally abuse a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, such as shouting in a disrespectful manner, swearing, and use of humiliating or shaming language.

5. Discriminate against, show different treatment to, or favour any children, youth, or vulnerable adults while excluding others.
6. Touch children, youth, or vulnerable adults in a manner which is inappropriate. A general guideline is not to touch in areas that would normally be covered by shorts and t-shirt. Inappropriate touching includes tough physical play, horseplay (such as wrestling, tickling), and kissing.
7. Engage in any activity or use language that is flirtatious, sexually suggestive, provocative, offensive, or exploitative that could be seen as harassment, bullying, assault, abuse, or abuse of trust. This includes all online interactions. Staff and volunteers must not develop physical, sexual, or romantic relationships with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.
8. Develop a physical or emotionally dependent relationship between staff and volunteers and children, youth, or vulnerable adults in their care; this is often referred to as "grooming".
9. Expose children, youth, or vulnerable adults to inappropriate activities and materials, such gambling and pornographic or violent pictures, videos, and literature.
10. Excuse, participate in, or facilitate behavior of children, youth, or vulnerable adults which is illegal, unsafe, or abusive
11. Do things for children, youth, and vulnerable adults of a personal nature that the children, youth, and vulnerable adults can do for themselves.
12. Smoke and/or be under the influence of alcohol and illegal substances.
13. Allow unauthorized adults (i.e., unknown individuals to children, youth, or leaders) into the spaces K4C and Flight uses at The Vine.
14. Take advantages (including, but not limited to, gifts, monetary benefits, and entertainment) from children, youth, or vulnerable adults or their parents/guardians. Taking bribes is strictly prohibited.
15. Leave children, youth, or vulnerable adults insufficiently supervised or alone.
16. Meet them at any place outside of The Vine's premises without the consent of their parents/guardians.

If a staff or volunteer have behaved inappropriately, they will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, they might be asked to suspend their roles or leave The Vine. We might also make a report to relevant authorities, such as the police and/or child protection services.

If any staff or volunteer becomes aware of any breaches of this code, they must report them to the Safeguarding Officer.

3.4 Venue safety & Fire and safety evacuation procedure

All The Vine's activities should be safe. Every effort will be made to ensure the venue is safe, e.g., harmful substances should be locked away.

The venues will be equipped with fire extinguishers and First Aid Box.

The First Aid Box is located at the Concierge Desk on the ground floor, alongside K4C's and Flight's Accident Books. Accidents need to be recorded, and children's or youth's team needs to be informed and will decide on appropriate actions.

In case of fire or other emergency evacuation, follow the fire and safety evacuation procedure in the Annex.

3.5 Travel protocols

Procedure for travel with children, youth, and vulnerable adults for The Vine's outings, trips, or events is found in the Annex.

3.6 Digital images and social media

Communications guideline

All media that is recorded by the congregation while children, youth, and vulnerable adults are attending The Vine's activity, which is open for public, are not the responsibility of The Vine, e.g., church open day.

Photography/Video

However, those who are bound by this guideline, including all staff, volunteers and those taking photographs or media for The Vine's use, must abide by the following media guidelines when taking, sharing, or using photographs or media in relation to The Vine:

- The use of camera, phones, videos, and any recording devices inside toilets and changing premises is strictly prohibited. None of these devices should be visible or in use in these areas, as it is possible to secretly take footage if devices are present.
- All photos and media of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults should be respectful, appropriate, and relevant to the nature of the church and not in any way disparaging or humiliating.
- Children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. It is never acceptable to capture any images in toilets or at any time when children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults are dressing.
- Images should be neither be of an exploitative or sexual nature, nor open to misinterpretation or misuse.
- As a guide, it is inappropriate to take photographs of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults who are not your own, without express parental consent.
- Should a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, or their parent or guardian wish to not have their photo taken or published, their wishes should be upheld. They have the right to be excused from group photos.
- Any images or videos that will be used for the church promotional purpose must have prior consent from the child's, youth's, or vulnerable adult's parents/guardians. Parents/guardians should have full understanding of the intended use and may request for viewing prior to use.
- Personal information in a photograph which can lead to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult being identified should not be published or uploaded in any way.

Social media

The Vine recognises the important role that social networking websites have in connecting communities. We understand that it is a powerful tool for communication. However, we also recognise the potential safeguarding risks of having an online presence and that social media brings, and therefore, we will adhere to the following guidelines:

- The Children Pastors and Youth Pastors will use designated social media accounts for the purpose of children/youth ministry. These

accounts are to be closed groups with stringent privacy settings and only opened to relevant staff, volunteers and parents.

- Only children and youth known to the ministry will be granted membership to the social media sites and allocated only to those group to which they are members of, e.g., no child under 13 years old will be granted permission to join Flight social media.
- All communication using official social media will be moderated to ensure all content is appropriate and respectful. Any misuse of social media, including cyber-bullying, abusive, discriminatory, or otherwise offensive or provocative postings will be removed and may lead to actions being taken against the offender.
- All staff and volunteers should not post photos of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults in The Vine's activities on their personal social media sites.
- All staff communication with children, youth and/or vulnerable adults must be established through official channels, e.g., official WhatsApp group, official Flight social media account, etc.
- All staff and volunteers are discouraged to submit and accept 'friend requests' to/from children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults on their personal social media accounts
- If communication is initiated between a volunteer and a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, the volunteer needs to immediately add the relevant official channel account into the conversation, e.g. Flight WhatsApp account or K4C account administered by the relevant pastor/staff, to safeguard and be accountable in the conversations taking place.
- All staff and volunteers must never send or engage children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults in inappropriate or sexually provocative messages or images.
- When a staff or volunteer leaves the ministry, they should be removed from the social media groups.
- Any concerns related to these guidelines should be addressed directly to the Safeguarding Officer.

3.7 Online safety

Online safeguarding risks have risen sharply over the past years, especially during COVID-19, when social interactions moved from in-person to online. To ensure children, youth, and vulnerable adults are safe during The Vine's activities in their online interactions, staff and volunteers will adhere to stringent online safety rules. At the same time, as this risk is an emerging one, education and mentoring needs to take place to better understand online safety risks and their management, and to mentor children, youth, and vulnerable adults, as well as their families on keeping safe online.

What is online safety?

It refers to individual's safety on the internet, including safe communication, personal information, etc. Online safety is a growing concern in safeguarding, because even though the harms experienced online may not demonstrate as physical injuries, they can cause incredible harm and affect a person's safety, mental health, and wellbeing. As internet is "unforgiving" in nature, any content uploaded could be streamed worldwide and may be online forever.

There are many risks hidden in the cyberworld, including misinformation, illegal activities and sexual exploitation. Therefore, parents/guardians and mentors of children, youth, and vulnerable adults must be aware and equipped for this rising challenge.

Therefore, The Vine will ensure that:

- All designated social media accounts for children and youth ministry of The Vine must adopt to stringent privacy setting and limited audience only.
- All staff and volunteers must never share a child's, youth's, or vulnerable adult's personal details online, including address, name, place of education, place of work, or any medical conditions.
- All programs and apps under The Vine's possession should always be updated to the latest version.
- All staff and volunteers at The Vine will aim to proactively educate themselves as well as children, youth, and vulnerable adults and their families on online safety themes, e.g., do not share sensitive and/or personal information about themselves or other people online, do not blindly trust someone's identity online, apply appropriate parental

controls and filters, and foster open conversations with children, youth, and vulnerable adults on online safety and accountability.

- In case a child, youth, or vulnerable adult discloses or is identified to be at risk online and vulnerable to exploitation, the concern needs to be immediately raised with the Safeguarding Officer who will then take appropriate action to ensure safety and involve the police or other relevant authorities where necessary.

For helpful resources on Online Safety, see the Annex.

4. Safeguarding through recruitment and appointment of staff and volunteers

The Vine has effective recruitment and selection procedures for staff and volunteers. The following safeguarding measures are to be added to the recruitment process. These will apply to all staff and volunteers of The Vine, regardless of how often they have contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.

- Requiring specific written references. The interviewer will ensure these references are the relevant people to be contacting and call these references. After verifying the qualifications and experience of the applicant, ask specifically about any history of child safeguarding issues.
- During interviews, ask the applicants to fill out a Safeguarding Declaration Questionnaire (see Annex), which includes the following questions:
 - Do you have criminal charges pending against you before the courts in Hong Kong or elsewhere? (Excluding minor traffic offences.)
 - Do you have criminal convictions or findings of guilt against you for sexual offences, offences related to children, or acts of violence in Hong Kong or elsewhere?
 - Do you have, or have you had, disciplinary proceedings brought against you involving allegations of child abuse, sexual

misconduct, sexual harassment, any other form of harassment, or acts of violence?

- Are you aware of any other matter(s) which would make you unsuitable to work closely with children, youth, and vulnerable adults?
- For posts that directly work with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults, potential candidates need to undertake the Sexual Conviction Record Check (SCRC). In Hong Kong, the employee can request the SCRC from the police with a letter from the employer, but the request is not possible for volunteers. If possible, obtain a SCRC from the applicant's country of last employment.
- A risk assessment of any concerning information will be held, and decisions made and documented.
- During the probationary period, the assessor evaluates the safeguarding ability of the candidate.
- If appointed, the new staff member and volunteers will sign the Safeguarding Declaration Form during induction and be made familiar with the safeguarding policies and procedures through one-on-one or group training. Appointees will be properly trained in their duties.
- During the probationary period, new staff member and volunteers should partner with experienced staff and volunteers.

These procedures will be followed consistently for all recruitments regardless of how well they are known to the existing staff, volunteers, or the church.

5. Reporting and responding to allegations and incidents of abuse

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the definitions of abuse as described in Section 2. It is hereby stated that The Vine will not tolerate any form of abuses or non-compliance with this policy, the relevant procedures, or the staff and volunteers code of conduct. In all cases, the safety, needs,

welfare, and rights of the children, youth, and vulnerable adults will *always* be the priority.

While bringing issues on safeguarding of children, youth, or vulnerable adults to the attention of relevant person can be a difficult task, The Vine strongly requests for the sake of the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, that all staff and volunteers do report perceived abuse, actions that could or may lead to abuse, mild or serious misconduct, or any non-compliance to the Safeguarding Officer, and if they are not available, to the Safeguarding Deputy. By swiftly addressing behavioural issues, the behaviour can be rectified before it escalates to a point of abuse or harm to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.

It is not the responsibility of the staff and volunteers to either investigate or determine whether abuse has taken place. However, all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act on any concerns, so that appropriate authorities can make enquiries and take necessary actions to protect the child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously.

The Vine will ensure that the allegation is investigated and that any justifiable action is taken to ensure that the child, youth, or vulnerable adult is safeguarded.

Enquiries must be conducted in the strictest confidence so that information can be given freely without fear of victimization and in a way that protects the rights of the staff and volunteers concerned.

Information about an allegation must be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to:

- protect the child, youth, or vulnerable adult,
- facilitate enquiries, and
- protect the rights of the alleged perpetrator.

If the investigation proves that there is no case, the concerned staff or volunteer should receive pastoral counseling and support, if needed, and their duties resumed, if considered appropriate.

The impact of this process on the concerned child, youth, or vulnerable adult is of utmost importance, and consideration should be given to support or counsel them and where appropriate their parents, taking full account of the support they need to process any trauma experienced.

All parties involved in the allegation procedure should be informed of the findings of the investigation and conclusion.

5.1. Reporting guidelines

The following process is to be followed in the case of an allegation or suspicion:

- Assess if a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is in danger, requires urgent medical attention, or in need of immediate protection. If YES, take the child, youth, or vulnerable adult immediately to a safe place and call the police and/or ambulance if needed. Do not leave the child, youth, or vulnerable adult alone, but stay with them or leave them in the care of a responsible adult.
- Should the incident require police and/or ambulance support, inform the Safeguarding Officer and if not available, their deputy *immediately*.
- Report the incident to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. The Safeguarding Officer will work with the person reporting to complete the Incident Report Form (see Annex) without delay, latest within 24 hours of the incident. Strictly confine the report to the facts and accurately distinguish between what is personal knowledge and what others have said, without forming any conclusion. Any report may be required to be submitted in court if there is a criminal trial. The Incident Report will be logged in Safeguarding Logbook, with access granted only to those with the confidentiality clearing to access it.
- After completing the Incident Report Form, the Safeguarding Officer will review and decide on the type and category of the case and the next steps, where for cases of suspected/alleged abuse and criminal activity, the Safeguarding Officer will work together with the Board of Directors/Elders to decide on the appropriate next steps and where needed involve the relevant authorities.

- Please refer to the flow chart below for further details.
- Management responsibilities/timelines are outlined further in the Annex.

5.2 Reporting communication flowchart

5.3 Child focus (listening to disclosures)

The following process is to be followed in the case of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult disclosing to a staff or volunteer an allegation of abuse, questionable behaviour, or harm:

- Listen; show that you are taking the disclosure seriously.
- Stay calm. Do not become frightened, angry, or anxious; try to give a calm appearance.
- Keep questions to a minimum, so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Only ask questions to clarify what has been said. Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not push for information, and allow the child, youth, or vulnerable adult to disclose as much as they want to.
- Do not make any promises. Inform the child, youth, or vulnerable adult that you must inform other people about what they have disclosed for their safety.
- Reassure the person that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Do not take notes while talking to the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, but as soon as possible after the discussion, write down all the details that can be remembered.

After a child has talked about an abuse,

- make written notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told);
- report the discussion to the Safeguarding Officer or in the case of their absence, to the Deputy immediately;
- together with the Safeguarding Officer, complete The Vine's 'Incident Report' Form (See Annex); and,
- do not discuss the suspicions or allegations with anyone else

The Safeguarding Officer will remind the reporting person of the confidentiality of the report and agree to inform them of the outcome of the investigation. All information provided will be kept in strict confidence by The Vine and will not be disclosed to any third party, unless there is a requirement to do so.

The Safeguarding Officer will follow the mandated procedure and protocol for processing reported allegation, suspicion, or disclosure of an incident/abuse/criminal behaviour.

These procedures are built on the best practice principle of minimising the need for the child, youth, or vulnerable adult having to repeat to multiple parties the information unnecessarily, thereby reducing further trauma.

Under no circumstances shall the reporting relevant person confront the accused or investigate the matter themselves.

It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused, particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected to be involved or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague, adult or to a parent/guardian who may be well known to the reported person and other individuals involved. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with the judgement about any actions to take.

Following the protocol will bring about the best result, protecting the child, youth, or vulnerable adult and bringing disciplinary or legal action against the perpetrator.

The current Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy Safeguarding Officer are listed in Section 8 of this policy.

6. Disciplinary procedures

In the event of safeguarding allegations against staff and volunteers, the Safeguarding Officer will review the case and decide on the threshold of concern and the next steps.

Misconduct

If the concern relates to poor behaviour/misconduct, depending on the threshold of concern, the Safeguarding Officer will either provide the staff or volunteer concerned with further training and support, or can delegate this role to the relevant pastor.

If the concern is more significant, then the Safeguarding Officer will ask the concerned person to temporarily suspend all their duties until further notice and will investigate and carry out necessary and appropriate disciplinary

actions (including, but not limited to, warning and dismissal) and/or signposting to counselling.

If a staff or volunteer is found to have known about a child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse or accident happens to the child, youth, or vulnerable adult under their care, and he/she fails to report it, this will also be treated as an act of misconduct, and the staff or volunteer may be subjected to disciplinary action or other appropriate actions, including, but not limited to, suspending or terminating the service of the staff or volunteer.

Suspected/Alleged case of child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse

In circumstances that suggest a child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse has taken place and /or criminal offence may have been committed, the Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with the Board of Directors/Elders will review and/or investigate the report and, where appropriate, will hand the case to the police and other relevant authorities to protect the welfare of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult. They will ask the concerned person to temporarily suspend all their duties and will fully collaborate with all authorities' investigations and required next steps, including any legalities, dismissal or other necessary steps.

7. Education and training of staff & volunteers about safeguarding guidelines

All staff and volunteers should be educated on safeguarding and on what behaviour is acceptable and what is not. This policy should be available to all staff and volunteers, either online or in hard copy. The contact details of the Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer should be readily available to all staff and volunteers, but also the Vine's congregation, (including children, youth, vulnerable adults, and their families). Those that report suspicions and concerns should be confident that these will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Actions below should be taken to ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of this policy:

- The Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy should be included in the new staff and volunteer induction programme.

- The Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy should be available on the church website, the name of the Safeguarding Officer and the Safeguarding Deputy should be stated clearly.
- Safeguarding Officer should present quarterly to the Board of Directors/Elders and the Senior Pastor, and at the Annual General Meeting to update the congregation on safeguarding policy implementation.
- Regular safeguarding training should be arranged for staff and volunteers to ensure their practice is up-to-date and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards best practice in child, youth, and vulnerable adults safeguarding. The training content should include a review on implementation, experience sharing, and policy update and revision.
- The Safeguarding Officer shall keep records of all safeguarding training (including attendance), organize appropriate training and updates, and issue reminders when training updates are required.

8. Management structure and monitoring

8.1 The Safeguarding Officer:

Ellison Tsang as at [4 May 2022].

8.2 The Deputy Safeguarding Officer:

Karla Roscoe as at [4 May 2022].

8.3 Designated point of contact of Board of Directors/Elders

To be confirmed in official minutes on Elders' meetings, any change to the responsible Board of Directors/Elder will also be confirmed in official minutes.

8.4 Review of safeguarding procedures

Quarterly update on safeguarding concerns/developments and on the progress of implementing safeguarding at The Vine should be given to the Board of Directors/Elders and the Senior Pastor by the Safeguarding Officer.

A review of safeguarding procedures will be conducted when:

- there is a change in legislation and/or government guidance;
- there is significant change or event happened at the Vine; or,
- otherwise, once a year.

Any queries or concerns relating to safeguarding may be raised to the Safeguarding Officer.

8.4 Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only in order to protect the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, facilitate enquiries, as well as manage the disciplinary/complaint aspects, and protect the rights of the alleged perpetrator. All information will be stored in compliance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486 of the laws of Hong Kong) (the "PDPO").

The PDPO provides specific exemptions for collection of data and transfer of information. Section 58(2) of the PDPO provides that personal data of the victim and any other relevant persons may be disclosed to the police, if the disclosure of information is relevant to the prevention or detection of crime, the apprehension, prosecution or detention of the offender, or the prevention, preclusion or remedying of unlawful or seriously improper conduct, etc.

9. Effective date, review, and amendments

Document:	Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy
Topic:	Safeguarding

Policy reference:	
Version:	1.0
Classification:	Internal
Supersedes:	
Owner:	The Vine
Maintained by:	Safeguarding Officer of The Vine
Review date:	April 2024
Applies to:	
Cross reference:	

Approval				
Version	Effective Date	Approval Date	Approver	Signature
1.0				

Revision History Log			
Revision Date	Version	Description	Author

10.

Annex

10.1 Incident Report Form

Please complete this report with a Safeguarding Officer.

Reporter's full name:		Date of receiving / discovering incident:	
Role at the Vine (e.g., K4C volunteer, pastoral staff):		Reporter's relationship to the child / youth / vulnerable adult (if any):	
Full name and age of affected child / youth / vulnerable adult:		Full name of parent / guardian:	
Details of the incident / complaint: What / When / Who / How?			
Full name of the alleged person:		Capacity of the alleged person (e.g. role at The Vine if any, parent / guardian, friend, etc):	

Actions and date taken by the person receiving or witnessing the incident:			
Who have been notified?	Who (full name and capacity at The Vine if applicable): When: How: Advice given:		
Incident brought to attention by (full name):		Relationship to the child / youth / vulnerable adult (if any):	
Completed by (Safeguarding Officer's name):		Capacity at The Vine:	
Signature:		Date:	
Received by (Member of Board of Directors/ Elders):		Capacity at The Vine:	

Signature:		Date:	
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10.2 Management protocol for processing reports of misconduct/abuse/criminal behaviour

The Safeguarding Officer, and if not available their deputy will fill out the Incident Report Form together with the reporting staff or volunteer immediately, within 24 hours of the incident, and will investigate all child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse complaints. Parents/guardians need to be informed immediately.

The Incident Report and relevant information needs to be recorded/logged in the Safeguarding Logbook.

The Safeguarding Officer will distinguish between misconduct and a suspected child, youth, or vulnerable adult abuse and/or criminal activity and will document the investigation. External support during any investigation and in deciding the appropriate course of action may be sought by the Safeguarding Officer in consultation with the Board of Directors/Elders.

For actions of poor behaviour/misconduct:

The Safeguarding Officer will review the incident and decide on the proceeding actions. In the case of poor behaviour, the Safeguarding Officer can discuss with the concerned person to correct behaviour or other steps to be taken, or delegate this task to the appropriate pastor.

In a serious concern, the Safeguarding Officer will ask the concerned staff or volunteer to suspend their activities at The Vine until further notice. Disciplinary action may follow, depending on the conclusion of the investigation.

For suspected abuse and/or criminal behaviour:

Where there is a concern/allegation of suspected child/youth/vulnerable adult abuse case and/or criminal activity, the Board of Directors/Elders will be informed by the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours of the incident and

consulted in the next steps. The suspected abuse case will be handed over to the relevant authorities within 24 hours of the Board of Directors/Elders' decision being made. If there is a concern of criminal activities, it will be handed to the police immediately.

Concerns outside of The Vine's Remit

If The Vine is made aware or has concerns of a possible case of abuse outside of the remit of The Vine, they will contact either or both of the following two organizations to hand over the case. The Vine will provide them with a copy of the report. Case closure will be reported against the Incident Report and particular care given to the child, youth, or vulnerable adult where possible.

Against Child Abuse Ltd ("ACA") hotline (2755 1122).

ACA is the leading non-government organisation in Hong Kong specialising in child protection programmes. More information can be found at <https://www.aca.org.hk>

Social Welfare Department ("SWD") hotline (2343 2255).

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region SWD provides specialist services through the Family and Child Protective Services Unit. More information can be found at https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_family/sub_listofserv/id_familyandc/

10.3 Travel protocols

Activities arranged by The Vine for children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults could require national and international travel and overnight stays. Trips away can offer many participants exciting and positive experiences, however, they also bring particular challenges for those charged with their care.

Protocols for travel

- It is good practice to meet with the parents/guardians before the trip or travel. Arrangements can be explained and discussed, including the need for medical information, confidentiality issues, and consent forms. For all children, youth, and vulnerable adults, a parental consent form must be completed and should include the following information:
 - Emergency contact numbers (at least two);
 - Any specific medical information or information relating to an impairment or disability; and,
 - Information about any other factors that may affect the child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- Avoid the use of private vehicles to transport children, youth, and vulnerable adults where possible, unless this involves a parent, carer, or guardian carrying their children and any other children by private agreement with another parent, carer, or guardian, rather than at the request or on behalf of The Vine.
- A child, youth, or vulnerable adult should not be left alone with a driver of a vehicle who is not a parent, carer, or guardian of him/her.
- Anyone acting in a supervisory capacity on a trip with children, youth, or vulnerable adults must observe this policy and sign the Safeguarding Declaration Form in Annex before beginning any form of work (whether paid or unpaid). All such persons must comply with the code of conduct.
- Where possible, mixed gender groups should be accompanied by at least one male and one female staff member and/or volunteer.
- There should be a sufficient ratio of staff or volunteers to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults on any trip. This ratio is dependent on the number of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults on the trip. But at least two adults should be supervising children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults at all times; this may include parents of children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults travelling with the group.

(Factors to consider when determining the ratio are: gender, age, ethnicity, and ability of the group; any special educational or medical needs; duration and nature of the journey; number and experience of the staff and/or volunteers in supervising the type of event or journey.)

- Room sharing among different genders and different age groups is not allowed (except a parent, guardian, carer, or a person approved by a parent/guardian sharing a room with the children under his/her care only). The trip supervisors must never share a room with any child, youth, or vulnerable adult on the trip.

10.4 Fire and safety evacuation procedures

Fire and safety

All staff and volunteers working in children (K4C) and youth (Flight) ministries should familiarize themselves with the location of all fire exits in The Vine Centre. In case of a fire, the alarm will sound and the following procedure should be followed:

1. The Children's/Youth Pastor will make immediate contact with the Facilities Manager to confirm the emergency.
2. K4C/Flight teachers/leaders, with the help of adult assistants in their classes, will evacuate all the children and youth from their classroom and guide them down the nearest Fire Exit. One adult will lead and one adult will be at the back of the group of children/youth to ensure that no child/youth is left behind from their group. The teacher/leader will count the number of children/youth evacuating the classroom. The teacher/leader will ensure that the number of people exiting the building equals the number that are counted when assembling at Wan Chai Playground.
3. Upon exiting the building, the teachers/leaders, children/youth, and all adults accompanying the children/youth will make their way to the entrance of Wan Chai Playground and line up for a head count.
4. The teacher/leader will take a head count and advise the Children's/Youth Pastor.
5. If a child/youth is missing, the Children's/Youth Pastor will take appropriate action. K4C teachers will remain with the children until they are released into the care of their parents/guardians. Flight leaders will remain with the teenagers until they are authorised by the Facilities Manager or relevant authority to be dismissed.

10.5 Signposting for mental health wellbeing/support & online safety

Community support (listed in alphabetical order)

I. Mental Health Support

- **Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service** – Mental health enquiry hotline in Cantonese
Tel: 2535 4135 For youth: 3413 1543
- **OASIS** – Counselling available (multilingual)
<https://www.oasishktherapy.com/> Tel: 3527 6054
- **MindHK** – Mental wellbeing support (multilingual)
<https://www.mind.org.hk/> Tel: 2466 7350
- **Suicide Prevention Services** – Suicide prevention services
<https://www.sps.org.hk/> Tel: 2382 0000 For youth: 2382 0777
- **The Samaritans** – Suicide prevention services (multilingual)
<https://samaritans.org.hk/> Tel: 2896 0000
- **The Samaritans Befrienders Hong Kong** – Emotional support & suicide prevention hotline
*https://sbhk.org.hk/?page_id=32063&lang=en
Tel (Cantonese): 2389 2222 Tel (English): 2389 2223*

II. Spiritual Support

- **Hub and Spokes** – Counselling available (multilingual)
<https://www.hubnspokesltd.com/> Tel: 3105 1908

III. Others

- **Caritas Family Crisis Support Centre** – Family support in Cantonese

<https://fcsc.caritas.org.hk/> Tel: 18288

- **Rainlily** – Support for sexual violence survivors
<https://rainlily.org.hk/eng/home> Tel: 2375 5322
- **The Zubin Foundation** – For ethnic minorities (multilingual)
<https://www.zubinfooundation.org/> Tel: 2540 9588

Reading materials

I. Online Safety Guidelines

- **Internet matters**
<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/>
- **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children**
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
- **TeensHealth**
<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/internet-safety.html>
- **SWGfL**
<https://swgfl.org.uk/online-safety/what-is-online-safety/>

II. Others

- How to Talk to Kids and Teens About World Trauma - Hey Sigmund
<https://www.heysigmund.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-and-teens-about-world-trauma/>
- Fear and Anxiety - An Age-by-Age Guide to Common Fears, The Reasons for Each and How to Manage Them - Hey Sigmund
<https://www.heysigmund.com/age-by-age-guide-to-fears/>
- Protecting our kids from Porn (A Public Service campaign from NZ via the BBC)
<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-53109571>

- Social Media Dangers
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbg4hNHsc_8
- Teens who can describe Negative Emotions Can Stave Off Depression
<https://neurosciencenews.com/depression-negative-emotion-14361/>

10.6 Safeguarding Declaration Form

The Vine Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The Vine implements the Safeguarding Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Policy so that everyone involved in any activity organized or arranged by The Vine or on behalf of the Vine relating to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults is aware of and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children, youth, and vulnerable adults from harm and abuse.

As a staff or volunteer (as defined in the Safeguarding Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Policy), you are required to complete this Safeguarding Declaration Form.

Full Name (English and Chinese, if any):	
Contact email address:	
Telephone number:	
How long have you been attending The Vine?	
Role at The Vine (Staff/Volunteer):	
Which group do you serve at? (e.g., K4C, family pastor, etc.)	

Questionnaire

You must provide the following information truthfully.	YES	NO
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Do you have criminal charges pending against you before the courts in Hong Kong or elsewhere? (Excluding minor traffic offences.)		
Do you have criminal convictions or findings of guilt against you for sexual offences, offences related to children, or acts of violence in Hong Kong or elsewhere?		
Do you have, or have you had, disciplinary proceedings brought against you involving allegations of child abuse, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, any other form of harassment, or acts of violence?		
Are you aware of any other matter(s) which would make you unsuitable to work closely with children, youth, and vulnerable adults?		

If you answer "YES" to any of the questions above, you may be required to speak to The Vine's Safeguarding Officer.

Declaration

I confirm that all the statements made by me above are true and correct on the date of signing. I will notify The Vine's Safeguarding Officer immediately upon becoming aware that any matter set out above has changed.

I confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safeguarding Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Policy and understand and commit to promote welfare and prevent harm and abuse by complying with the policy.

I agree to adhere to the terms of the Safeguarding Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Policy as amended from time-to-time.

I agree to abide by the code of conduct and guidelines listed in the Safeguarding Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

I agree to attend training and education that is essential to implementing the Safeguarding Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

I agree that I will make every effort to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned parties in the case of a safeguarding incident. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only in order to protect the child, youth, or vulnerable adult, facilitate enquiries,

as well as manage the disciplinary or complaint aspects and protect the rights of the alleged perpetrator.

Signed: _____ **Print Name:**

Declared on (date): _____ (day/
month/year)

If you have any questions, you may speak with the Safeguarding Officer prior to completing the Safeguarding Declaration Form.