

Safeguarding Policy



1. Purpose

- To ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing and protective environment for everyone who engages with our church community.
- To ensure that children, young people and adults at risk of harm who are part of our community are protected from harm.
- To ensure that any harm that is identified, regardless of where it occurred, is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately.
- To ensure that our staff and volunteers are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and are supported in fulfilling them.
- To ensure that all our ministry is provided in a manner that is consistent with our Biblical values and beliefs.

2. Scope

- This policy applies in particular to staff or volunteers who work on our behalf with children, young people, their parents / carers, adults at risk of harm, and to those who have leadership and oversight of the church's activities. This includes trustees, the Minister, Lay Elders, group / ministry leaders, paid staff, volunteers, or others working on our behalf.
- The policy also outlines the general responsibilities of every member of our church community to raise concerns about individuals or practice in the church with the appropriate people.

3. Our values and beliefs

Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:

- Every human life, including the unborn, is valuable to God and each person bears the image of God.
- We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers. We must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst, from those dangers whether they arise from abuse or neglect within our community or abuse that occurs outside our organisation.
- God cares for the widow, the orphan and the stranger; he calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation.
- We are to love those around us as God loves them and to seek to bring healing, restoration and reconciliation to broken and damaged lives by the manifestation of the love of God through us.
- The church is not a gathering of sinless and perfect people, but rather a community of grace where we seek to encourage one another to grow in faith and obedience to God.
- Sin in our midst must not be tolerated but dealt with decisively, effectively and transparently.
- The values of love, gentleness and kindness ought to characterise all our interactions, including in situations where challenge or even formal church discipline are required.
- We are to honour those that God has set in authority over us and to obey the law of the land.

4. Our responsibilities and commitments

4.1 Our responsibilities

- To ensure that the protection of children, young people and adults at risk of harm and the promotion of their welfare is of paramount importance to us.
- To treat each person as equal in the sight of God; equally valued, equally capable of sin and equally offered the gift of salvation and reconciliation to Him.
- To seek to minister to and to encourage growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency and sensitivity, in accordance with our fundamental beliefs as laid out in our statement of faith and our charitable aims / governing documents.
- To ensure that as a church we are alert to the risks within society, including risks associated with grooming, online abuse, radicalisation, gender-based violence, exploitation, domestic abuse etc and to report any concerns appropriately.
- To value, respect and listen to the views of every member of our community, including those who are vulnerable or find it difficult to make their voice heard.
- To work in partnership with children, young people, parents / carers, adults at risk of abuse, and local and national partner agencies and organisations to promote the welfare of those at risk of harm.
- To comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

4.2 How we seek to fulfil these responsibilities

A healthy culture

- We will actively seek to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with our biblical principles and best practice in safeguarding.
- We will seek to visibly demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the organisation and our senior leaders will support the development of best practice and provide accountability to everyone who works (whether paid or voluntarily) on our behalf.
- We will ensure that we appoint a Safeguarding Lead and at least one Deputy who will take responsibility for leading on safeguarding children and adults across the church.
- We will develop a culture that equips every member of our church to identify and raise concerns.
- We will ensure that our expectations in relation to the conduct of members of our church are clear through codes of conduct, policies and procedures, including a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying and to any discriminatory or abusive attitudes, language or behaviours.

Safer recruitment of staff and volunteers

- We will adopt safer recruitment practice in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- We will ensure that staff and volunteers are supported and trained to deliver best practice in safeguarding
- We will provide effective leadership and support for staff and volunteers including ongoing training, supervision and pastoral support.
- We will ensure that we have policies, procedures and systems for managing concerns or allegations against staff or volunteers, supported by a culture of listening to allegations and responding with rigour, fairness and transparency.

Safe activities

We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry, including:

- Managing health and safety through effective policies and procedures.
- Use of risk assessments for relevant activities.
- Considering the 'virtual' as well as the 'real' world, including our use of social media and technology.
- Ensuring appropriate ratios of adults to children for different activities.

Responding to safeguarding disclosures and concerns

- We will seek to clearly identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who are part of our church community and to respond appropriately and proportionately:
 - To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them.
 - To provide information, guidance and support as best we are able.
- We will respond promptly to any concerns or disclosures and will seek advice from Christian Safeguarding Services as needed.
- In cases which meet the statutory threshold, we will refer to and work with local Children's Services / Adult Social Care services as required.

Managing allegations and people who may present a risk to others

- We take allegations against members of our church very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly via a transparent and timely process.
- We will report any Serious Incidents to AMiE (Anglican Mission in England) and the Charity Commission as required.
- Where we become aware that an individual may present a risk to others within the church (e.g. because of convictions for violent or sexual offences) we will seek advice from Christian Safeguarding Services on how best to manage this and take all necessary actions.

Data protection

- We will record and store information accurately and keep it securely, sharing information appropriately in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as:
 - Consent forms
 - Attendance data for work with children, young people and adults at risk of abuse
 - Accident and incident reporting
 - Confidential recording of safeguarding concerns and any actions taken

Developing and maintaining best practice

- We will regularly review and where necessary update our policies, procedures and systems for effectiveness and compliance with best practice principles.
- We will ensure that relevant policies and procedures are publicly available.
- We will involve children, young people, their parents or carers and adults at risk of harm in our safeguarding processes wherever possible, including being responsive to feedback and actively communicating where possible with those involved when safeguarding concerns arise.
- We will ensure that we have a culture and policies and procedures for raising concerns or complaints and for dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest and fair manner.

5. Key roles and responsibilities

- Our Trustees have overall responsibility for safeguarding within the church. They will appoint a nominated Safeguarding Trustee to oversee compliance and promote best practice.
- Our Minister and Lay Elders will take the lead in demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding and developing a healthy, nurturing church culture.
- Our Safeguarding Lead and Deputy will take responsibility for implementing our policy and procedures, promoting safer recruitment, ensuring training requirements are met, and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- All staff and volunteers working on behalf of the church are expected to act in line with this policy, our safeguarding procedures and codes of conduct.

See appendix A for further details.

6. Basis of policy and related documents

This policy has been informed by:

- Our statement of faith
- Our governing documents (i.e. our CIO constitution)
- Safeguarding Requirements and Serious Incident Reporting in AMiE Churches document
- National legislation and guidance on safeguarding children and adults (see appendix B)
- Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding
- RBWM local guidance and procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Code of conduct for those working with children and young people
- Role descriptions for staff and volunteers
- Complaints policy
- Recording and information sharing policy
- Adult to child ratios guidance
- Health and safety policy and risk assessments

7. Policy review and authorisation

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and at other times if significant updates are required.

- Policy originally adopted: 3rd March 2024
- Date of current review: n/a
- Next review date: March 2025

Signed:

Chair of Trustees



Date:

1/3/2024

Sam Brewster

Appendix A

Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

Governance of safeguarding

The trustees will ensure that they provide leadership of safeguarding across the organisation by:

- Ensuring that legally compliant policies, procedures, codes of conduct and systems are implemented.
- Ensuring that a suitably skilled and knowledgeable Safeguarding Lead and at least one deputy is appointed, supported, and resourced.
- Providing accountability to those responsible for various aspects of safeguarding.
- Reviewing the safeguarding arrangements to ensure that an effective and proportionate approach is thoroughly implemented and consistently enacted across the church.
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy provide regular updates to the Trustees.
- Ensuring that Charity Commission requirements, including the responsibility to report any serious incidents, are fully met.

Leadership and management of safeguarding

The Minister and Lay Elders, Safeguarding Lead and Deputy, will:

- Ensure that the safeguarding policy is regularly reviewed, updated and any changes signed off by the trustees.
- Ensure that safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely and proportionate manner, including making referrals to statutory agencies as required, working with partner agencies such as the Local Authority and the Police, and the maintenance of accurate records and systems.
- Lead on the implementation of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ensure that those engaged in ministry on behalf of Grace Church Windsor are provided with proportionate and appropriate training and that they are competent to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure that regular reports are provided to the trustees and that any urgent issues are communicated to the chair of trustees in a timely manner.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding and promote its importance across the church.

Individual responsibilities

All staff and volunteers are required to:

- Act in accordance with the policies, procedures and codes of conduct provided.
- Complete initial and refresher training as required.
- Ensure that they remain vigilant to the risks of harm and know how to report concerns.

Appendix B

Basis for our policy: relevant legislation and guidance

Safeguarding Children	Safeguarding Adults
<p>National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children Acts (1989 & 2004) ○ Children and Families Act 2014 ○ Children and Social Work Act 2017 ○ Working together to safeguard children (2023) ○ What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015) ○ Protection of Children Act 1999 ○ Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006 ○ Protection of freedoms Act 2012 ○ Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2018 amended) ○ Prevent duty guidance 2016 ○ Sexual offences Act 2003 ○ The Safe Network Standards (available from the NSPCC website) ○ The policy also takes account of the principles outlined in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keeping children safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition 2023 ▪ Keeping children safe in education 2021 ▪ FGM duty guidance ▪ Prevent duty guidance ▪ Domestic Abuse Act 2021 	<p>National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Care Act 2014 ○ Human Rights Acts 1998 ○ Care Standards Act 2000 ○ Mental Capacity Act 2005 ○ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007 ○ Sexual Offences Act 2003 ○ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 of Fraud Act 2006 ○ Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ○ Health and Social Care Act 2008 ○ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) ○ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) ○ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) ○ LSAB Multiagency Policy and Procedures
<p>Local guidance and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See RBWM Children's Services https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/children-and-families 	<p>Local guidance and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See RBWM Adult Safeguarding https://www.optalis.org/locations/safeguarding