
SLIC Safeguarding

1.1 Report a Concern or Find Support

If someone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical attention, call 999. If the situation you are reporting is **not** an emergency, please use the contact details below:

-If you are worried about someone and want to raise a concern or report abuse, please contact the SLIC Safeguarding Team by emailing safeguarding@slic.church.

-Reports of children and young people at risk of abuse and neglect should be made to Southampton's children social care team using this [link](#).

-Adult safeguarding concerns should be reported to Southampton's adult social care team, details [here](#).

1.2 Important Contact Details

Name of Place of Worship: Southampton Lighthouse International Church

Address: St Mary's Rd, Southampton SO14 0BB

General Email Address: office@slic.church

Charity Number: 1184599

Designated Safeguarding Lead - Rebekah Wilson - safeguarding@slic.church

Sanjay Rajo – sanjay@slic.church Lead Pastor

Melroy D'Souza – melroy@slic.church Safeguarding Trustee

Churches' Child www.ccpas.co.uk

Protection Advisory 01322 517817 / 0845 120 4550

Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ

Children's Services 023 8083 3336 (MASH office hours) 023 8023 3344 (out-of-hours)

Children's Services 0300 555 1384 (office hours) 0300 555 1373 (out-of-hours)

Adult Services Southampton 023 8083 3003 (office hours) 023 8023 3344 (out-of-hours)

Adult Services 0300 555 1386 (office hours) 0300 555 1373 (out-of-hours)



Police 101 (use 999 only in an emergency)

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk 0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk

Child Exploitation Online ceop.police.uk

Protection Centre (for eSafety concerns)

This safeguarding policy was approved by the trustees of Southampton Lighthouse International Church on 10 December 2018

This safeguarding policy was updated by the Safeguarding Team of Southampton Lighthouse International Church in September 2024

2. SLIC and Safeguarding

2.1 Southampton Lighthouse International Church

SLIC is a non-denominational church situated in the centre of Southampton. We have a membership of around 180 and run many different groups for children, youth, elderly and other adults at risk. Alongside the services on a Sunday service and during the week, there are groups held for various age ranges and other demographics. There are also home groups and missional communities that meet at various locations throughout the city.

SLIC is a member of the Evangelical Alliance.

SLIC is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

Registered in England and Wales. Charity registration no. 290183.

Registered office: Southampton Lighthouse International Church, St Mary's Road, Southampton, SO14 0BB

Office telephone: 023 80226004

Email : Office@slic.church

2.2 Why safeguarding is important

As Christians, every one of us in SLIC needs to care deeply about safeguarding. Safeguarding mistakes can be immensely costly for everyone involved. But that is only part of the picture; there are many more reasons why safeguarding should matter to us.

Matthew 18 is perhaps the most comprehensive passage in the New Testament on how Jesus wants relationships to be handled within his Kingdom. And he says it all begins with us becoming small: At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1–3).



2.3 Jesus is more radical

We tend to associate childhood with charm, innocence, simple trust, and so on. Jesus is being much more radical than that. In the ancient world, children were at the bottom of the pile, without status and therefore without rights or protection. Jesus is therefore turning all our assumptions about status upside down, by declaring that the way into his kingdom is to become like a little child – to take the lowest place before God as we humble ourselves in repentance.

For Jesus, 'the little ones' includes children, but it includes all believers who stand in the lowest place. It especially includes the children and adults at risk of harm, who are the focus of safeguarding.

But, in a sense, it includes all of us who have seen our need of God and realised that we are in the lowest place before him (see Matthew 18:6, where Jesus makes clear that 'these little ones' are the same as 'those who believe in me').

Jesus says of such little ones:

- We should be ready to learn from them: 'whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 18:4).
- We should be committed to welcoming them: 'whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me' (Matthew 18:5)
- We should care for them, protecting them from things which may cause them to stumble and fall: 'If anyone causes one of these little ones – those who believe in me – to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung round their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea' (Matthew 18:6).

2.4 Why this matters

Why is safeguarding important then? We want to be good citizens who respect the laws of the land, and we want to safeguard our church's reputation. But there are even more important reasons:

- We live in a fallen world where human sin presents many dangers and obstacles to us all – especially the most vulnerable.
- Neglect and abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, and spiritual – are distressing realities in our world.
- We want to care for all those entrusted to us. We want to recognise their value and dignity as those made in the image of God
- God is a refuge and a protector, and we want to reflect him in our care for others
Safeguarding is not merely a duty (though we must uphold important legal requirements and it is a solemn responsibility).

Instead, recall God's heart for the 'little ones' and the vulnerable. Recall how God has helped us, cared for us, and made us his children. When it comes to safeguarding in the church, all of us have a part to play – even those of us who are not directly involved in working with children and adults at risk. We all play a part in making our Church a safe and welcoming place for all.



2.5 International conventions and national legislation

The value of every person is affirmed in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

. . . Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, 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. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says that children should 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.

Adults who may be at risk should be equally protected. Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

2.6 The responsibilities of the church trustees

The SLIC trustees bear the legal responsibility for the church's governance. The trustees of any charity must ensure that 'those benefiting from, or working with, their charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it. They have a legal duty to act prudently and this means that they must take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen. This is particularly important for trustees of a church, which includes children and adults at risk.

Trustees must:

- be aware of what the relevant law is
- understand how the law applies to the church
- comply with legal requirements
- adopt best practices within the church as far as possible

The revised government inter-agency statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013' came into effect on 15 April 2013. All organisations must comply with this 'unless exceptional circumstances arise'. This means that trustees must also:

- Always act in the best interests of children and adults at risk, and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them
- Put safeguards in place to protect and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk, and to enhance the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public
- Approve a safeguarding policy which demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children involved with a charity from harm



- Review, approve, and endorse the safeguarding policy annually, or when legislation changes inform children, parents, adults at risk, and workers of the policy and procedures as appropriate
- Respond seriously and appropriately to all concerns and allegations of abuse, which may require a referral to children or adults social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the police
- Ensure that procedures are in place for safe recruitment, selection and vetting, and supervision of workers (whether paid or voluntary)
- Implement associated policies and procedures which promote the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk (e.g. health and safety, data protection, photography)

The Charity Commission 'strongly recommends' that all trustees of charities that work with children or adults at risk should be DBS checked, though only those who have close and unsupervised contact would be eligible to obtain an enhanced DBS check and barred list check. Others would be eligible to obtain an enhanced DBS check but without a barred list check.

The trustees take this obligation seriously and, in addition to the above, undertake to:

- promote a culture of safeguarding within the church in order to protect everyone and support the church safeguarding team in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults at risk
- provide on-going safeguarding training for every person working with children and adults at risk
- provide information to children and adults at risk on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying, or any other matter which causes them concern
- ensure that the church premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that they are welcoming and inclusive

2.7 About this safeguarding policy

This safeguarding policy is to be read in conjunction with specific individual group policies (IGPs) which give details of the group, behaviour expectations, and the fire procedure, as well as guidelines on health and safety, first aid, and other good practices that are specific to the age group concerned and the activities involved. This safeguarding policy has been drawn up in-line with statutory guidance and is based on material published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS). We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Charity Commission requires the trustees to review, approve and endorse this policy annually or when legislation changes.

2.8 The safeguarding team

To enable us to effectively fulfil our safeguarding obligations, we have a team of people with specific responsibilities (members of the team may take on more than one of these roles).



The team normally comprises of:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Rebekah Wilson
- Assistant DSL / Oversight of Under-18: Tim Lucier
- Oversight of Vulnerable Adults: Neil Aston
- Lead Pastor: Sanjay Rajo
- Policy Lead: Melroy D'Souza

Important People:

- Assistant for Pastoral Care: Surjit
- Minister Responsible for Pastoral Care: Kuldip Rajo (Pastor)
- Trustees : Gwyneth Symons, Melroy D'Souza, Barbara Ladher, Rhys Barlett

3. Understanding the Issues

3.1 What do we mean by children and adults at risk?

Legally, a child is someone under the age of 18. Safeguarding legislation therefore applies to everyone under that age. This policy does not distinguish between 'children' and 'young people' since they are all under the age of 18. Everyone is vulnerable in some way – it's part of being human in a broken world. However, some adults need protection because their circumstances put them particularly at risk, whether temporarily or permanently. This may be due to physical or mental disability, illness, addiction, age, or a stressful life event. As a result, they may have difficulty in making or communicating decisions, taking care of themselves, or protecting themselves against harm or exploitation. Safeguarding legislation therefore also applies to any adult who:

- has care and support needs,
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect,
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

3.2 What do we mean by abuse?

Defining abuse is difficult and complex. A person may abuse someone by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. It can be physical, emotional, financial, or even spiritual.

Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- spouses/partners or other family members
- neighbours, friends, or acquaintances
- paid staff, professionals, or volunteers



- strangers who deliberately exploit those they perceive as vulnerable to abuse

3.2 Abuse of children: definitions

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.'

Sexual abuse 'involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact and [inappropriate] touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.'

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

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- [Neglect] may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.'

Emotional abuse is 'the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.'

3.3 Abuse of adults at risk: definitions

Physical abuse includes 'assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions'.



Sexual abuse includes 'rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting'.

Psychological abuse includes 'emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks'.

Financial or material abuse includes 'theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits'.

Modern slavery includes 'slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment'.

Discriminatory abuse 'includes forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion'.

Neglect and acts of omission includes 'ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating'. All these types of abuse may be carried out deliberately or through negligence or ignorance. They may be one-off events or repeated.

3.4 Domestic abuse: definitions

Domestic abuse is defined by the Home Office as 'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality'. Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, those forms of abuse listed above in sections 2.3 and 2.4, as well as so-called 'honour-based' violence, female genital mutilation, and forced marriage.

Controlling behaviour is defined as a 'range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.' Coercive behaviour is defined as 'an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.'

Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children within the home, even if they are not physically harmed. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 extended the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others, especially in the home.



3.5 Protecting Children and Adults at Risk

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established in 2012 (under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012). It processes criminal records checks when someone applies for a relevant post (whether paid or voluntary) and manages the Barred Children's List and Barred Adults' List of unsuitable people who should not work in regulated activities with these groups. The DBS decides who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups. It is illegal for a barred person to apply for such work (paid or voluntary), or for the church to recruit a barred person for such work.

The church must notify the DBS if someone is asked to step down because they have harmed, or might have gone on to harm, a child or adult at risk, or if they stepped down for such reasons before being asked to do so.

3.6 Staff Conduct – Safe Working Practice

It is essential that all staff are conscious of how they should conduct themselves to minimise the risk of finding themselves as the subject of any child protection processes. All staff should be aware of the following summary of things to do and not to do when working with children.

“Do”

- Read and follow the child protection procedures.
- Report to the designated / named person any concerns about child welfare/safety.
- Report to the designated / named person any concerns about the conduct of other staff/volunteers/contractors.
- Record in writing all relevant incidents.
- Work in an open and transparent way.
- Discuss and report any incidents of concern or that might lead to concerns being raised about your conduct towards a child.
- Report to the designated/named person any incidents that suggest a child may be infatuated with you or taking an above normal interest in you.
- Dress appropriately for your role.
- Only use e-mail contact with children via any authorised system.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children.
- Ensure you understand the rules concerning physical restraint.
- Where physical contact is essential for educational or safety reasons, gain the child's permission for that contact wherever possible
- Allow children to change clothes with levels of respect and privacy appropriate to their age, gender, culture and circumstances.
- Avoid working in one-to-one situations with children. When this unavoidable please ensure that a “lone working risk assessment” is completed. See appendix for further guidance.



- Avoid volunteering to accommodate children overnight.
- Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved activity.
- Fully co-operate with any investigation into child protection issues at your setting.
- Listen to children when they express concern (rumours) about staff which might appear to be just, and check facts vs fiction.

“Don’t”

- Take any action that would lead a reasonable person to question your motivation and/or intentions.
- Misuse in any way your position of power and influence over children.
- Use any confidential information about a child to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child.
- Engage in activities out of the workplace/setting that might compromise your position with children or young people.
- Establish or seek to establish social contact with children outside of the setting.
- Accept regular gifts from children.
- Give personal gifts to children.
- Communicate with children in inappropriate ways, including social networking and mobile telephones.
- Pass your home address, phone number, e-mail address or other personal details to children.
- Make physical contact secretive.
- Meet with children in closed rooms without other staff being aware.
- Use physical punishment of any kind.
- Confer special attention on one child unless this is part of an agreed plan or policy.
- Transport children in your own vehicle without prior agreement from parents and Group leader.
- Take, publish or share images of children or other children without their parents’ permission.
- Abuse your position of trust with children.
- Allow boundaries to be unsafe in more informal settings such as trips out.

3.7 Safer recruitment of workers

All workers, whether paid or voluntary, must be recruited, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. People working closely and regularly, or unsupervised with children or adults at risk will be DBS checked.



3.7.1 Appointing volunteers

If someone expresses interest in volunteering in a role that will bring them into direct contact with children or adults at risk, the appropriate team leader, in discussion with the Pastor/Child work leader, may invite them to attend as an observer in the activity.

If the person decides they would like to proceed, the Pastor/Child work leader will give them the roles description. Applicants need to sign the form confirming that they have received and read this Safeguarding Policy.

On completion of the application form, the Pastor/Child work leader will meet with the volunteer to discuss their application. This will include finding out about their life experience and attitudes, previous experience of working with the particular group, their spiritual journey, as well as answering any questions the applicant may have. If the applicant is successful, the Safeguarding team will:

- Take up references from at least one referee who have known the applicant for more than two years: one should ideally be within the church (preferably in a leadership role, but not necessarily a member of staff); the other, if possible, should be from outside SLIC (preferably the current employer, whether paid or voluntary)
- Email the online link for the DBS check to the applicant (when necessary)
- The Safeguarding team must then be comfortable that the applicants documentation and ID have been checked and verified in support of the DBS application, when required. Until satisfactory DBS disclosure and references are obtained, a volunteer must not be left unsupervised with children, young people, or adults at risk.

On receipt of satisfactory references and DBS check (when necessary), the Safeguarding team will confirm the appointment, subject to a probationary period of six months, and give the volunteer a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and relevant Individual Group Policy.

At the end of this probationary period, the ministry or team leader will meet the volunteer to review their involvement. DBS checks, when required, are repeated every three years.

Some groups have a lighter application form for volunteers with lower levels of responsibility, maybe benefit from having a standard DBS check however all volunteers working with Children or vulnerable Adults at risk do require the enhanced DBS check.

3.7.2 Criteria for not appointing volunteers

Individuals who have previously abused a child or adult at risk, or who have a record of violent or inappropriate sexual behaviour will be excluded from being involved in certain ministries within the church.

If there are concerns or reservations about appointing an individual, a risk assessment should be completed by the Head of Safeguarding. If the risk assessment does not allow the person to join the area of ministry they have applied for, then alternative avenues of service might be identified. This requires sensitivity and tact on the part of those giving the feedback, particularly if references are discussed.



The reasons for not appointing someone are particularly important where past offences have come to light which were not disclosed on their application form. Members of the Safeguarding team or trustees should contact the applicant in such circumstances to ensure confidentiality.

All applicants should be notified in writing of a decision not to appoint.

3.7.3 Training workers

SLIC will provide on-going safeguarding training for every person (whether paid or voluntary) working with children and adults at risk. This may be a training event internally or externally. Workers will be expected to take part in training at least once every two years, preferably every year.

3.7.4 Support and supervision of workers

The trustees are committed to supporting all workers, whether paid or voluntary, and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers are issued with a copy of the safeguarding policy and an Individual Group Policy appropriate to their area of ministry.

It is unacceptable for anyone in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour with children or adults at risk that might allow a sexual relationship to develop, for as long as the relationship of trust continues. All team members must be accountable to each other in all areas of this policy and the relevant Individual Group Policy, if available.

3.8 Supervision of children and adult-children ratios

Adult-to-children ratios are specified to protect the safety and welfare of the children in our care, as well as everyone working with them. The Department of Education specifies minimum ratios of adults to children within formal childcare, which SLIC has adopted for its groups. These are:

3.8.1 Age //Minimum adult-children ratio

Under 2 years old	1 adult for every 3 children	with a minimum of 2 adults
2 year olds	1 adult for every 4 children	with a minimum of 2 adults
3–7 year olds	1 adult for every 8 children	with a minimum of 2 adults
8+ year olds	2 adults for up to 20 children	1 extra leader for every 10 additional children

In all groups of ten or more children, it is recommended that the person in charge is in addition to the minimum number of adults. (For example, a group of fourteen 3–7 year olds' require at least two adults, so the ideal would be two plus the leader.) If the ratio is not met, then either the group meeting or event must be cancelled or parents should be asked to stay and care for their children.

Suitably capable and mature teenagers (13–17 years old) may be used as junior helpers. They must be supervised by an adult at all times, and must not be counted as adults when calculating



adult-child ratios. However, if they have a clear leading role, they do not need to be included as children when calculating adult-child ratios.

3.8.2 Keeping records of children

The Head of Children's Work and Head of Kids and Youth Work must keep up-to-date records of the children in their care. These records should include:

- Name
- Address (including postcode)
- Date of birth
- Emergency contact details of parents or carers
- Details of any health conditions, medication or allergies
- Doctor's telephone number and address

Group leaders must maintain accurate registers of the children, team members. This information is to be kept. Registers are stored securely until children reach the age of 25 years old.

Any accidents or incidents must be recorded in the accident/ incident log book. A written note about the incident must also be given to the parent or carer, with a request that they confirm receipt of this information. In the case of a safeguarding issue, make a written record as soon as possible (ideally within an hour) after the incident or disclosure, using the appropriate form and inform the Head of Safeguarding.

All information must be stored and used in accordance with the church's Data Protection Policy.

3.8.3 Administering medication/medical support

Group leaders should consult with First Aiders when administering emergency medication. Wherever possible, parents should provide consent and a first aider / doctor should be present.

4. Dealing with Allegations or Suspicions of abuse

4.1 Possible indicators of abuse

The following signs may or may not indicate that abuse has taken place, but the possibilities should be considered. The lists below are not exhaustive nor prioritised. If you are concerned about a child or adult, you should speak to the Head of Safeguarding and/or one of the Pastors for procedures on dealing with suspicions or allegations of abuse.

4.1.1 Signs which may indicate physical abuse of children or adults

- Injuries (including bruises, bites, burns and fractures) which do not have an 'accidental' explanation
- Injuries which are not consistent with the explanation given for them



- Injuries in places on the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Self-harming

4.1.2 Signs which may indicate sexual abuse of children

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Sexually provocative or seductive behaviour with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home

4.1.3 Emotional signs which may indicate some kind of abuse of children

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour (particularly where a person withdraws or becomes clingy), depression or aggression
- An increase in nervousness
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Running away, stealing or lying

4.1.4 Signs of financial abuse

- Change in living conditions
- Lack of heating, clothing or food
- Inability to pay bills or unexplained shortage of money
- Unexplained withdrawals from an account
- Unexplained loss or misplacement of financial documents
- Sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents

4.2 General procedures for dealing with allegations, suspicions or concerns

The following procedures are to be followed in relation to **all** safeguarding concerns (each point is explained further in the policy):

- Do not attempt to investigate
- Keep a thorough record



- Report concerns immediately
- Maintain confidentiality
- What happens next
- What to do if you think your concerns have not been dealt with appropriately

Additional specific advice and procedures to follow in particular situations are set out in subsequent sections:

- Allegations or suspicions of physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect of a child
- Allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse of a child
- Allegations or suspicions of domestic abuse within a family
- Allegations or suspicions of any kind of abuse or neglect in an adult at risk
- Allegations or suspicions of abuse by a person who works with children or adults at risk

4.2.1 Do not attempt to investigate

You should not, under any circumstances, attempt to investigate an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

An allegation of abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so it is vital that you do nothing that could jeopardise that investigation. If you ask leading questions or discuss the allegation with anyone (other than appropriate people in the Safeguarding/Pastoral team), any police statements that are subsequently made will be considered as contaminated evidence by the court.

4.2.2 Keep a thorough record

Make a thorough written record of allegations made to you or incidents that have raised your suspicions, and your responses. Records must be as accurate as possible and stored securely as they will be required in the event of a criminal investigation.

- Record exactly what was said to you and what was said by you or any others involved.
- Record exactly what happened, what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity), and any actions you took.
- In the case of an adult, record their views and wishes, including the outcomes that the adult wants, such as being safe at home, restricted or no contact with certain individuals, or pursuing the matter through the criminal justice system.
- Write it as soon as possible – ideally within an hour
- Sign, date and time your report
- Keep it in a secure place



- Hand a copy (preferably typed) of your report to the Head of Safeguarding as soon as possible
- Password protect any notes you make on a computer
- Use initials only in emails, not full names
- Keep all hand-written notes in a secure place, even if you have subsequently typed these up. Taking a photo of handwritten notes will provide it with a datestamp

4.2.3 Report concerns immediately

If someone makes an allegation to you, or you become suspicious of abuse, you should report your concerns as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding or one of our Pastors.

In the absence of the Head of Safeguarding (or if the suspicions in any way involve them), you should report the matter directly to one of our Pastors, who can also be contacted via the church office. In the absence of both the Head of Safeguarding and the Pastors (or if the suspicions in any way involve them), you should contact CCPAS for advice, or refer the matter to social services or the police. Contact details are at the start of this policy.

4.2.4 Maintain confidentiality

Confidentiality is vital. Do not discuss the suspicion or allegation with anyone other than:

- Head of Safeguarding
- Our Pastors
- Officials from investigating statutory agencies

You should not even discuss it with members of the person's family as you may unwittingly alert an abuser that an investigation is imminent.

4.2.5 What happens next

The Head of Safeguarding (acting on behalf of the trustees) handles allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse. This involves:

- Collating and clarifying the details of the allegation or suspicion
- Obtaining informed consent for information to be passed on (if this is not possible and others are at risk of abuse or neglect, it may be necessary to pass information on without consent)
- Referring matters on to the relevant statutory agencies, which have a legal duty to investigate
- Reporting the matter to the church trustees and, when necessary to the Charity Commission and/or church insurance company

Information can be shared with other members of the Transitional Leadership Team, trustees, staff, or wider leadership team on a strictly need-to-know basis when it is in the interests of the child or adult concerned, or if others in the church may be at risk.



4.2.6 What to do if you think your concerns have not been dealt with appropriately

If you believe that the Head of Safeguarding and the Pastor have not responded appropriately to concerns reported to them, you may report your concerns directly to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from CCPAS. Anyone has the right to report concerns directly to these outside agencies in the first place, but the trustees hope that members of the church will follow the procedure within this policy.

For advice on what to say if someone wishing to disclose abuse, see 'Appendix 2: How to respond to someone wishing to disclose abuse'.

4.3 Additional procedures for cases involving children

4.3.1 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect of a child

This section applies if:

- an allegation of physical or emotional abuse, or of neglect, of a child is made to you
- a child has signs which may indicate physical abuse
- a child has a symptom of neglect
- there are concerns about emotional abuse of a child

Report the matter as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding, following the general procedure outlined above in [section 4.2](#), who will:

- request medical help if needed, informing the doctor of any suspicions (if medical care is needed urgently, ring 999 before contacting the Head of Safeguarding)
- obtain from the parents/carers informed consent for passing information on to the statutory agencies, unless this may put the child, or others, at risk
- contact children's social services or the police (or CCPAS for advice) in cases of deliberate injury, or if concerned about a child's safety, or if a child is afraid to return home

If the issue is to do with unacceptable parenting, the Head of Safeguarding or Pastor will:

- encourage the parent or carer to seek help, unless this places the child at risk of further harm
- offer to accompany the parent or carer to seek help, if they are unwilling to go on their own
- contact Children's Social Services for advice in cases of significant concern, or if the parent or carer still fails to act
- take and follow advice given by CCPAS if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Services (CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference)



4.3.2 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse of a child

This section applies if:

- an allegation of sexual abuse of a child is made to you
- a child has signs which may indicate sexual abuse

Report the matter as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding, following the general procedure outlined above in [section 4.2](#), who will:

- obtain from the parents/carers informed consent for passing information on to the statutory agencies, unless this may put the child, or others, at risk
- contact the duty social worker for children and families, or the police child protection team
- take and follow advice given by CCPAS if unsure whether or not to contact children's social services or the police (CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference)

4.3.3 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of domestic abuse within a family

This section applies if:

- an allegation of domestic abuse is made to you
- a child or parent/carer has a physical injury which may indicate domestic abuse

If domestic abuse may be taking place in a home where there are children, report the matter as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding (see [section 1.6](#)), following the general procedure outlined above in [section 4.2](#). If there are no children in the home, see the additional procedures in [section 4.4.2](#).

Someone experiencing domestic abuse needs to be encouraged to report it to the police. If they are unwilling to do so, but disclose to an SLIC worker that this is happening, it is then the responsibility of the worker to contact the Head of Safeguarding, who may contact the police.

When the police attend a call for a domestic dispute and there are children in the house, the police will contact social services. Any allegations that a child has been hurt due to domestic abuse, whether intentional or not, must be referred to social services. The allegations will probably be investigated by the community paediatric child protection team.

4.4 Additional procedures for cases involving adults

4.4.1 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of any kind of abuse or neglect of an adult

This section applies if:

- an allegation of any kind of abuse or neglect of an adult is made to you



- an adult has a physical injury which may indicate physical abuse
- an adult has a symptom of sexual, psychological or other abuse

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance states that, in a case of possible abuse of an adult, 'it is important to understand the circumstances, including the wider context such as whether others may be at risk of abuse, whether there is any emerging pattern of abuse, whether others have witnessed abuse, and the role of family members and paid staff or professionals.

The guidance also notes that, 'early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns.

Report the matter as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding or other relevant member of the safeguarding team (see [section 1.6](#)), following the general procedure outlined above in [section 4.2](#), who will:

- discuss any concerns with the adult at risk, giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy, and rights to lead an independent life
- contact the emergency services if there is immediate danger to the adult at risk or if they have sustained a serious injury, informing them of any suspicions
- contact adult social services, which has responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse
- alternatively contact CCPAS for advice

4.4.2 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of domestic abuse between adults

This section applies if:

- an allegation of domestic abuse is made to you
- an adult has a physical injury which may indicate domestic abuse

If domestic abuse may be taking place in a home where there are children, see the additional procedures in [section 4.3.3](#). Someone experiencing domestic abuse needs to be encouraged to report it to the police. If they are unwilling to do so, their decision must be respected. Encourage the couple to seek support from the church pastoral care team.

4.4.3 Additional procedures for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse by a volunteer

This section applies if:

- an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff)
- you develop suspicions that a worker may be an abuser

Do not discuss the matter with the worker. Report the matter as soon as possible to the Head of Safeguarding following the general procedure outlined above in [section 4.2](#), who will:

- contact CCPAS for advice. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.



- liaise with social services about suspending the worker
- refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures, or to the Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (DASM)

If the situation arises in a residential context (for example, camp or weekend away), the same procedures must be followed. In addition, the worker concerned should be supervised carefully until advised otherwise by the Head of Safeguarding or our Pastors.

In the event that a worker is the subject of a police investigation, they will be suspended from their duties. When the investigation is completed, their position will be reviewed taking account of the outcome of the investigation.

5 Dealing with potential radicalisation

The Prevent Strategy is part of the Government's counter-terrorism and anti-radicalisation strategy. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015²² states that:

'Radicalisation' refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. During that process it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being drawn into terrorist-related activity.

The Act defines 'extremism' as: vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. . . [and] calls for death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

While we believe that Jesus's teaching about Christian discipleship is 'radical', it has no relation at all to the understanding of 'radicalisation' given above. Jesus's followers are not to embrace violence, but to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9,38–39) and those who love their enemies (Matthew 5:43–45). Similarly, Jesus's teaching forbids Christians from engaging in 'hate speech' (Matthew 5:21–22), though it is important to note that this is not the same as disagreeing with someone's views.

The teaching of children and adults within SLIC is based firmly on the understanding of the Bible and strongly encourages authentic Christian discipleship. No leaders within the church, therefore, should ever endorse terrorism, extremism, or radicalisation (as defined above).

5.1 Adults at risk of being radicalised

Adults at risk of being radicalised includes those who come under the category of 'adults at risk' elsewhere in official safeguarding guidance. However, it also includes others who may be vulnerable to radicalisation because of factors which would not otherwise make them 'adults at risk'. It is possible that such a person may have some involvement Church through our various outreach activities.



5.2 Preventing the radicalisation of children

The Government expects schools and childcare providers to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. Churches are not covered by this, but this may change.

Signs that a child is at risk of radicalisation could include:

- talking about friends or family involved in extremism
- use of extremist or hate language (without necessarily understanding its meaning)
- use of images or symbols linked with extremism or terrorism Other 'engagement factors' (which do not 'necessarily indicate that a person is either committed to terrorism or may become a terrorist', but 'include needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences') including:
 - becoming isolated from other children in the group
 - feelings of grievance or injustice
 - feeling under threat
 - a desire for status, or a need to dominate and control others
 - a marked desire for political or moral change
 - susceptibility to indoctrination
 - relevant mental health issues

5.3 What to do if you suspect radicalisation

If anything arouses suspicions that someone may be drawn into terrorism, or a child is at risk of being drawn into terrorism:

Observe: Note factual indications of potential radicalisation without alerting the person concerned or alarming others. Indications may include:

- use of extremist or hate language
- expressing opinions drawing on extremist-related ideology
- use of visual symbols linked with extremism or terrorism
- changes in behaviour or friendships

Discuss: Discuss concerns with the Head of Safeguarding or our Pastors.

Record: Make a full written record of observations, discussions, and actions taken; keep this record securely and confidentially until it can be passed to the Head of Safeguarding or Channel Police Practitioner.

Act: If appropriate, the Head of Safeguarding will report the concerns to a Channel Police Practitioner, who will complete a preliminary assessment.



6 Practice Guidelines

SLIC is committed to good working practices. This enables workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships, and minimise the risk of false accusations.

6.1 Boundaries to protect workers/volunteers

Boundaries are designed to protect workers as well as creating a safe environment for children and adults at risk. Workers should treat everyone – including children and adults at risk – with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.

Written or verbal remarks should not have sexual connotations or ridicule individuals in any way. Workers have a responsibility to be presentable, both in dress and hygiene.

It is not acceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in a relationship, or engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop, with a child or adult at risk for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

Keep everything public (a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors). Only workers who have DBS clearance including checks of appropriate barred lists should supervise children who require help with toilet needs.

Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by a child rather than a worker.

When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc.), encourage children to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the children's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.

6.2 Telephone and electronic communication with children

Telephone and electronic communications are helpful for complementing communication in person with 11–18 year olds but is never appropriate for under-11s. However, these means of communication present particular risks that should be considered.

6.3 Photographs of children

SLIC is committed to safe practice when dealing with images of children. No names or any other personal information, which could enable identification of a child, are used. The storage and use of images is subject to the Data Protection Act, in addition to this policy and any specific requirements within relevant Individual Group Policies, which provide safeguards against misuse of the images.

Parents or carers who do not wish the church to take, store and use photographs and video of their children must use ChurchSuite to 'opt-out' to inform our photographers. It is not possible to opt out of only some uses of photographs and video because of the practical difficulties this causes for those using material in church publicity contexts. Printed material will be double-checked with Parents who have opted in before publishing.



6.4 Trips and transport

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children and adults at risk organised by, or on behalf of, the church. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between those with parental responsibility or car share to our church service. Only those who have gone through the church's recruitment procedure for volunteers and workers should transport children and adults at risk.

The lower age limit for workers transporting children and adults at risk is 20 and they must have held a full driving licence for a minimum of two years. They must also have adequate insurance and the vehicle should be fully roadworthy.

Parental consent should be given for all transportation of children. Children should only be transported with the knowledge of the Head of Children's Work.

It is reasonable to expect that drivers may be alone with a child for short periods (for example, when dropping off the last child). Consideration should be given to dropping the least vulnerable child last and planning routes accordingly. Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with a child. When using minibuses for transporting children, seat belts must be fitted for, and worn by, all passengers.

All children carried as passengers in cars are subject to the following rules:

- It is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that children aged 13 and under have the appropriate seat restraint.
- Children under 3 years of age must have the correct child restraint.
- All children between 3 and 12 years of age must use the correct child restraint (e.g. booster seat), unless the child is over 135 cm in height.
- Children over 135 cm in height, or aged 12–13 years must wear adult seat belts.
- Passengers aged 14 and over must wear adult seat belts, but it is the passenger's legal responsibility to do so, not the driver's.

6.5 Premises

Many people make use of different parts of the building. It is essential that all workers take responsibility for the building.

The primary concerns must be that:

- the building is safe
- it is an appropriate environment for our activities

Make every effort to look after the rooms you use and leave the premises in a fit state to be used by someone else.



7 Pastoral Care

7.1 Supporting those affected by abuse

The church trustees are committed to ensuring that pastoral care and support are available to anyone in contact with the church who has been affected by abuse. The trustees and safeguarding team will work with statutory agencies as appropriate.

Appendix 1: Trustees'

Safeguarding Statement

SLIC is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and ensuring their well-being. We recognise the personal dignity and rights of every person as a bearer of God's image. Every person has the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to, and to be protected from all forms of abuse, and we will ensure that all our policies and procedures reflect this.

1. We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect of children (under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
2. We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults at risk and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
3. We believe every person should be valued and safe. We want to make sure that children and adults at risk with whom we have contact know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.

We are committed to:

- following legal requirements and good practice recommendations in relation to safeguarding and disabilities.
- exercising proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and adults at risk, and ensuring that everyone follows the procedures within our safeguarding policy (including providing appropriate support, resources, training, monitoring and supervision)
- supporting the Safeguarding Team in their work, and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults at risk
- nurturing, protecting and safeguarding children and young people, and supporting parents and families
- co-operating with relevant statutory authorities (including Children's and Adults' Social Services which have the primary responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse, and the police, who should be contacted as a matter of urgency when an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed)



- reviewing this statement and our policy and procedures at least every three years If you have any concerns for a child or adult at risk, speak to the Head of Safeguarding or one of the Pastoral team.

SIGN AND PRINT NAME HERE

Head of safeguarding

Lead Pastor

Chairman of Trustees

Appendix 2: How to respond to someone wishing to disclose abuse

1 Effective listening

- Ensure the physical environment feels safe for the person wishing to make a disclosure.
- Give opportunity for the person to talk in private, but make sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above everything else, listen without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at the person whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with speech or language difficulties, ensure there is someone available who is able to understand them.

2 Confidentiality

- Confidentiality is not the same as secrecy.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality: you will need to report the conversation to the Head of Safeguarding, and it may need to be reported to the statutory agencies.
- If the person decides not to tell you after all, accept their decision, but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Inform the person that you will need to keep a written record of the conversation, but that this record is confidential and will only be seen by the Head of Safeguarding and, if necessary, the statutory agencies.

3 Helpful responses

- 'You have done the right thing in telling'



- 'I am glad you have told me'
- 'I will try to help you'

4 What not to say

- 'Why didn't you tell anyone before?'
- 'I can't believe it!'
- 'Are you sure this is true?'
- 'Why? How? Where?'
- 'I am shocked, don't tell anyone else'

Appendix 3 - Lone working - Assessment Process and Record Keeping Guidance

One to one contact with individuals in the context of pastoral support should be properly planned, risk assessed and recorded.

It is essential in pastoral care to acknowledge appropriate physical, sexual, emotional and psychological boundaries. Inappropriate touching or gestures of affection are to be avoided.

Consider - What, why, who, when, where, how

What is the nature of the contact?

- Pastoral, supportive, mentoring.

Why is one to one necessary?

- Confidentiality should not be confused with secrecy or privacy. It is possible to hold a confidential conversation in a public area, where there is privacy.

Who is involved?

- Provider, Receiver, others with knowledge of arrangements.

When will the contact take place?

- The timing of contact and meeting is important to ensure actions are not misinterpreted.

Where will the contact take place?

- Can a public venue that affords privacy be used, or if a private venue is used there is a need to ensure it is not secretive. N.B. Openness with others in awareness of the contact arrangements supports all involved. Deviation from this principle should be an exception and justified by compelling circumstances which must be recorded in a risk assessment.



How will the needs of all involved be addressed?

Are there particular factors which add to the vulnerability of either party?

If so, a full risk assessment should be completed. Records should be maintained that are relevant to the contact and evidence a rationale to the contact being undertaken on a one to one, lone basis

Minimum recording requirements for all one to one visits include date and time; persons present; venue; nature of contact. It may be pertinent to record in more detail if there is any indication that this person, the context or content of the meeting has a heightened vulnerability either before or during the meeting.

It is good practice to check with the person concerned at the start, midway through and at the end of the meeting that they are comfortable with the arrangement and process of the meeting.