

Grace Church Hammersmith

**Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable
Adults**

Updated: 15 January 2024

Reviewed: 1 November 2022

Safeguarding Policy and procedures:

Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults

1. Purpose

This policy with its procedures and appendices outlines how we will seek to:

- 1.1. Ensure that we provide a healthy and spiritually nurturing, environment for everyone who engages with our church community
- 1.2. Ensure that all children and vulnerable adults who attend the church's activities are provided with a safe environment, protected as far as possible from abuse
- 1.3. Ensure that those involved in work with children and vulnerable adults have clear guidelines and, where appropriate, training relating to their own roles and responsibilities and are protected as far as possible from false allegations
- 1.4. Ensure that an appropriate response is made in the event of abuse being suspected, disclosed or alleged
- 1.5. Ensure that when supporting people who have experienced harm:
 - 1.5.1. We treat with dignity, respect, and compassion
 - 1.5.2. That their views and wishes are given full consideration
 - 1.5.3. That we act in their best interest
 - 1.5.4. That we ensure they are appropriately involved in and informed of decisions that affect them
- 1.6. Ensure that appropriate, confidential safeguarding records, that allow us to fulfil our duty of care to protect and promote the wellbeing of those to whom we minister, are securely kept, and disposed of in line with our legal duties and best practice under both safeguarding and data-protection legislation and guidance.
- 1.7. Ensure that our trustees, staff, and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities and duties and are supported to fulfil them competently and confidently
- 1.8. Ensure that we review this Safeguarding Policy at frequent and regular intervals, and lodge a copy of the current policy with the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service.
- 1.9. Ensure that all church members have a basic understanding of safeguarding and that they understand their responsibility to raise and challenge any abusive behaviours

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies in particular to staff or volunteers who work on our behalf with vulnerable people (children, young people, their parents / carers, adults at risk of abuse or adults with care and support needs) and to those who have leadership and oversight of the church's activities. This includes trustees, senior leaders, group / ministry leaders, paid staff, volunteers, or others working on our behalf
- 2.2. 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 officers.

3. Context

Grace Church Hammersmith is a Christian church which holds services in London. We do not own our own premises but hold a lease on a building which we use for Sunday worship.

We are a Presbyterian church which holds to the Ecumenical Creeds of historic Christianity, and the Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms. We are part of the International Presbyterian Church.

Charity Number: 1195190

Insurance Company: Ansvar Insurance, Policy Number: CFW 2362175

As a Christian church, our most important regular event is meeting for worship on a Sunday. Our services are meetings for the whole church family and so include all ages from birth to old age and all abilities and states of mental and physical health. We encourage the growth of warm, healthy family relationships in the church.

We also organise children's groups to provide age-appropriate teaching, on Sundays and during the week.

4. Definitions

Additional needs: is a term most often applied to children who require support beyond what we would usually expect to provide to a child of that age or developments stage.

Adult: a person who is at least 18 years of age

Adult at risk of abuse / in need of protection: refers to adults who have care and support needs, are at risk of abuse, and due to their support needs are unable to protect themselves from the abuse.

Adult with care and / or support needs: refers to an adult who requires help with day-to-day tasks that most people would be able to perform for themselves.

Child: A child is a person who has not yet attained their 18th birthday which aligns with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. In Scotland, the position is slightly more complex as Scottish law also recognises an age of "Legal Capacity" which is 1. Unborn children are included within the scope of Child Protection.

Child in Need: Similar to targeted safeguarding, this refers to care and support that is offered to a child or family with more complex needs such that if effective support is not provided, the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health, development, or wellbeing.

Child Protection: refers to safeguarding activity that has met the statutory threshold for referral to the Police or Social Care and involves the prevention of, or response to "significant harm".

Deacon(s): refers to those appointed by the church to that office to support the Elders and serve the church in practical and legal matters.

Elder(s): refers to those appointed by the church to that office to provide spiritual leadership and instruction. The Elders have the spiritual authority within the church.

Officers: refers to all those who hold formal office in the church including Deacons and Elders, and Trustees.

Regulated activity: refers to activity that a barred person must not do. In simple terms, it is activity that requires a DBS check.

Safeguarding arrangements: is used in this policy, procedures and related documents as a generic term that includes all aspects of the church's approach to safeguarding, including matters related to policy, process, culture, and practice

Single Central Record: is the master record of all pre-appointment checks and processes that were completed prior to appointment to a role.

Spectrum of safeguarding: is the whole range of safeguarding activities that includes universal safeguarding, consent-based care, and support (i.e., support that falls below the statutory threshold), and the statutory responsibility to protect children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse from significant harm.

Staff: refers to any paid employee or office holder.

Statutory threshold: the point at which the church has a duty to report a concern to report a matter to one of the statutory bodies such as the Police, Social Care, or the Charity Commission.

Sub-threshold (or consent based) safeguarding: matters or concerns which do not meet the criteria for referral to statutory authorities. These issues may still be serious and require a response from the church, however, internal processes will be followed.

Targeted Safeguarding: care or support that is offered to a child or their family on the basis of consent to prevent harm and promote wellbeing where there is a risk of poor outcomes from the individual if their support needs are not met.

Trustee(s) refers to those who are legally responsible for the governance and oversight of the charity.

Universal safeguarding: activity that is required to keep everyone safe. This includes those who have no additional needs and includes the interface with other aspects of safety such as Health and Safety and employer responsibilities.

Volunteer(s): refers to anyone who is appointed by the church to a role or who performs identified tasks on behalf of the church for which they receive no payment (other than out-of-pocket expenses that are appropriately authorised).

Vulnerable people: is a generic term that can be used to mean different things and so care is needed. In the context of this policy, the term is used in a generic sense to include anyone who has a support or care need or whose ability to protect themselves against abuse is limited. This includes children, young people, adults with support needs and adults at risk of abuse. It also includes those who, due to specific individual circumstances find themselves, either for a short time or over a more extended time, requiring additional care, support, or protection, but who would not otherwise be regarded as needing support.

5. Values and beliefs

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

The elders and trustees of Grace Church Hammersmith recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults. The church is intended by God to be a place where all people can find themselves part of a family where people have been transformed by God's Holy Spirit such that they are able

to have a quality of relationships which only God makes possible through his Son Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Christians have a duty to love one another in a manner modelled upon Christ's self-sacrificial love for them on the cross. Abuse is always a case of inflicting harm on another for the sake of personal pleasure or gain, and so is the very opposite of what Christ requires of his people.

Nevertheless, the realities of human sinfulness mean that all members of the church are still sinful, and it is essential that steps are taken to minimise the effects of sin within all the relationships of the church, so that the gospel may have its full effect in bringing repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation. In particular those who are most vulnerable must be protected from being harmed by the sins of others. We are committed as a church to protecting children and vulnerable adults in this way. This is the purpose of this Safeguarding Policy.

6. Our responsibilities and commitments

6.1. Our responsibilities

7. Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member to help prevent the abuse of children and adults at risk, and the duty of each church member to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and adults at risk. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

8. Safer recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and adults at risk, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children and adults at risk.

9. Respecting children and adults at risk

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and adults at risk so that all children and adults are shown the respect that is due to them.

10. Safer working practices

The church is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and adults at risk and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

11. A safer community

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any individuals who may pose a risk to children, young people and adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately

11.1. How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities

11.1.1. the safety or wellbeing of those who are part of our community and to respond appropriately and proportionately:

11.1.1.1. To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them

11.1.1.2. To provide information, guidance, and support as we are able

11.1.1.3. To share information appropriately with partner agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met

11.1.2. We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as:

11.1.2.1. Consent forms

- 11.1.2.2. Attendance data for work with children, young people, and Adults at Risk of Abuse
 - 11.1.2.3. Accident and incident reporting
 - 11.1.2.4. Confidential recording of safeguarding concerns
 - 11.1.2.5. We will adopt proportionate safer recruitment best practice in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
 - 11.1.2.6. Managing health and safety through effective policies and procedures; using risk assessment processes and proportionate systems
 - 11.1.2.7.
 - 11.1.2.8. We will provide effective leadership, management, and support to the staff and volunteers who deliver services on our behalf including:
 - 11.1.2.9. Ongoing training and skills development
 - 11.1.2.10. Supervision and pastoral support
 - 11.1.2.11. Quality and performance management measures
- 11.1.3. We will involve children, young people, their parents or carers and adults at risk of abuse in our safeguarding processes wherever possible; making reasonable adjustments where necessary to enable them to participate in the decisions that affect them
- 11.1.4. We will ensure that we have a culture and policies and procedures for raising concerns or complaints by any member of our community including children, young people, adults at risk of abuse and their parents / carers and for dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest, and fair manner, including clear appeals processes
- 11.1.4.1. We will also ensure that our leaders are competent and confident in handling complaints, concerns, and allegations
- 11.1.5. We will develop a culture that encourages every member of our community to identify and raise concerns and will support this with a clear whistleblowing policy
- 11.1.6. We will ensure that relevant policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc are publicly available

Safeguarding Procedures

12. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide staff and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

13. Scope

These procedures apply to all staff and volunteers and others who act on behalf of the church.

14. Governance and oversight

The Trustees will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

- 14.1. Ensuring that they appoint from amongst their number a nominated Safeguarding Trustee who will act on their behalf to provide leadership and guidance on matters related to safeguarding
- 14.2. Ensuring that the church leadership promote the importance of safeguarding and lead the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable and that safeguarding is appropriately prioritised, and its profile maintained
- 14.3. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained and skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a deputy are appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced
- 14.4. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is implemented and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the DSL and Deputy DSL at least annually, but more frequently as required
- 14.5. Ensuring that clearly defined safeguarding procedures and systems are in place, that they are understood and implemented by all staff, volunteers, and anyone else who acts on our behalf
- 14.6. Ensuring that the DSL provides a verbal update to all trustee meetings (which will be conveyed by the safeguarding trustee) and that a written annual report is provided to the trustees by the Safeguarding Trustee, the DSL, and Deputy DSL
- 14.7. Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures
- 14.8. That any "Serious Incidents" (as defined in the Charity Commission Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>) are reported accurately and in a timely manner

15. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

15.1. Management of recruitment processes

- 15.1.1. Staff and volunteers will be provided with written Job / role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position / role
 - 15.1.1.1. Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a DBS check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- 15.1.2. Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions
- 15.1.3. A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained

15.2. Recruitment process

Staff

- 15.2.1. Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form including a self-declaration of fitness and suitability for the role Where necessary and appropriate (e.g., lack of literacy skills, English as a second language etc) support can be provided for completion of the forms.
- 15.2.2. All applicants for positions on church staff must as a minimum:
 - 15.2.3. be interviewed by the minister and maybe other elders too.
 - 15.2.4. complete a self-declaration form, including providing details of any allegations or convictions against them.
 - 15.2.5. apply for a DBS enhanced disclosure through the church (or give consent to a 'status check' of the DBS update service), which will on receipt be reviewed by the safeguarding lead. Where the applicant is from overseas, an extra reference is required, and a 'certificate of good conduct' may, if appropriate, be required from their national embassy. DBS checks will be renewed every three years.
 - 15.2.6. provide two referees.
 - 15.2.7. provide appropriate identification documents.
 - 15.2.8. agree with and accept this Safeguarding Policy and all the procedures within it
 - 15.2.9. The Single Central Record, training Log and Personnel file will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

Volunteer positions

Applicants for volunteer positions within the church must as a minimum:

- 15.2.10. either be members of the church, having been through the interview process for that, or have been interviewed by a church elder regarding their suitability for working with children.
- 15.2.11. complete a self-declaration form, including providing details of any allegations or convictions against them.
- 15.2.12. apply for a DBS enhanced disclosure through the church (or give consent to a 'status check' of the DBS update service), which will on receipt be reviewed by the safe guarder. Where the applicant is from overseas, an extra reference is required, and a 'certificate of good conduct' may, if appropriate, be required from their national embassy. DBS checks will be renewed every three years.
- 15.2.13. provide a referee who is able to comment on their suitability to work with children
- 15.2.14. provide appropriate identification documents

15.2.15. agree with and accept this Safeguarding Policy and all the procedures within it

DBS Checks

15.2.16. Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, staff and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check

15.2.16.1. Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the result of the DBS check has been received

15.2.16.2. Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to commence prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a formal risk assessment will be completed

15.2.16.3. A formal agreement that outlines the duties that are permitted, and all measures implemented to prevent the individual having unsupervised access to vulnerable people will be drawn up and signed by the appointee and the DSL or the Safeguarding Trustee

15.2.17. Once formal notification of a clear DBS check has been received, the Single Central Record will be updated with the relevant information

Fair Treatment policy

15.2.18. Grace Church Hammersmith is a Christian Church committed to treating people according to Biblical principles of justice and grace. We are committed to treating all those who work or volunteer for the church, or who benefit in any way from the church's work, in a manner which accords with Biblical teaching about all people being made in the image of God, and all Christians being of equal value in Christ Jesus.

15.2.19. In seeking employees and volunteers we seek to recruit people who fulfil biblical standards of lifestyle required of all Christians and who demonstrate suitable Christian maturity for the particular roles they will be fulfilling. In addition, we look to recruit people who have particular experience, skills and potential suitable for these roles.

15.2.20. As a Christian church committed both to serving and to being the body of Christ, all employment posts can only be filled by Christians. The nature of all posts and the context in which they are carried out, and their link to the wholly Christian nature of the Church's work, give rise to a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post-holders to be Christians. While we welcome a wider range of people to fulfil volunteer positions than we would be likely to employ, the same expectation applies to volunteers. Therefore, all staff and volunteers are required to demonstrate a clear personal commitment to Jesus Christ, as demonstrated both by willing assent to orthodox Christian teaching and willing conformity with orthodox and historic Christian morality. This includes (but is not limited to) sexual behaviour, where exclusive faithfulness within the marriage of one man and one woman, and celibacy outside it, are the only acceptable patterns of behaviour for all. However, forgiveness of past sins is at the heart of the Christian gospel, so the existence of past sins in this or other areas, since repented of and replaced by a godly lifestyle, is no bar to employment or volunteering.

- 15.2.21. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as one part of assessing applicants' and volunteers' suitability for positions of trust, Grace Church Hammersmith undertakes to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice as it stood on 29 April 2021.
- 15.2.22. As a community of redeemed sinners Grace Church Hammersmith will not think worse of applicants on the basis of any information revealed by this service. Such information will be used for making decisions about the appropriateness of offering an employed or volunteer position to the applicant, ensuring the necessary protection of children, and helping the applicant grow in Christian godliness, and will not lead to unfair treatment in any area of church life.
- 15.2.23. A Disclosure is only requested if relevant for the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered a position.
- 15.2.24. Where a Disclosure is to form part of a recruitment process, we encourage all applicants for volunteer positions, and all applicants for employment called for interview, to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent separately and in confidence to the church's Recruiter and we undertake that this information will only be seen by those who need to, as part of the recruitment process.
- 15.2.25. We ensure that all those in the church who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of offences.
- 15.2.26. At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary work.
- 15.2.27. Every person undergoing a DBS check will be made aware of the DBS code of practice and a copy will be available on request.
- 15.2.28. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking a position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment or voluntary work.
- 15.2.29. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working or volunteering with us. This will depend upon the nature of the position, circumstances and background of the offences, and the character of subsequent repentance.
- 15.2.30.

Handling, Use, Secure Storage, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

In consideration of our use of the Disclosure and Barring Service, to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, we agree to comply with the DBS Code of Practice, Data Protection Act and other legislation in regard to the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.

Handling

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. This will usually include one or more of the elders of the church and the safeguarding officers. In such cases Grace Church Hammersmith undertakes to inform the applicant that this has happened and give opportunity to discuss it with the elder(s) concerned.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Storage and Access

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal file but stored separately and securely, with access strictly limited to those who are entitled as part of their official duties.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, Disclosure information may be kept for up to six months for the resolution of disputes or complaints, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If this happens it will be done in consultation with the CSS Disclosure Unit who will seek advice from the DBS giving full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights legislation. The conditions regarding safe handling and storage will continue to apply.

Disposal

Once the retention period has lapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately and appropriately destroyed (e.g. by shredding). While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will continue to be kept securely. We will not keep any original documents or copies relating to the disclosure certificate. However, we may keep a record of it, i.e. the name, date, and type of disclosure, the position for which it was requested, the unique reference number and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Our relationship with Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS) as an Umbrella Organisation

We accept that the CSS Disclosure Unit, as our umbrella organisation, has a responsibility to ensure, as far as possible, that we comply with all the requirements in the DBS Code of Practice, this and other policy statements, and in other DBS procedures and processes. We undertake to keep CSS informed of any changes in our organisation, personnel or practices which could materially affect our ability to work within these expectations.

The precise nature and expectations of probationary periods will vary from role-to role as described in the role description, however, they are intended to be supportive of the volunteer / employee and to provide a framework that provides accountability to both the individual and the organisation. Probationary periods will not be used for punitive purposes.

- 15.2.31. All staff and volunteers will be subject to a formal probationary period
- 15.2.32. Prior to commencement of the role, a clear statement of the criteria for successful completion of the probationary period will be provided
- 15.2.33. Regular support, guidance and review will be provided throughout the probationary period and the outcome (passed, extended, failed) will be communicated to the employee or volunteer prior to the end of the probationary period and records will be retained of all discussions

Ongoing support and supervision

- 15.2.34. All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management
- 15.2.35. Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years

Training

- 15.2.36. All staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular safeguarding training
- 15.2.36.1. Trustees will receive initial training. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance up to date
- 15.2.36.2. Church leaders will refresh their training every three years
- 15.2.36.3. Volunteers and staff involved in working with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years
- 15.2.36.4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years
- 15.2.36.5. All staff, volunteers and trustees will undergo some informal update activity annually
- 15.2.36.6. Training should include themes on domestic abuse and trauma and the impact on victims including children.
- 15.2.36.7. Children are now regarded by law (Domestic Abuse Act 2021) as victims of domestic abuse if they are living in a home where their parents or relational care givers are abusing each other.
- 15.2.37. A log of training and DBS checks will be maintained by the church

16. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

Christian Safeguarding Services fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.

Health and Safety

- 16.1.1. Regularly reviewing our health and safety policy to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance
- 16.1.2. Maintaining and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments for both the premises and the activities of the church
- 1.1.1. Ensuring that appropriate safety equipment such as First Aid kits, Fire Extinguishers etc are available and maintained on an ongoing basis
- 1.1.2. Key Health and Safety information will be prominent and best practice will be promoted through announcements, effective signage etc

General Guidelines for all church activities

In these guidelines, references to 'child' or 'children' should be taken to apply to and include, where appropriate, vulnerable adults also. References to parents should be taken to apply to

legal guardians also, or to other adults who have been entrusted by their parents or guardians with bringing them to church.

General Guidelines for all church activities

1. Each church activity will have guidelines for matters specific to the age and situation of the children and adults present at it.

2. No child should ever be in a situation where he or she is alone with an adult other than his or her parent. For this reason, children visiting the toilet must be accompanied by a parent, not by a leader of the activity. Where this is not possible then two leaders must accompany to the toilet.

Children using nappies may have them changed by a crèche leader only at the consent of the parents. Children being potty trained may be helped to use the potty without parents present, provided that this takes place in a room where there are two or more leaders present (this will normally be the main crèche room, which will be necessary anyway when speed is of the essence). This will only be done with the consent of the parents.

3. Each church activity will have its own register book. This will include, for every time the activity takes place,

- The date
- Names of leaders and helpers
- Which children attended
- Any incidents or near misses, particularly if a child hurts him/herself

4. Children should only be left in the care of leaders of church activities with the consent of their parent or parents. For this reason parents of all children left in children's groups without their parents present must have signed a consent form.

Each church activity will therefore maintain a file of current consent forms. These will be kept for at least five years after the event. Registers will also be kept for at least 5 years

6. Children should be collected by their parents or other adult responsible for their care from church activities, including those which happen during the service. Where the parents are not known to the leaders, the child should only be returned to the same parent or adult who dropped him or her off. For activities happening during services, parents need to come out of the service to collect their children and take them back in.

7. Leaders should not initiate contact or conduct communication with children outside of church activities (including via social media) without the consent and ongoing knowledge of the child's parents.

8. We will maintain a minimum of the following adult: child ratios at all activities.

- ✓ 0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
- ✓ 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
- ✓ 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
- ✓ 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
- ✓ 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children

These ratios may be changed very briefly whilst a leader is fetching a parent to collect a child to take them to the toilet.

9. A DBS enhanced disclosure is required for all leaders and helpers at regular church activities for children. All church elders and staff require a DBS enhanced disclosure. For less frequent or one-off activities all those in leadership require a DBS enhanced disclosure and for those

assisting the guidance provided by CSS will be followed in deciding whether a disclosure is necessary or not.

10. A check of the DBS “Barred List” is required for those working in ‘regulated activity’ and for the ministers who are managing them.

11. All those involved in leading or helping with church activities, and all church staff and office bearers, will be provided with a copy of this policy and asked to read it.

12. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years. The next review is due in January 2024.

Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

16.2. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL

16.2.1. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding

Details of the concern must be recorded on the “Incidents and concerns reporting form” (either before, during, or immediately

Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

16.3. In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required

16.4. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a “Confidential File” in relation to the person at risk

16.4.1. A Chronology (See appendix D) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file

16.4.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis

16.4.2.1. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a “need to know” basis

16.5. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care

16.5.1. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:

16.5.1.1. To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect

16.5.1.2. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse

16.5.1.3. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness

16.5.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix B for contact details)

16.5.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children’s Social Care

16.5.4. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process

16.5.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the “Record of action” and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis

16.6. Confidential files will be stored password protected

- 16.7. The DSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding

Guidelines for dealing with the disclosure, discovery or accusation of abuse

1. Treat the concerns seriously.
2. Do not promise confidentiality. If you are asked by someone whether they can tell you something in confidence, you should always say no. Rather, they should only tell you if they trust you to do what is right with what they say.
3. Record what you are told in writing as soon as possible, and at the latest within an hour of the conversation taking place. Record any questions that you asked. Record the date and time of the conversation. Keep all hand-written records.

Incident report form – Available upon request from Safeguarding Lead

4. Report the conversation to the Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy Safeguarding Lead. If both are either unavailable or implicated, you may report it to one of the elders or to the CSS. Do not discuss the situation with anyone before doing this.
5. The Safeguarding Lead will contact the appropriate authority, i.e. Social Services or the Police, if necessary. Advice may be sought from the CSS. The elders will be informed by the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Social Services – 020 8753 6600 (Hammersmith and Fulham Child Protection ICAT)

- 020 8748 8588 (Out of Hours Child Protection)

- 020 8753 4198 - Option 3 (Vulnerable Adult)

- 020 8748 8588 (Vulnerable Adults - out of hours)

DBS – 03000 200 190 (once action has been taken against someone)

Charity Commission – Trustees responsibility to report harm to charity's work, beneficiaries or reputation – report actual or suspected incident asap.

Email – RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

Our insurers -Access Insurance Services 020 8651 7420

Police – if criminal activity is suspected

6. In cases where misconduct leads to a staff member or volunteer being dismissed, the DBS will be informed in line with legal requirements.
7. The Safeguarding Lead will give guidance to relevant leaders of church activities on how to support an abused child in the context of church activities.

Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

- 16.8. In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required
- 16.9. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk
 - 16.9.1. A Chronology will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file
 - 16.9.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis
 - 16.9.2.1. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a "need to know" basis
 - 16.9.2.2.

- 16.10. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care
- 16.10.1. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:
 - 16.10.1.1. To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect
 - 16.10.1.2. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse
 - 16.10.1.3. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness
- 16.10.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix B for contact details)
- 16.10.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children's Social Care
- 16.10.4. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process
- 16.10.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the "Record of action" and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis
- 16.11. Confidential files will be stored in a password protected drive
- 16.12. The DSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding

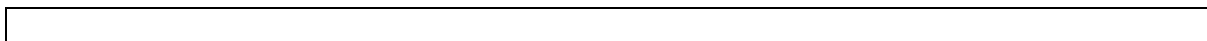
Guidelines for dealing with people known to pose a risk

The Christian gospel is an invitation to all people, despite and because of their sinful pasts and sinful nature, to come to Christ to find grace. For that reason it is very likely that there will be people – both children and adults – who pose a risk to children wishing to come to church activities. And for that reason it is essential that the church extends a welcome to such people.

1. Where a person has a known history of offending, he or she should have an agreed arrangement with the safeguarding Lead about how situations leading to temptation or difficulty for the individual, and any risk of harm to children, will be avoided. For example, a person with a known history of offending against children could be asked to avoid using the toilets or entering rooms where children's activities take place. Arrangements will be put in place appropriate to the level of risk the person poses. Agreement with this arrangement will be required if the person is to be allowed to attend church activities. This will be done in agreement with the police and/or probation office, where appropriate, and reviewed on a regular basis.
2. Those known to pose a risk will never be placed in a position of responsibility for children, or assisting in children's activities.

Appendix B
Key safeguarding contacts

Organisational	Statutory services
<p>E-mail: safeguarding@gracechurchhammersmith.org</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Lead: Talitha Mansaray</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jenny Ilderton</p> <p>Our policies and other useful information about safeguarding can be requested</p>	<p>Local Authority details</p> <p>LADO@lbhf.gov.uk</p> <p>Safeguarding children Initial Consultation and Advice Team (ICAT) 020 8753 6600</p> <p>Emergency out-of-hours: 020 8748 8588</p> <p>Email familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk</p> <p>Allegations against staff or volunteers should be reported to <i>(Please remember that e-mail is NOT secure so confidential or sensitive data should not be included)</i></p> <p>Safeguarding Children Partnership</p> <p>Website: Local Safeguarding Children Partnership London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (lbhf.gov.uk)</p> <p>Safeguarding Adults</p> <p>Report concerns to Adult Social Care Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Phone: 0800 145 6095 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday Emergency out-of-hours: 020 8748 8588</p> <p>E-mail: safeguardingadults@lbhf.gov.uk</p> <p>Safeguarding Adults Board</p>



Appendix C - Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework

- Our statement of faith
 - This policy reflects the organisation’s fundamental biblical beliefs and should be read in conjunction with the statement of faith
- Our governing documents (e.g., constitution / Memorandum and Articles of Association etc)

Safeguarding Children

- National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children)
 - Children Acts (1989 & 2004)
 - Children and Families Act 2014
 - Children and Social Work Act 2017
 - Working together to safeguard children (2018)
 - 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:
 - Keeping children safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition
 - Keeping children safe in education 2021
 - FGM duty guidance
 - Prevent duty guidance
 - Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Local guidance and procedures
 - *Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures*
 - *Local authority guidance*

Safeguarding Adults

- National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults)
 - 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

- Local guidance and procedures
 - *Local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures*
 - *Local authority guidance*

Grace church hammersmith

Volunteer application form

About You		
Full name	Address	
Phone number		
Mobile number		
E-mail address		
About the role		
Department /Group / ministry area	Role applied for	
Is the role subject to a DBS check?		
Children only	Adults only	Children and adults
Personal statement		
Please briefly describe your reasons for applying for this role and any appropriate experience in similar roles.		
Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?		

--

Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?

Please supply details of 2 people who can comment on your suitability for this role.

Reference 1

Reference 2

Name

Name

Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them

Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them

Address

Address

Phone

Phone

E-mail address

E-mail address

Self-declaration

Yes

Do you have any criminal convictions that would affect your ability to perform this role?

Is your state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health adequate to fulfil this role?

If the role involves working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, are you, or have you ever been barred from such work?

Are you in agreement with the church's beliefs as outlined in the statement of faith?

Do you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, codes of conduct, risk assessments etc that are relevant to this role?	
Is there anything that you wish to add or that you wish us to consider in relation to this self-declaration?	
I confirm that the information supplied in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. Signature: Date:	
For office use only: Form reference / volunteer reference as per Single Central Record.	

Incident / concern reporting form

About this form and the person completing it			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate box(es)</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed
About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / (where appropriate)
<i>Please insert more lines as required</i>			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?</i>			
Context of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>Where / when / who else was present etc?</i>			

Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety	
Other action taken or advice sought	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	

Record of safeguarding conversations and actions

Date of action / conversation	Document reference
Description of record	
Information given	
Advice received	
Actions to take	
Outcomes	
Recorded by	Date recorded

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with children or young people

Those working with children and young people will

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from parents
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of the children in their care
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or authority as adults and leaders within the group
- Only take responsibility for children if they are physically and mentally fit and able to do so
- Treat them with respect and dignity
- Treat them in an age-appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice
- Treat them as individuals
- Respect their views and wishes
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- Ensure that age-appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented in accordance with this policy
- Ensure that any age-appropriate physical contact is child led
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual child or the group
- Refrain from any physical chastisement
- Refrain from making any social media connections with them
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them
- Act with fairness and treat children equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding
- 2022 Position of Trust law now states that is a church leader/youth leader engages in an inappropriate relationship with a 16-17 year old, this is now illegal and carries a 5 year prison sentence.

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers providing pastoral care

(Please note: this code of conduct is not intended to cover disciplinary issues, although the broad principles would still apply)

Those involved in providing pastoral care will:

- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support
- Ensure that the dignity and wishes of the individual are always respected
- When delivering challenge or difficult messages, will do so in a respectful, compassionate, and gentle way that is in line with their best interests (including their emotional and spiritual wellbeing)
- Will seek to ensure that the individual's right to question or ignore any advice or suggestions is fully understood
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- Ensure that any physical contact is client led
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding

