

# **STANMORE CHAPEL SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

## **Policy Statement on children, young people and the church**

This statement was initially agreed at a church meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and was updated in November 2023.

Copies of this statement will be given to all existing workers involved in children and young peoples work and all new workers as they are accepted by the church. The Pastor and Elders together with the safeguarding officers and leaders of the children's and youth programs will review this policy biennially and, at the same time, confirm that it is being carried out satisfactorily.

- As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or volunteer.
- The church is committed to following the Home Office Code of Practice *Safe from Harm*.
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church's agreed procedures, which includes Good Practice Guidelines for those working with young people.

Chris Tapp (chris.tapp@stanmorechapel.org.uk) currently acts as Safeguarding Officer & Lead Recruiter - liaising with the FIEC and thirtyone:eight (formerly CCPAS) as necessary, and seeking disclosures and undertaking other administration as appropriate. In addition Sheila Jarvis (sheila\_jarvis@btinternet.com) is also an approved Recruiter.

The church is a member of thirtyone:eight and will make use of this service, and guidance from the FIEC to ensure that we adhere to current legislation.

The FIEC have a partnership arrangement with the thirtyone:eight and they are responsible for processing DBS Disclosure applications on behalf of FIEC affiliated churches.

## **Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities in Young People's work**

As an organisation using the DBS disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, this church undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received.

We welcome people to serve the church on the basis of the right mix of talent, skills, character, potential and call of God, including those who may have criminal records.

A Disclosure is requested only after a through risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.

A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to a person serving with children and young people. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

## **Safe from Harm**

### **Home Office Code of Practice Guidelines – Summary of Recommendations**

Safe from Harm – a Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales was published by the Home Office in 1993. Its guidelines provide the basis for this document.

The guidelines are summarised in the following thirteen recommendations:

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children
2. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur
3. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person
4. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers
5. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles
6. Use supervision as a means of protecting children
7. Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children (see Appendix 1)
8. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children (Example of reference form in thirtyone:eight guidelines)
9. Explore all applicant's experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
10. Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.
11. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period
12. Issue guidelines on how to deal with disclosure or discovery of abuse
13. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

### **Appointing those working with young people**

Any potential youth / children's worker should initially be made known to the Elders before being approached in order for background checks to be made.

It is expected that volunteer workers should be regular attendees of the church.

Each prospective worker should be known to an elder of the church. Ideally two references should be obtained, one, where appropriate, from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.

If a worker has recently moved from another church, the second reference should be from the leadership of that church. (Note thirtyone:eight guidelines).

A DBS check will then be carried out for all children / youth workers. We also offer regular safeguarding training (at least once every three years) and expect workers to undergo this training.

All workers will be subject to a six month probationary period after which their role will be reviewed.

### **Guidelines for Discipline**

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life and is an expression of God's love for an individual

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the children in your care.
- Work in each individual child's positives, do not compare a child with another, but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect children to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.

- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and resist allowing demanding children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- If children are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.

Never smack or hit a child and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.

- Discipline out of love, NEVER in anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry you may deal with the situation unwisely.)
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property, and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if not kept.
- Every child is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows therefore each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.
- Some children have a tendency to be disruptive in a group. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.
- Have a disruptive child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take a disruptive child to one side and engage with them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths.

Remedial action can be taken against a constantly disruptive child. They can be warned that you may speak to their parents/carers about their behaviour, they may be sent outside the room (under supervision), back into the church service, or after consultation with a church leader and advising the parent/carer, be banned from attending the group for a period of time.

If a child's behaviour continues to be disruptive despite measures taken above, seek advice and guidance from a leader.

Pray with the other workers before the session and take time to debrief before you leave.

### **Good practice guidelines for those working with young people**

The church recognises that it has a responsibility to:

- Ensure the safety and well being of young people it has dealings with
- Safeguard those working with young people from wrongful accusations and temptations.

To achieve this, it has drawn up a number of guidelines.

These guidelines recognise that it is necessary for those dealing with young people to use common sense in their conduct and that maintaining the safety of young people is the first priority. Those who have any dealings with young people will be required to sign a declaration stating that they will observe these guidelines.

In the context of a healthy, friendly relationship, based on mutual respect between ourselves and the young people, treating all young people befitting their age and watching language, tone of voice and body movements.

And having gained some factual information from a new young person when they come into the church (name, age, address), confirmed whether their parents know that they are at the church, and on leaving, given the child a leaflet about the church, details of activities, a contact telephone number and a Parental Consent Form, which must be returned with parents signature by the next activity

We shall therefore seek

- Not to be alone with a young person where an activity cannot be seen but leave doors open or have all activities in the same room.

- Not to engage in activities with a high risk of causing physical injuries or that could lead to unwelcome or invasive behaviour.
- Not to take a young person to the toilet on their own, but have another child or another adult present.
- Not to show favouritism to any young person
- Not to invite a young person to homes alone
- To avoid travelling in a car alone with a young person
- To learn to control and discipline young people without physical means
- To avoid scapegoating, rejecting or ridiculing any young person
- To create a right environment if a young person needs counselling – doing so with the door open and letting another adult know about the interview. If possible, have that adult in the building and let the young person know that there is another adult around.
- To avoid walking a young person home alone, but do so with a group of young people and if possible with another adult.

We recognise that there will be times when we are unable to meet all of the above requirements.

### **Taking care of touching**

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

### **Communicating Directly with Young People (Phone, Mobile, Email, Social Media and video conferencing)**

There will be times where it is necessary and appropriate for workers to communicate directly with specific young people either individually or as a group, but care must be taken when using a note, letter, phone, mobile, email, social networking sites, social media and video conferencing sites.

Before such direct communication permission should be obtained from a parent/guardian either directly by, or in liaison with the ministry leader. Parents should consent, preferably in writing, to their preferred mode(s) of communication and supply the contact details of the child as they deem appropriate.

Where technology allows, correspondence should be kept and available for scrutiny by the ministry leader and/or Safeguarding Officer.

Where video conferencing is being used the following general guidelines should be followed:

- Video conferencing platforms such as Zoom should be used as opposed to social media tools e.g. Skype, Face time and WhatsApp video calls.
- Parental consent will be obtained for all participants.
- Conferences will not be recorded.

Any photos or videos containing images of young people which are publicly available (i.e. on the website, Facebook, YouTube) must only be used strictly with parental permission.

## **Definitions of Abuse**

**These definitions are used by the NSPCC and the Department of Health:**

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Is where an actual or likely physical injury to a young person takes place, or there is failure to prevent physical injury to a young person. This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It also includes deliberate poisoning, alcohol or drug intake, and attempted drowning or suffocation.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature young people in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate and exploit a young person.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Is the persistent pattern of deliberate uncaring or emotional deprivation of a young person. All abuse involves some emotional deprivation.

### **NEGLECT**

Is the persistent or severe neglect of a young person which results in serious impairment of their health or development, including failure to thrive. This can also include exposure to cold and starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care.

### **ORGANISED ABUSE**

Is sexual abuse where there is more than a single abuser and the adults concerned appear to act in concert to abuse young people. This includes child prostitution, pornography or where adults use an institutional framework or positions of authority to abuse young people.

## **Recognising Abuse**

**These are all possible signs and symptoms for abuse. It is possible for some signs to exist without abuse. We must never assume that abuse has taken place or misconstrue any signs or actions.**

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

- Unexplained injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which seems excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Bald patches
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Refusal to strip for swimming
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Bed wetting/soiling
- Bruising, especially to cheeks, ears, nose
- Personality changes

## SEXUAL ABUSE

- Act or speak in a sexual way inappropriate to their age
- Any allegations made by a young person concerning sexual abuse
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Young person with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
- Young person with a detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Experience discomfort when walking or sitting
- Experience pain when urinating
- Become severely depressed, even attempt suicide
- Have poor self-image
- Regress to younger behaviour, such as thumb-sucking, bed wetting or soiling
- Be afraid to go home
- Personality changes

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Neurotic behaviour like rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking, head banging
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of new situations
- All-round developmental delays
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Poor social relationships
- Temper tantrums that are not age-appropriate
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence

## NEGLECT

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness and lethargy
- Poor state of clothing
- Compulsive stealing
- Clinging behaviour
- Under-developed in weight, muscle tone, pale complexion

Frequently unwell, with repeated colds and coughs, stomach upsets and rashes

### **How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse**

## GENERAL POINTS

- Above everything else listen, listen, listen
- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- As soon as possible write down what has been shared
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## HELPFUL RESPONSES

- You have done the right thing in telling
- That must have been really hard
- I am glad that you have told me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

## DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"

## CONCLUDING

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse)
- Contact the person in your church/organisation responsible for co-ordinating child protection concerns or go directly to thirtyone:eight / Social Services / Police / NSPCC
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

## MAKING NOTES

Make notes as soon as possible, preferably within one hour of the child talking to you. Write down exactly what the child said and when s/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place.

## SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THOSE WORKING WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE

If a person who is working with the young people is suspected of abuse or allegations are made against them they must be removed from their responsibility.

If the Independent Person or Child Protection Administrator is suspected of abusing any young people, concerns should be expressed to the elders of the church.

Note: If when working with the young people you see someone acting in ways which may be misunderstood or which may be used in wrongful accusations, then speak to them or speak to the Independent Person.

### **Code of Practice for the Independent Person**

#### **If the Independent Person is contacted because of suspicions or allegations of abuse they will**

- Advise the safeguarding officer of the suspicions or allegations and consider with them any action to be taken.
- Ensure that a statement regarding the cause for concern has been drawn up, dated and signed by the person initially involved.
- It may be appropriate at this stage to notify the parents.
- Contact the Social Services Child Protection Team for advice and action to be taken.

The Team will co-ordinate action to be taken and they will always contact Police, Education and Health departments so that information can be gathered from all these agencies. An urgent meeting will be arranged to discuss the incident in order to decide what action, if any, is to be taken. The reporting officer i.e. the person who signed the report will be asked to attend.

- Ensure that all phone calls, discussion, decisions made and actions taken are accurately recorded including dates, times and the reason for decisions taken and that the document is signed.

**STANMORE CHAPEL  
(Baptist and FIEC)  
MARSH LANE & NELSON ROAD, STANMORE, MIDDX**

**Acceptance of Child Protection Policy**

Name of Worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Address (inc. Postcode) : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration**

I understand the nature of the work that I am to do with the young people.

I confirm that I have read and understood the church's Child Protection Policy including the 'Good Practice Guidelines for those working with young people' and I will follow these guidelines.

I consent to the church requesting two references from: someone who has experience of my paid work and/or my volunteering with children and/or the leadership of my previous church.

I consent to a Criminal Records Check if appointed to a position working with young people. I am aware that details of pending prosecutions, previous convictions, cautions, or bindovers against me will be disclosed along with any other relevant information which may be known to the police, Department of Health or the Department for Education and Skills.

I do not have a criminal record/I have a criminal record as disclosed (Please delete as appropriate)

Criminal Record Disclosure

If there are things I do not understand or if I have reason to be concerned about a child I will check with the appropriate young people's leader.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STANMORE CHAPEL**  
**MARSH LANE & NELSON ROAD, STANMORE, MIDDX**

Minister: Chris Tapp, The Manse, 96 Marsh Lane, Stanmore, Middx. HA7 4HP  
 chris.tapp@stanmorechapel.org.uk

**Consent Form for Young People**

**General Information**

Full name of child/young person \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Day) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Night) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Mobile) \_\_\_\_\_

In the event of an emergency please contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to young person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of any regular medication, medical condition (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs, etc.) or disability which may affect normal activity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Consent**

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to take part in the normal activities of this group. I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group. I understand that while involved he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and /or other adults approved by the church leadership and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take all reasonable care of the children, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of, the activity.

In an emergency, or if you cannot contact me, I am willing for my child to receive necessary hospital or dental treatment including an anaesthetic.

I am willing for my child to be transported to/from the meetings either in the church minibus or by private car belonging to a church member or appointed worker.

Children aged 12 or more – I give permission for my child's own mobile number and/or e-mail address to be held by the youth leaders and for contact to be made direct with my child regarding activities arranged specifically for that age group.

Signed (parent/or adult with parental responsibility) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (Please print in capitals) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STANMORE CHAPEL**  
(Baptist and FIEC)  
MARSH LANE & NELSON ROAD, STANMORE, MIDDX

**Cause for Concern Report**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Full name of child/young person \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sequence of Events/Actual Words Used/Observations

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Action Taken

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Name of Person Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_      Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Any other notes, please attach on a separate sheet

Name of Person recording incident \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_      Time: \_\_\_\_\_

