Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire

Safeguarding Policy

Policy #	#1
Version	v1.10
Domain	HR
Reason for update	Scheduled review
Author(s)	Based on Thirtyone:eight model policy
Review by	John Fermer & Emma Sherwood (May 2026)

Safeguarding Policy Summary

1. Our Commitment

- We believe every child, young person, and adult has the right to be **safe, valued, and respected.**
- We follow national safeguarding law, the Equality Act 2010, and the Care Act 2014.
- Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility.**

2. Key Contacts

Safeguarding Coordinators

Emma Sherwood – 📧 emma@oakscc.org.uk | 📞 07702 067149

John Fermer – 📧 john@oakscc.org.uk | 📞 07973 531838

If they are unavailable or involved:

📞 Thirtyone:eight: 0303 003 1111 (option 2)

📞 Derbyshire Children's/Adult Social Services: 01629 533190

📞 Police: 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

3. If You Have a Concern

1. **Listen carefully –** do not interrupt or promise secrecy.
2. **Record what happened within 24 hours –** write down dates, times, names, and exact words.
3. **Report** immediately if necessary, or within 24 hours **–** go to www.oakscc.org.uk/safeguarding to fill out a post-it note or incident form.
4. **Do not investigate –** only statutory agencies do this.

4. Safe Practices

- At least **two leaders per group;** correct adult-to-child ratios followed**.**
- No one under 16 is left in charge.
- **DBS checks** required for anyone working with under-18s or vulnerable adults.
- Avoid being alone with a child or young person where you cannot be seen.
- Respect privacy and dignity at all times.

5. Working with Children & Young People

- **Positive behaviour management –** never use physical punishment or shouting.
- Always obtain **parental consent** for trips, photos, or electronic communication.
- Be careful with **social media** – use group accounts, not personal ones. No private messaging.
- Pray with children/young people only with their permission, in open spaces, and sensitively.

6. Adults with Care & Support Needs

- Adults may be at risk from: physical, emotional, sexual, financial, organisational, or discriminatory abuse; neglect; domestic abuse; modern slavery.
- Respect dignity, choices, and independence while ensuring safety.

7. Pastoral Care

- We support anyone affected by abuse.
- If someone known to pose a risk attends church, strict **boundaries and supervision** will be put in place.

8. Remember

- Safeguarding protects **everyone.**
- If in doubt, **speak up** – it is always better to raise a concern than to stay silent.

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Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire Safeguarding Policy

Section 1–– Details of Organisation Page 3

Section 2 – Prevention Page 4

Section 3 – Practice Guidelines Page 6

Section 4 – Responding to Allegations of Abuse Page 7

Section 5 – Pastoral Care Page 9

Appendix 1 – Policy Statement

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Poster

Appendix 3 – Thirtyone:eight Knowledge Hub Links & Flowcharts for Action

Appendix 4 - Good Practice Guidelines for the Prevention of Abuse

Appendix 5 - Procedures for children's & youth groups

Appendix 6 - Guidelines for Discipline

Appendix 7 - Praying with children & young people

Appendix 8 - Guidance on Social Media and Young People

Appendix 9 - Safeguarding adults who have care and support needs

Section 1: Details of the Organisation

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Name of Organisation: Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire

Primary Address: Oaks Community Church, 2 & 4 Lea Road, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 1SB (Dronfield congregation)

Other venues: The Lighthouse, Berry Avenue, Eckington S21 4AR (Eckington congregation)
Youth groups, Belonging Groups & Connect Groups, meet in various homes of leaders.

Tel No: 01246 414448 Website: www.oakscc.org.uk

Chair of Directors & Email: Richard Bull rbull46@gmail.com

Core Team Leadership Team Email: coreteam@oakscc.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinators Names & Emails: Emma Sherwood emma@oakscc.org.uk

John Fermer john@oakscc.org.uk

Members of: Ground Level Network

Charity Number: 1115427 Company Number: 05291244

Insurance Company: Public Liability Insurance with Congregational & General

The following is a brief description of the activities at our various venues:

- Children's groups during Sunday services.
- Midweek groups for children & young people – at Oaks Community Church, The Lighthouse and/or in homes of leaders.
- Occasional trips, family events, activity days, holiday clubs & weekends away also take place during the year.
- Belonging Groups for adults – at Oaks Community Church, The Lighthouse, or in homes of leaders.
- Pastoral care and support for children, young people and families; and adults who have care and support needs.
- Community groups for adults meet at Oaks Community Church & The Lighthouse, or in homes of leaders.

Our Commitment

The Core Team and Directors recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults who have care and support needs. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults who have care and support needs can be at risk of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, 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”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to 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”.

The Core Team and Directors have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight (https://thirtyoneeight.org/ten-standards).

The Core Team and Directors undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its paid and voluntary workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work, and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children and adults who have care and support needs.
- Not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

SECTION 2: Prevention

Understanding Abuse and Neglect

Defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

> *1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent*

treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in Appendix 3.

Safer Recruitment

The Core Team and Directors will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. Examples include ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post.
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form.
- Those short listed have been interviewed.
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview.
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate.
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information).
- Qualifications, where relevant, have been verified.
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant.
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy, staff or volunteer handbook (depending on the role) and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding Training

The Core Team and Directors are committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all staff and voluntary workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake in-house safeguarding training every year and externally recognised safeguarding training every 3 years.

The Core Team and Directors will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Workers

As a church we are committed to ensuring that all workers receive the support they need. The Core Team and Directors undertakes to follow and apply the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

SECTION 3: Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults who have care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

We have specific Good Practice Guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached (Appendix 4). Procedures for children's & youth groups are included in Appendix 5. In addition, specific guidelines are attached for discipline (Appendix 6), and praying for children & young people (Appendix 7). Appendix 8 contains guidance on social media & young people.

Working in Partnership

We have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

The Safeguarding poster (Appendix 2) will be displayed at Oaks Community Church, and The Lighthouse, where meetings take place.

Section 4: Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

1. In case of an emergency, phone the police on 999 in the first instance. If it's not an emergency, but you still feel the police are needed, call 101

2. Fill out an incident form **as soon as possible** here: www.oakscc.org.uk/safeguarding

3. Contact the Safeguarding Coordinators (or thirtyone:eight if they are implicated in allegation)

Contact Information

Safeguarding Coordinators

Emma Sherwood
emma@oakscc.org.uk
07702067149



John Fermer
john@oakscc.org.uk
07973531838

If the suspicions implicate both Safeguarding Coordinators, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight
Website: thirtyoneeight.org
email: info@thirtyoneeight.org
Tel: 0303 003 1111

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Procedures of Safeguarding Coordinators:

- On receipt of an incident report, the Safeguarding Coordinators should make a judgement on whether there is a need to contact thirtyone;eight. If yes, they must follow the advice given.
- The Safeguarding Coordinators must document any actions or lack thereof taken on the following form: https://oaks.churchsuite.com/-/forms/dlzgeokl
- The role of the Safeguarding Coordinators is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Coordinators, the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinators should not delay taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Core Team and Directors will support the Safeguarding Coordinators in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.
- It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight if they disagree strongly with the decisions made by the Safeguarding Coordinators.

Detailed Procedures Where There is a Concern About a Child: Allegations of Physical Injury, Neglect, Emotional or Sexual Abuse

The Safeguarding Coordinators will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight) for advice.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted thirtyone:eight.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g., poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them.

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Detailed Procedures Where There is a Concern That an Adult is in Need of Protection:

Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse or Harm Including; Physical, Sexual, Organisational, Financial, Discriminatory, Neglect, Self-Neglect, Forced Marriage, Modern Slavery, Domestic Abuse.

The Safeguarding Coordinators will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinators will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.
- Identify support services for the victim i.e., counselling or other pastoral support.

Further details on safeguarding adults who have care and support needs can be found in Appendix 9.

Allegations of Abuse Against a Person Who Works with Children/Young People, or Adults with Care and Support Needs

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Coordinators will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight and follow any advice given.
- Suspend the worker immediately until any investigations have been completed to protect the person making the allegation and the worker.

SECTION 5: Pastoral Care

Supporting Those Affected by Abuse

The Core Team and Directors are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire. This will be considered on a case by case basis and be carried out by the most appropriate person.

Working with Offenders and Those Who May Pose a Risk

When someone attending Oaks Community Church is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults who have care and support needs, we will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. In our safeguarding commitment to the protection of children, young people and adults, we will set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with thirtyone:eight.

The individual would not be allowed to be involved in any children's or youth groups under any circumstances.

Adoption of the Policy

This policy was agreed by the Directors and will be reviewed every year.

Signed by: _____ (Chair, on behalf of Directors)

Date: _____

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APPENDIX 1

Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire Protection of Children & Adults Policy Statement

The following statement was agreed by the Company Directors of Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire on 01/07/2017

Oaks Community Church North East Derbyshire (known as The Oaks) is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.

- 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 of harm and abuse and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the Oaks.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as a place of worship/organisation all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by Oaks Community Church.
- Supporting all in the Oaks who are affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then report it here: www.oakscc.org.uk/safeguarding and speak to one of Safeguarding Coordinators: Emma Sherwood and John Fermer.

A copy of the Oaks policy can be found at www.oakscc.org.uk/safeguarding

Signed by Chair of Company Directors:_____ Signed by Safeguarding Coordinators:_____

Date _____

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APPENDIX 2

Oaks Community Church
North East Derbyshire

Safeguarding is a priority here

We are committed to creating safer places by following statutory guidelines on good working practice

Safeguarding Coordinators for Children and Adults:



Emma Sherwood
07702 067149

John Fermer
07973 531838

A copy of our safeguarding policy is available at www.okscc.org.uk/safeguarding

In an emergency call 999, or for independent advice, call thirtyone:eight on:

0303 003 11 11

thirtyone:eight
Creating safer places Together

thirtyone:eight is an independent Christian safeguarding charity
Charity no: 1004490 Company no: 2646487 https://thirtyoneeight.org

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APPENDIX 3

thirtyone:eight Knowledge Hub:
https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub/

Definitions of common safeguarding terms:
https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub/definitions/

Categories of abuse:
https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub/responding-to-concerns/recognise/categories-of-abuse/

Signs and indicators of abuse:
https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub/responding-to-concerns/recognise/signs-and-indicators/

How to respond well to concerns:
https://thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub/responding-to-concerns/

Please note: we are a member of thirtyone:eight and if you would like access to any of their member area information, please contact the Church Coordinator who can assist you.

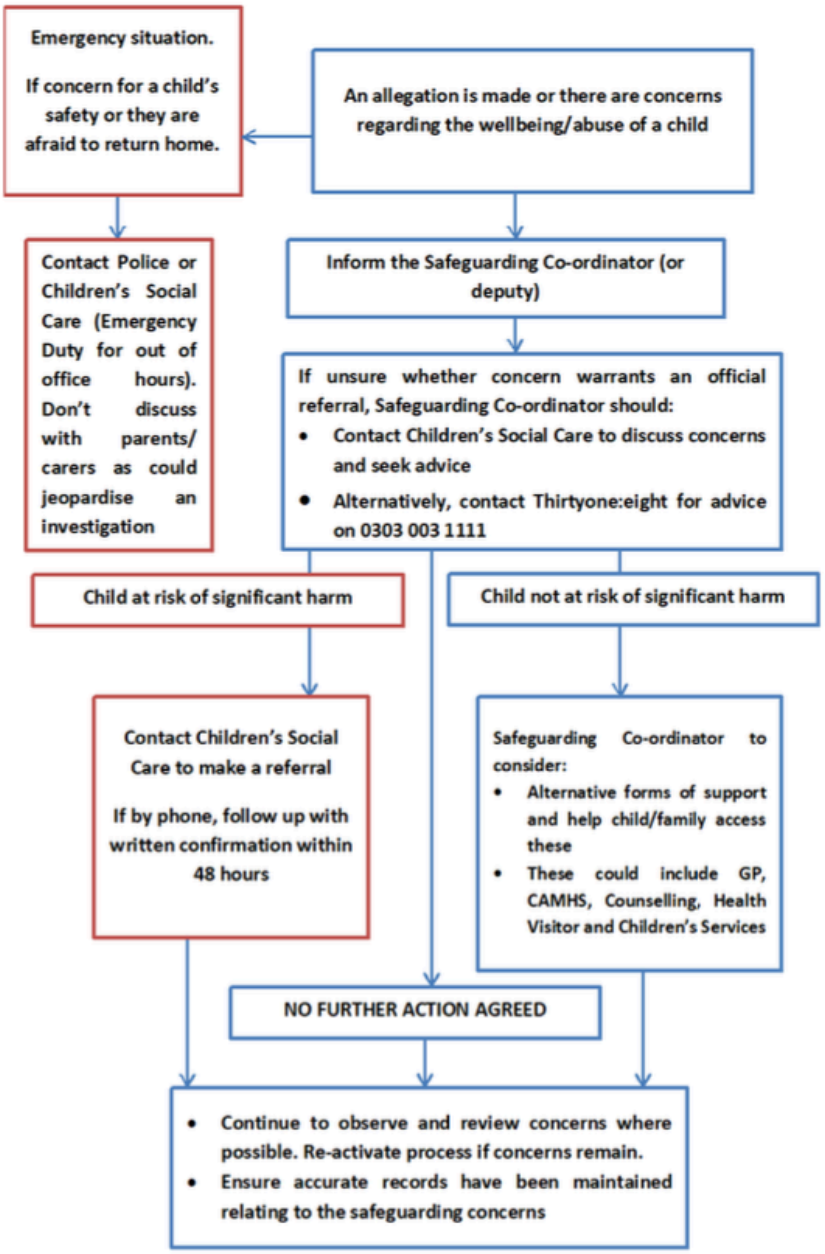
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Flowcharts for action:

Flowchart for Action Children and Young People

thirtyone:eight
Creating safer places. Together.

This flow chart provides an overview of action to be taken when concerned about the welfare of a child. It is to be used in conjunction with written procedures.

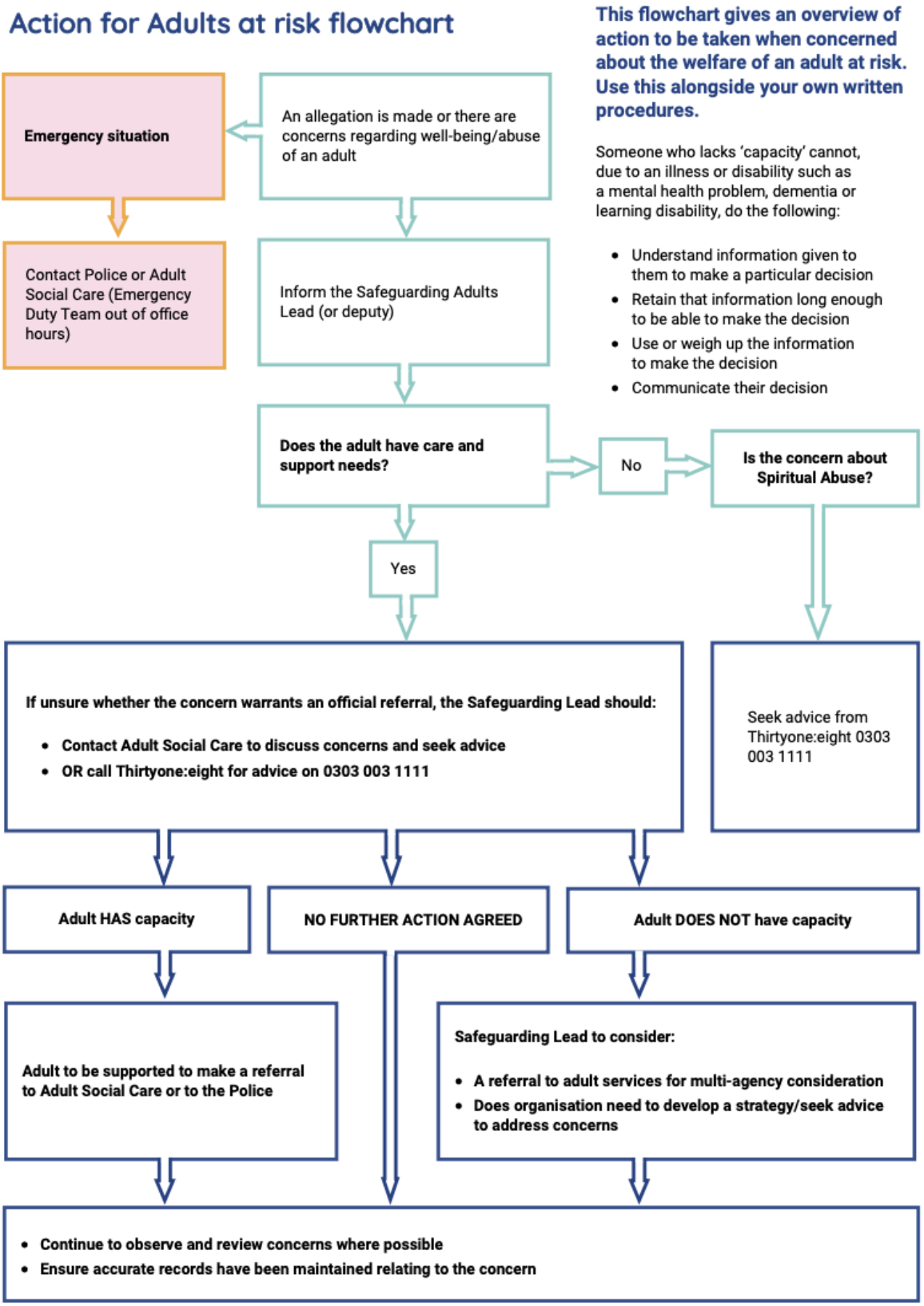


Working Together to Safeguard Children defines significant harm as:

"… any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life. Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development."

© Thirtyone:eight 2018 Flowchart for Action Children & Young People

Adult Flowchart



APPENDIX 4

Good Practice Guidelines for the Prevention of Abuse

Good practice with children and young people

1. *The church should ensure that:*

- As far as possible a worker is not alone with a child where their activity cannot be seen. On church premises, this may mean leaving a door open or two groups working in the same room.

  In a counselling situation with a young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know they are there. Never promise absolute confidentiality, always reserve the right to speak to a more senior leader.

- Access to the building is safe and well-lit.

2. *You, the worker, must:*

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.

- Not engage in any of the following:

  - Invading the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting.
  - Inappropriate rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
  - Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in ‘fun’.
  - Inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form.
  - Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.

- Control and discipline children without using physical punishment. In case of difficulty refer initially to the parents - especially if they are church members.

- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed.

- Not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

- Not leave children under the supervision of a junior leader (under 18) or a leader without a clear DBS (formerly CRB) disclosure.

- Not invite a child or young person to your home alone: invite a group, or ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.

- Not give a lift to child or young person on his/her own, other than for a short journey. If they are alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car.

- Not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people if you take a group away without the express permission of the leader in charge.

- Make sure that all children attending a group or activity have a completed consent form.

- Make sure that all events & activities have been risk assessed and documented.

Good practice with colleagues

If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them initially about your concerns. If things don't improve, speak to your supervisor or to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

APPENDIX 5
Procedures for children's & youth groups

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. At least 2 leaders for every group.

Recommended ratios

2 years & under	1 leader to 3 children
2 -3 years	1 leader to 4 children
4 - 8 years	1 leader to 6 children
9 - 12 years	1 leader to 8 children
13 – 18 years	1 leader to 10 children

Wherever possible, if there are girls in a group at least 1 female leader; if there are boys in a group at least 1 male leader.

No person under 16 years should be left in charge of children of any age (including toilet visits). Any helpers under 16 must be included in your number of children when calculating child/helper ratios. Junior helpers should be at least 2 years older than the top age limit of the group in which they are helping.

If children need to use the toilet, do not enter the toilet cubicle under any circumstances - encourage all children to use the toilet themselves and wait outside the door.

2. A register of attendance should be kept - children and leaders/helpers; please complete at the beginning of your session (either a temporary paper copy for entry onto ChurchSuite after the group session, or directly onto ChurchSuite at the beginning of the session).

For **midweek groups** you should also have a completed consent form (see below) for each child in your group.

For **Sunday groups,** where parents are on the premises, only names are needed, please register all children at the beginning of your session.

3. An incident report form or a post-it note form should be completed, recording details of any unusual events. This will need to be supported by a detailed incident report, to be submitted to the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible after the incident took place.

4. An accident report form should be completed in the event of any accident - see below.

5. All in your group need to complete a general consent form (midweek groups only).

6. All Leaders should be familiar with the Safeguarding policy, and work in accordance with it.

7. Anyone over 16 who is regularly working with under 18s, teaching, supervising, training or providing advice/guidance on well-being, must undergo a DBS check before beginning work either on a paid or voluntary basis. Checks are renewable every 3 years. If you wish to recruit another leader or helper to work with your group, please talk to the Church Coordinator before you proceed.

8. Lighting - ensure children do not enter or leave building alone at night without written parental consent. Make sure outside lights are switched on before children arrive (and off again afterwards!).

9. Food - where food is being prepared, at least 1 worker must hold a Level 2 Food Safety Certificate. This person must oversee food preparation and ensure that helpers comply with Food Safety regulations. Particular care must be taken when catering away from Oaks premises, e.g., camping trips. Children under 16 are not allowed in kitchen areas for their own safety. If in doubt, please check with the Church Coordinator.

SAFETY

General

Children should not be allowed to:

- Enter kitchen areas, without express permission and supervision of group leader(s).
- Climb pillars, stand on tables or windowsills.
- Play on or near stacks of chairs.
- Occupy areas which are unsupervised by an adult.
- Play with electrical appliances or sockets. Any young person (under 18) operating electrical equipment (e.g. PA) should be supervised by a trained adult (over 18).

Games – please take care when using equipment indoors:

- General ball games – soft sponge balls only, structured team games, no shoes, no wooden bats.
- Football – soft sponge balls only, waist height or below, no shoes.

Leaders of individual groups are expected to carry out (and regularly review) a risk assessment of all regular activities which take place during the group session. Safety measures highlighted in the risk assessment should be applied to all group activities.

FIRST AID AND MEDICATION

1. At least 1 leader in a group should have attended a recognised First Aid course. Ideally large groups should have more than 1 first aider.

2. A properly stocked First Aid kit should be available. Leaders should know where to find it and how to use it.

3. An accident reporting system must be in place – in the event of an accident a form should be completed, including name of young person, date, time, place, nature and circumstances of injury, action taken, by whom. Parents must be notified directly by a leader and must sign the accident form (one form per injured party). If you cannot obtain a parent's signature, a phone call must be made as soon as possible, and a note to this effect recorded on the accident form.

4. No medicines to be given to children without written permission from parents.

USE OF INTERNET

If using the internet as part of your group activity, you need to ensure that children are properly supervised, and advised against accessing unsuitable/inappropriate websites.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Leaders must not publish any photographs of children either on noticeboards, in magazines or on the web without parental permission via ChurchSuite.

Names, contact numbers, specific locations or any other identifying information should not be given.

TAKING CHILDREN OFF THE PREMISES – NON-RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

1. **General consent**
   A local trip which takes place within the usual time frame of the group, and takes place on foot, does not need a separate consent form **as long as you have all general consent forms in place**.

2. **Special events**
   Special event consent forms must be completed and signed by parents/legal guardians before taking children out on any other trips. Parents must be informed if their child is being taken in a car or other vehicle, and of the time, date, place, and nature of the trip. Letters detailing the event must be sent out on Oaks headed paper or emails sent via ChurchSuite.

3. **Contact details**
   Leaders taking children on trips must take a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers for next of kin of all children (usually take a copy of all special event consent forms). For residential trips these details must also be left in the office and with a contact

person (see below). Health forms are essential for residential trips; office staff are happy to produce forms for you.

4. **Risk assessments**
   Risk assessments for all regular group activities should be in place, and reviewed annually. All activities outside the normal group time/location (see special events above) must be separately risk assessed. Please contact the Youth/Children's Worker or Church Coordinator well in advance of your trip/activity (at least one month), if you need help to complete a risk assessment. A copy (signed by all leaders) must be handed in to the office for approval before the trip takes place. Risk assessments for regular groups should be reviewed & updated annually by 30th September, and a copy sent to the Church Coordinator by this date.

5. **Transport**
   Both drivers and vehicles should be assessed by the organiser of the trip:
   a) **Approved Drivers**

   - Must be over 21 and have held a full valid driving license for at least 2 years.
   - Must have insurance cover for transporting children on the basis of at least 'Occasional voluntary work' or 'Occasional business use' (please send a copy of your certificate into the office).
   - Must be DBS checked.
   - Should not give lifts to one child unless it is completely unavoidable e.g., the last child to be dropped off after an event. A lone young person should be asked to sit in the back of the car.

   b) **Vehicles**

   - Must have a current MOT Certificate, and be road worthy.
   - Must have front and rear seat belts fitted (please do not carry more passengers than you have seat belts available). Seat belts must be worn by all young people.
   - If transporting children under 12 years or under 135cm in height, booster seats must be used in accordance with current national regulations.

TAKING CHILDREN OFF THE PREMISES – RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

If you wish to take children/young people on a residential trip of any kind or duration, you must talk to the Church Coordinator at least 3 – 6 months in advance. Many factors need to be taken into consideration, such as:

- Accommodation
- Transport
- Drivers
- Leaders
- Activities
- Catering
- Budget
- Risk assessments.

All of the above need to be discussed and agreed by Company Directors before letters are sent out.

For residential trips a church contact person should be available, by phone, to be contacted in case of emergencies either by parents or by leaders.

APPENDIX 6
Guidelines for Supporting Behaviour

This includes nurturing, training, instruction, verbal prompts, teaching & 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.

- Do not compare a child, young person or adult with another in the group; rather encourage and affirm and, if possible, give them responsibility for appropriate tasks.

- Build healthy relationships and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect others to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.

- Take care to give the quieter and/or well-behaved individuals attention and resist allowing the demanding individuals 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 and young people in particular are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.

- **NEVER** smack or hit anyone and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.

- Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry you may deal with the situation unwisely.

- Lay down ground rules or facilitate the group to discuss and set their own ground rules e.g., no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property, and make sure everyone understands what action will be taken if not adhered to.

- Every person 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.

For those who are continuously disruptive:

- Have them sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Challenge them to change their behaviour whilst encouraging their strengths.
- Warn them you may speak to their parents/carers about their behaviour, they may be sent outside the room (under supervision), or be banned from attending the group for a period of time.

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APPENDIX 7

Praying with children & young people

1. Introduction

Some of the main ingredients that underpin any effective ministry to children and young people, including prayer, are:

· Acceptance
· Respect
· Non-judgmental listening
· Sensitivity
· Discernment
· Patience.

In applying these values in the area of prayer, not only will you build trust and respect, but you will also be providing a good 'prayer' model so that children and young people can learn how to pray for others in a sensitive and responsible way.

Although it may seem obvious, it is important parents/carers are aware that prayer is an integral part of church life (particularly if they don't attend church themselves), and that on occasions you may pray with their child either corporately or individually, with the child's consent or at the child's request.

You can reassure any concerned parent/carer with the principles contained in these guidelines, or if a child is part of a club or Sunday school within the church this could be mentioned, for example, on an information leaflet given to parents/carers when the child joins the group.

In the unlikely event of a parent/carer requesting that their child does not participate in individual prayer, this must always be respected.

2. Praying

Prior to praying, always make sure you have the child's permission and always pray in an open area where other leaders and/or children are around. If there is a general invitation to come forward for prayer in or after a family service then it will be helpful to have children's workers available to pray with the children/young people rather than relying on other leaders who may be used to dealing with adults. Only those authorised by the church leadership should be involved in this ministry.

The child should be asked if there is anything specific that they are requesting prayer for and listen to their reply. Speak quietly and calmly, never shout or raise your voice. Don't laugh at or dismiss out of hand if they want to pray for something you consider trite or irrelevant (e.g., my cat's poorly). If they do not have specific needs or requests then simply ask God to bless them.

Those praying with children and young people should always be alert to child protection issues and other concerns such as bullying. In these circumstances do not forget about or delay taking appropriate action because you are caught up with praying.

If you have prayed about a specific issue, it may be helpful to write it down afterwards and give it to the child so that, if they want, they can let their parents/carers know and remember it themselves.

If a child/young person becomes distressed, stop praying. Stay calm and gently ask them if they would like to say what has caused their distress. Depending on the child's response you could consider whether there are any gender issues or whether they would feel more comfortable meeting with someone else.

If unsure or the child/young person remains distressed do not continue praying but stay with them until they are calm, offering them reassurance and complete acceptance. Then talk to the child's parents/carers, assuming you have no child protection concerns.

3. Practicalities

When it comes to praying, consider your body language, particularly in relation to things like your height and the height of the child/young person. Try to ensure you are on their level rather than towering over them perhaps by both of you sitting down; but do avoid crowding.

Refrain from placing your hands on a child/young person's head as they may find this frightening or threatening. If you think they may appreciate something like an arm round a shoulder or their hand being held always ask them if this is what they would like *before* doing it.

Some churches use substances such as oil on the forehead when praying for healing. Bear in mind that a child/young person may be uncomfortable with the use of anointing oil so it is important to only go ahead with the child and parents' agreement.

Remember also that a child/young person may not, for example, understand things like 'speaking in tongues' and it is important therefore not to do anything that may cause confusion or distress.

4. Language

Use clear uncomplicated language. Reflect back what the child has said to you, to show you have understood their prayer request. If a child says they are feeling tired, you could reply "let us pray for you as you are feeling tired" not "I think you are depressed, let's pray about that". Keep the prayers simple and short so you can then be confident your prayers have been understood by the child.

5. Giving Advice

Avoid giving specific advice about problems involving decisions. A child or young person could be very susceptible to suggestion, particularly if they are distressed. Even if you believe you have heard from God about their situation, it would be far wiser to pray this through on your own or with another leader. Never advise a child/young person to stop taking medication or cease seeing professionals involved in their care or welfare.

6. Confidentiality

Never promise total confidentiality. Should a child/young person wish to disclose to you a situation such as abuse within a prayer ministry context, you have a duty to pass this on to your church's child Safeguarding Coordinator and possibly Children's Social Services or the police. You may need to gently give clear boundaries but reassure the child that if you share anything about their

situation with someone else it will be on a need-to-know basis only and you will make sure they are supported and cared for.

APPENDIX 8

Guidance on Social Media and Young People

1. Context

a. Social media is an integral part to how the majority of young people live and interact. The majority of young people have grown-up with access to this technology, and rely on it as a substantial method of communication and engaging with the world. For many young people, social media is ubiquitous, accessible from all their other arenas (home, school, youth club, etc.). Social media has a significant impact on their social development.

b. Social media can exclude young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds and cannot be the sole form of communication while internet access is not open to all.

c. Just like other means of engagement and interaction (face-to-face conversation, phone calls, group meetings, written letters, banter, gossip in the local shop), it is a neutral environment with good and bad potential: relationships can be strengthened; encouragement, empathy, friendship, inspiration and joy shared; hasty and hurtful words regretted; bullying and crime committed; deceptions created. It has particular hazards and precautions which are the main concerns of this document.

d. Social media can give scope for projecting image and presentation. Users choose who they want to be, and which parts of themselves they want to show to the world. Identity in the social media domain is inevitably a partial reflection of users. This has a knock-on effect in pressure to carefully manage one's image, appearance and behaviour. Social media is even used by some to fabricate new identities or impersonate others.

e. Online etiquette is a developing and ever-changing culture. Social media brings into question private/public boundaries and values. Due to its nature, social media is both open to, and a forum for, abuse and bullying (including 'fraping' & 'trolling').

2. Safeguarding

a. In accordance with good Safeguarding practise, we are committed to take all possible steps to protect young people from significant harm.

b. We also recognise the importance of establishing and updating procedures to ensure that those engaged in this ministry are protected whilst they work with children and young people. While this document refers on the whole to youth workers, this is a broad definition that is equally useful to all leaders in Oaks Community Church who involve young people in their activities.

3. Parental awareness and consent

a. Parental consent for using electronic forms of communication is essential and should be included in annual consent forms or by letter with a return slip agreeing to the use of specific forms of communication. The consent form must outline what means will be used for communication and what you will be communicating.

b. It is important to explain this policy and practice to parents and carers and seek to ensure they are aware and are happy with the use electronic communication and what types of electronic communication are being used.

4. Social Media & Youth Work

The social media environment is one context among many in which young people spend time; and one among many that is suitable for youth work engagement.

a. As there is no guarantee about who will receive any communication, youth workers should assume that everything they write/post is in the public domain (even if it is through a private platform such as direct messaging, text or email). Young people aren't always savvy about protecting their privacy settings or using passwords on their devices. Private and confidential information is not suitable for any electronic or online communication.

b. A youth worker should always consider their role when engaging young people, especially in the virtual environment. In the main, social media can be used for promoting project profiles and events and/or as a setting for maintaining and developing existing youth work relationships. Projects and workers must be clear about the purpose of their social media interactions in order to discern best practice.

c. A youth worker should consider their personal/professional boundaries when engaging with young people. What impact will information they share about themselves in the public domain have on the professional relationship, and how will this impact upon role-modelling? Professionals must also consider the opposite effect on integrity and holistic relationships when crafting or separating their public image. It may be helpful to have separate accounts for personal and work use - even if a youth worker is a perfect role model online, some of their friends may post unsuitable material on his/her personal profile.

d. It is not appropriate for youth workers to have private non-work-related contact with children and young people with whom they are engaged in ministry via social media.

5. Safeguarding Relationships

Social media raises ethical issues about the ways in which youth work engages young people. Youth workers should be clear about their intentions and their methods.

a. A youth worker should decide on the appropriateness of actively following young people on social media via a professional account, especially if access is available from the home environment either for worker or young person. Other adults within churches are advised not to make friend-requests of young people: let young people initiate online relationships of their choosing. **There are benefits for young people in having**

trustworthy adult friends who may watch out for them, especially when friending a parent is 'uncool'.

b. If following/friending young people on social media, a youth worker should consider what to do with information they find. They may wish to confront online issues in the real world; but youth workers should be aware of the impact of observing and policing the social media environment may have on relationships and engagement.

c. Youth workers (like all internet users) should be aware of and alert for situations that require (without alerting online parties) referral to Oaks Community Church Safeguarding Coordinators, social services or the police.

d. A youth worker should consider the environment in which communication occurs. Recorded and/or public communication is considerably safer than unrecorded/private conversations (both online and in the 'real world'). Most social media tools have the capacity to save direct/private messages, although they should be stored carefully (in line with Oaks Data Protection policy).

e. Youth workers & other leaders should make the Youth & Children's Worker aware that they are using electronic communication, and ideally this must be set up as part of a group communication and not on an individual basis.

f. Social media, because of the innate archival of messages in many services, has some useful benefits in terms of Safeguarding as it often affords a better record of communications than a letter or phone call. Depending on the sensitivity of an issue, always consider if a face-to-face meeting might, if practicable, be better.

g. It is preferable that texts and emails from workers to individual young people should be discouraged and that all such communications should be made on a group basis to communicate specific information (e.g., times and dates of events). Consider when it is appropriate to cc: parents/carers. It should not be used as a specific relationship building tool. Workers should encourage appropriate face-to-face contact where ever possible. Conversation - the repeated sending of emails between two individuals via text or email is discouraged.

h. While text messages are always saved by the service provider and could be retrieved in a court-case, effort may be required to find suitable tools that will enable accurate records to be held by the individual worker. If direct, private messaging is necessary to on-going relationship building, then written consent should be sought.

a. Generally, instant chat sites such as Snapchat and any other similar media should not be used to communicate with young people by workers. The use of Skype or Zoom and any other web camera or visual communication that cannot be recorded should also be avoided on a one-to-one basis.

b. Skype or Zoom may be used for conference calls and is considered appropriate if a project or group uses a web camera in a group environment for project purposes, and has clear aims and objectives for its use. Youth workers should always seek to inform a line manager or group leader when this is taking place and keep a record of it.

c. Any worker using a mobile phone for the purpose of communicating with children and young people by email, text or verbally should be prepared to make that mobile phone available for inspection by the Safeguarding Coordinator, and/or the Youth & Children's worker.

6. Language

All language should be appropriate and where possible 'standard responses' should be used (if you have sent an email out containing event details and receive a reply asking for further details, create a standard response with additional details so that all young people receive the same information). Workers and volunteers should take great care over the language used so as to reduce any scope for misinterpretation. When sending communications such as text messages or emails workers should not use inappropriately informal language as this can often be misunderstood and lead to further complications.

7. Hours of communication

There are no defined or prescriptive hours of posting/messaging; responsibility lies with young people and/or their parents to determine hours of access to social media.

8. Facebook and similar social networking sites

a. Youth workers should **NOT** have children or young people for whom they have ministerial responsibility added as 'friends' to their personal social networking page. A dedicated Facebook Group, or other similar medium, should be established, with at least two authorised administrators who should also be authorised workers, specifically for the use of a project or youth group: to which only recognised members of that group can be admitted; and only if they are over the required minimum age limit for such a group (The minimum age for Facebook is 13 years.)

b. Youth workers should only use this agreed social networking account for contact with children and young people with whom they are working. This should be an account that is set up specifically for this purpose on behalf of a group rather than an individual (i.e., use group accounts, never personal accounts). The security setting for group accounts should be of the highest appropriate level and the group closed to membership of all but those for whom the group is intended.

c. It is possible to set up a group via your professional Facebook account but ensure that your personal settings are secure and have limited viewing. It is possible also to set the Facebook Group privacy settings so they can't see the profiles of others who have joined (look under Account, Privacy settings on Facebook). Youth workers should not use their personal social networking or instant messaging accounts for contact with children and young people.

d. Youth workers should seek to ensure that their personal profiles on any social networking sites should be set to the highest form of security to avoid young people accessing personal information or seeing any pictures of a personal nature.

e. Each social networking platform needs understanding before engaging with young people using it. For example, the Snapchat platform is becoming very popular among

students allowing instant messaging and photos to be shared while partying while saving embarrassment the following morning as the platform deletes content as soon as it is viewed. This immediate deletion of content makes it unsuitable for Youth Work and professional contexts as it removes all means of accountability and protection.

9. Definitions and notes relating to this document

a. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 years old and designated as a minor under statute law.

   i. A children's and/or youth worker, or other leader is anyone appointed by Oaks Community Church to a post or role, whether they are paid or unpaid.

   ii. 'Internet' communication specifically refers to the use of: Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and any other websites of a similar nature.

   iii. 'Email' communication specifically refers to the use of: Emails including written text and/or pictures sent from personal or work accounts.

   iv. 'Text' communications relate to SMS messages sent between mobile phones and online group messaging programs.

b. Where consultation with the Youth & Children's Worker is advised in this document, it may be more appropriate to inform another colleague in addition. It is good practice to have a communication policy that all are aware of and adhere to.

c. With regards to young people who have left the group please use discretion with regards to this policy and seek advice where necessary.

10. References

a. This document was formulated from the following supporting documents:

- Diocese of Lichfield Social Media and Youth People Guidance
- Methodist Children Youth – Internet, email, texting communication guidelines. The Methodist Church
- Social Networking Services & Social Media. Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Using Social Networking Services and Social Media. Children Protection in Sport Unit.
- Best Practice: Social Media and Electronic Communication with Young People. Netball England.
- Streetspace Social Media & Electronic Communication document. Frontier Youth Trust
- Parish of Bushbury Social Networking Policy

b. Other resources about safe use of the internet include Dr Bex Lewis' *Raising Children in a Digital Age* (Lion Books 2014)

APPENDIX 9

Safeguarding adults who have care and support needs

An adult who has care and support needs (previously referred to as an Adult at Risk) is defined as an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (either short or long term).
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

We need to take into account the ability of adults to make informed choices about the way they want to live and the risks they want to take.

This includes how able they are:

- To understand what is likely to result from or affect their situation.
- To take action themselves to prevent abuse.
- To take part as fully as they can in making decisions about getting other parties involved.

What is abuse?
Abuse and neglect take many forms. Abuse can lead to a violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can be physical, spiritual, financial, verbal or psychological. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act.

It can happen when an Adult at Risk is persuaded into a financial or sexual exchange they have not consented to, or can't consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

Definitions of Adult abuse
The following information relates to the Safeguarding of Adults as defined in the Care Act 2014 Chapter 14: Safeguarding, and this replaces the previous guidelines produced in 'No Secrets' (Department of Health 2000).

The legislation is relevant across England and Wales but on occasions applies only to local authorities in England.

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- 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.

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Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professional and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act.

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and the different circumstances in which they may take place. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

• **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

• **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called 'honour' based violence.

• **Sexual abuse** – including 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** – including 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** – including 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** – encompasses 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** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

• **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

• **Neglect and acts of omission** – including 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.

• **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more.

Signs of possible abuse in adults

Physical abuse

- History of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries.
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems left unattended.

Domestic violence

- Unexplained injuries or 'excuses' for marks or scars.
- Controlling and/or threatening relationship including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called 'honour' based violence and Female Genital Mutilation.
- Age range extended to 16 years.

Sexual abuse

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse.
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Full or partial disclosures or hints of sexual abuse.
- Self-harming.

Psychological abuse

- Alteration in psychological state e.g., withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful.
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a carer.
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes.
- Unexplained paranoia.

Financial or material abuse

- Disparity between assets and living conditions.
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents.
- Sudden inability to pay bills.
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf.
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property.

Modern slavery

- Physical appearance; unkempt, inappropriate clothing, malnourished.
- Movement monitored, rarely alone, travel early or late at night to facilitate working hours.
- Few personal possessions or ID documents.
- Fear of seeking help or trusting people.

Discriminatory abuse

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect.
- Poor quality or avoidance care.

Organisational abuse

• No confidence in complaints procedures for staff or service users.

• Neglectful or poor professional practice.

Neglect and acts of omission

• Deteriorating despite apparent care.

• Poor home conditions, clothing or care and support.

• Lack of medication or medical intervention.

Self-neglect

• Hoarding inside or outside a property.

• Neglecting personal hygiene or medical needs.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more.

Spotting signs of financial abuse

The Office of the Public Guardian receives and records more instances of financial abuse than any other form of abuse. Financial abuse can occur by itself, but research has shown that where other forms of abuse take place, there is likely to be financial abuse too.

There are some signs that might show financial abuse is taking place:

- A change in living conditions.
- Selling possessions.
- Being unable to pay bills, or an unexplained lack of money.
- Money being taken out of an account without a reason.
- Financial documents being lost without a reason.
- Someone being cut off from family, friends or their social network.
- The carer having more money to spend on things like clothes, travel or accommodation.
- Sudden changes to a bank account or how someone uses it.
- New, recent authorised signers on a client or donor's account card.
- Money being taken without permission from the Adult at Risk's ATM card.
- Changes in how the ATM card is being used (such as more frequently or from different locations).
- Sudden or unexpected changes to someone's will or other financial documents.

This list shows some of the signs (there can be others) that abuse might be taking place. If something on this list happens, it doesn't automatically mean someone is being abused – it just means we need to look closer at the situation.

Other forms of abuse

There are some things which might increase the risk of someone being abused:

- Records of the client being abused before, or records of suspected abuse.
- Other members of the client's family being abused.
- Family tensions and conflicts.

Factors which have been shown to increase the chance of abuse include:

- A client being over 75 and female.
- Organic brain injury (lower mental function due to illness).
- Cognitive impairment (someone having trouble with memory, thinking skills or making decisions).
- Physical, mental or emotional dysfunction, especially depression.
- Recently losing a partner, not having friends or a social network, living alone, or not having contact with their children.