



Safeguarding Policy: Introduction

The following statement was agreed by the leadership of the American International Church (AIC).

Safeguarding is taken seriously by AIC. We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ invites all to reconciled relationships with God, with our fellow humans, with the earth, and within our own selves. We further believe that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to join God in the work of salvation and reconciliation in our world. To that end, safeguarding those who are vulnerable in our community is not merely a modern legal requirement, but a divine calling as we bear witness to the gospel. Through safeguarding, we contribute to healing and reconciliation and avoid causing the brokenness of sin to harm our children and adults.

Safeguarding is promoting the safety and welfare of children and adults who are at risk of, or experiencing harm, abuse or neglect. We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from any form of abuse or neglect regardless of age, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Therefore, as members and workers of the church, we will:

- do all we can to create and maintain a safe and caring environment for all people
- respond promptly and effectively to any form of abuse and neglect, including reporting abuse to statutory agencies as necessary
- seek to prevent abuse in any form from occurring.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone: to prevent abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults; to act upon concerns of abuse; and to support the wellbeing of each person within all communities in which the Church is placed. Safeguarding is a requirement and a duty in all Councils of the Church.

Safeguarding at AIC is supported with relevant policies, practice, guidance and training.

AIC acknowledges that the wellbeing of the child or adult who is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse, harm and neglect is paramount, and it will always act in their best interests, in line with national legislation, relevant statutory guidelines and good practice guidance. AIC believes that all people have the right to be and feel part of this community, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will operate in line with the Human Rights Act 1988, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Equality Act 2010.

Our Commitments:

- promote safe and healthy cultures in which good practice standards in safeguarding are updated and disseminated – our policies and practices will comply with the United Reformed Church's (URC) procedures and guidance set out in Good Practice 6.
- ensure everyone in a position of trust is carefully recruited / selected / appointed / elected and trained in safeguarding children and adults at risk
- respond promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding allegation or concern (including reporting any allegations to statutory agencies) including those who may pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk
- care pastorally for all children and adults at risk, and all those who have experienced abuse in the past
- ensure that all those who pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk, and those who are the subject of allegations, receive appropriate pastoral care and supervision
- exercise informed vigilance about risks in all forms of abuse and neglect
- work together with other denominations, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations
- review our safeguarding policy, practices and procedures annually, considering lessons learned from safeguarding cases and changes in legislation, statutory guidance and good working practice – any local policy changes will be formally approved by the Church Council.

Safeguarding Policy



Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that protecting people from abuse, harm or neglect is central to our culture. It provides procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised.

What to do if someone discloses abuse

If a child or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and have been abused, it is important that the person being told:

- **stay calm and listen carefully**
- **reassure them** that they have done the right thing in telling
- do NOT investigate or ask leading questions
- explain that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- do NOT promise to keep secret what they have been told
- **inform the church Safeguarding Coordinator within 24 hours** (see Key Contacts below); if the Safeguarding Coordinator or any church staff are implicated in the allegation, inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer
- **immediately record details of the allegation, and all information about the disclosure** (using the template in **Appendix 5**). This should be given to the church Safeguarding Coordinator or the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

What to do if there is a concern of abuse

If there is an immediate threat of harm, call 999 without delay.

If there is no immediate threat of harm:

- **contact the Church Safeguarding Coordinator** or the Synod Safeguarding Officer **within 24 hours** to determine whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory authorities (see Key Contacts below)
- **immediately record the conversation and the circumstances** surrounding it (using the template in **Appendix 5**)
- do NOT notify the person about whom the allegation is made
- inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer should be kept informed of any serious concerns and referrals to police and statutory authorities.

Who this policy applies to

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Church Council and applies to:

- all members of our church
- all those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- our church council
- paid staff (both internal and external, such as consultants)
- volunteers
- organisations, groups, and individuals which hire our building.

Definitions

The term 'children' refers to those under the age of 18 years.

The term 'adult at risk' refers to any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, are permanently, or for time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of the church, whether children or adults. We will always maintain confidentiality, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm or abuse.

Creating a safer culture

We are committed to creating a safer culture in our church which will help us to prevent harm from occurring and provide an environment in which all can flourish.

We will:

- appoint Safeguarding Coordinator and ensure contact details are posted in the building and available for anyone to report a concern. A job/role description for the coordinator is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- practice safer recruitment procedures for paid and volunteer roles, to include the following steps:
 - requiring an application form, two references (not family), and a self-declaration form for all candidates
 - interviewing all candidates
 - providing workers with a job description
 - obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for eligible roles and positions, following the URC's guidance
 - providing all workers with written contracts or covenants
- ensure all those working with children and/or adults at risk are given copies of relevant Codes of Conduct
- provide safeguarding training in alignment with the URC's training matrix
- comply with legal requirements in respect of data protection
- complete the URC's Annual Church Safeguarding Return
- ensure that safeguarding is a regular agenda item for Church Council meetings
- require all external clients, informal groups, or individuals hiring the premises hold and abide by their own safeguarding policy; or if they do not have a policy, they must abide by AIC's safeguarding policy.

Ensuring safer activities

Whilst it is not possible to guard against every eventuality, we are committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for activities both on and off church premises.

We will:

- plan and organize activities to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimizing opportunities for harm, misunderstanding, or false accusation
- obtain consent forms for all children participating in church activities
- remain cautious of online safety and electronic communications – see **Appendix 1: Online Safety Policy**
- ensure appropriate insurance is in place for buildings and activities
- consider the implications of data protection and health and safety requirements for specific activities
- carry out risk assessments for relevant activities or events
- ensure adequate staffing for activities and that leaders have suitable training, are aware of relevant guidance and agree to follow relevant Codes of Conduct
- ensure the hirer's agreement is in place for other organisations using church premises

- seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer for complex or sensitive risks

Recognising and responding to concerns of abuse

We acknowledge that, although promoting Safer Culture and Safer Activities will help to protect all those in contact with the church, some concerns will inevitably arise and we are committed to responding well in such circumstances.

We will:

- promote awareness of different kinds of abuse and signs of abuse, other vulnerabilities and types of safeguarding concerns – **Appendix 6** provides information on forms of abuse and further guidance
- seek to create a 'listening culture' and help people develop listening skills to respond appropriately in situations where sensitive information is disclosed
- inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer as a minimum of any situations where involvement from statutory services is/may be required
- share information with statutory services as appropriate and co-operate with them during any investigations
- report any serious safeguarding incident to the Charity Commission and notify the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

Managing allegations and people who may pose a risk to others

Where allegations are made against individuals within the Church, we are committed to following all required investigative and regulatory procedures. We will work in collaboration with the Synod, wider Church staff, statutory agencies and other relevant organisations.

We will:

- **immediately inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer on becoming aware of anyone in the church who may present a risk to others**
- work with the Synod Safeguarding Officer to develop risk assessments and a plan for rigorous and careful supervision of known offenders
- follow advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer to provide known or alleged offenders with support, friendship, and supervision
- alert the Synod Safeguarding Officer or statutory agencies to known breaches of a safeguarding agreement
- cooperate fully with any investigative or disciplinary procedures

Supporting victims and survivors

The key principle underpinning our policy and practice in this area is that all those who have experienced abuse, whether recently or in the past 'will be listened to and offered the pastoral care and support they deem appropriate and relevant, irrespective of type of abuse, context, or when this occurred' (from the URC General Assembly policy statement 2021).

We will:

- recognise that the Church Council has responsibility for provision of pastoral care
- be aware of local support services that people can be referred or directed to
- ensure those in relevant roles attend appropriate training
- seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer about provision of appropriate support when necessary.

Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or compliments please contact:

Name: Jared Jagers, Associate Minister of Faith Formation

Telephone No: 07565 687 333

Email: jared@amchurch.co.uk

It would be helpful to have complaints in writing, as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing, complaints will be acted upon.

Any written complaint will be responded to within 10 days.

Key Contacts: Sources of advice and support

- The church **Safeguarding Coordinator** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations relating to children, young people or adults should be addressed:

Name: Sue Stroman

Email: safeguarding@amchurch.co.uk

- **Synod Safeguarding Officer**

Name: Belinda Herbert

Telephone No: 0771 664 0596

Email: safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

- **URC Safeguarding Office** (This should only be used if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer)
Telephone No 020 7520 2729
Email safeguarding@urc.org.uk
- **ThirtyOne: Eight** (This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact URC)
Safeguarding helpline: 0303 003 1111
- **Designated Officer (DO)**
Contact the Children and Families Contact Service by calling 020 7974 3317 who will direct your call to the Duty DO.
- Statutory contact in the case of a child
Camden Council Children and Families Contact Service
Contact: Duty Manager
Telephone No 0207 974 3317. Out of hours: 0207 974 4444
Email LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk
Website <https://www.camden.gov.uk/early-help-for-families>
- Statutory contact in the case of an adult at risk
Camden Council Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
Telephone No 0207 974 4000 and select option 1
Email adultsocialcare@camden.gov.uk

Review

The Council will review this policy annually with the guidance of the Safeguarding Coordinator(s), amending and updating it as required, and informing the congregation at the Annual General Meeting that this has been done.

Date of the most recent review: PENDING

Date of the next review: September 2026

Signed: Jared Jagers, Associate Minister of Faith Formation

(on behalf of the Church Council)

Appendix 1: Online Safety Policy



Technology is now a major part of daily life for most people and recent developments have enabled many new initiatives in the way churches use technology as part of their ministry. This opens up new and welcome opportunities to engage with people, but we recognise there are also risks associated with this. We should therefore all pay attention to how we can safeguard children and adults at risk to help ensure their online safety

Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to safeguard children and adults at risk when we are ministering on behalf of the church through the internet, social media, or mobile devices, and to provide guidance on our approach to online safety.

Who this policy applies to

- All those in the church working with children and adults at risk
- Those involved in managing IT systems within the church
- All those engaged in any form of online ministry, including group activities.

All those working with children and/or adults at risk will be given – and asked to sign – copies of the relevant *Codes of Conduct* which include guidance about working safely online.

Scope of the policy

- IT systems and resources
- electronic communications and use of social media
- video conferencing
- livestreaming and use of recorded video
- appropriate use of images online
- responding to online safety concerns.

Definition of online abuse

Abuse that is facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices. It can happen anywhere that allows online digital communication. Examples can include:

- bullying/cyberbullying
- sexting
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial exploitation
- sexual exploitation
- scamming
- grooming and harassment

It is possible that victims may not always understand that they are being abused in this way. The impact can be significant however, particularly in the way it may create fear and isolation.

We will maintain and use our IT resources to support good safeguarding practice

This covers both the hardware and software used within the church, along with decisions about the use of particular apps, services or websites. This policy does not try to cover all aspects of IT use but highlights actions we will take to support safer practice.

This will include:

- reviewing and updating the security of our IT systems regularly
- risk assessing any emerging new technologies before they are used within the church

- installing filtering software on devices owned and used by the church as appropriate
- reminding staff and volunteers of the need keep login and password details secure.

We will promote safe use of electronic communications and social media

This will include:

- using clear unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation
- keeping copies of messages
- obtaining parental/carer consent for email, text, or chat/messaging app contact with children
- avoiding communication outside of 9am to 9pm
- using church accounts where possible instead of personal ones
- all social media interaction between workers (paid or voluntary) and children or adults at risk will be limited to church-administered groups
- all participants to be above the minimum age limit for the social media platform being used
- workers will take care with their social media privacy settings to prevent participants seeing personal information which is not linked to communication within the group.

We will create safe online spaces when using video conferencing or video calls

This will include:

- using paid subscription services to video calling platforms to utilize additional security measures
- terminating any call infiltrated by uninvited visitors
- ensuring there are at least 3 participants in any breakout room
- have a minimum of 2 adults on a video call that includes children
- disable private chats on a video call that includes children.

One-to-one calls

One-to-one communication via video with a child or adult at risk is the equivalent of meeting that person in a room alone with no one around. We will put appropriate boundaries and safeguards in place, depending on the age or needs of the child or adult at risk.

Group video calls

We will take appropriate measure to ensure the safety of participants in our group activities via video call or video conferencing. This will include:

- communicating expectations around appropriate behaviour to participants
- ensuring there are at least two adults on a call before a child or adult at risk joins
- using organisational profiles and devices wherever available rather than personal accounts
- not recording group calls unless there is a compelling reason to do so
- terminating a call if necessary (eg problematic behaviour by uninvited visitors).

We will apply appropriate safeguards when livestreaming or using recorded video

We will follow the guidance from the URC regarding livestreaming and recordings. This will include:

- ensuring anyone appearing in livestream or recorded video has given appropriate consent
- ensuring people know if an event is being recorded and giving them an opportunity to move to the designated area where they will be out of camera shot
- using group shots of the congregation and not singling out any individual.

We will ensure appropriate use of images online

We will follow the guidance from the URC regarding the use of images taken during church activities. In relation to online use of images, this includes:

- ensuring appropriate consent is obtained before posting any images online
- ensuring that children or adults at risk cannot be individually identified by any personal details provided alongside the images
- discussion with parents and children about appropriate use of images.

We will store data securely

Where digital data of any form about children is stored, it will be on church-owned computers or servers that are password protected and in general data be stored securely on the church premises. If this is not possible then a record will be made of where the data is stored. Where it is necessary for data to be transported, memory sticks will be purchased for workers so that there is a separation between personal and church information.

We will respond appropriately and sensitively to all online safety concerns

In the event of concern that there may be an online safety incident of any kind, we will follow the process set out for responding to safeguarding concerns.

If anyone is in immediate danger, this will be reported to the police or other statutory services straightaway.

Other concerns will be reported to the Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC), or their deputy, who will seek advice on what action is needed. If the CSC is unavailable, the matter will be reported to the Synod Safeguarding Officer (SSO).

We will provide support to those affected, seeking advice from the SSO or other specialist services as required.

Appendix 2: The Role of a Church Safeguarding Coordinator



Context

We believe that children and adults at risk deserve the best possible care that the church can provide and that the church should be a safe place for everyone involved. We recognise and give thanks for the time and devotion given by anyone carrying out this role.

Purpose of the role

- To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church.
- To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues.
- To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church.

Responsibilities

To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church

- To familiarise themselves with church policies and procedures and URC good practice guidelines in safeguarding and to keep abreast of any changes and developments.
- To ensure that church policies and procedures are reviewed annually, kept up to date, and are fit for purpose.
- To make sure that elders and others in the church are aware of the church safeguarding policies and procedures, including URC guidelines and Charity Commission responsibilities.
- To collaborate with the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator (when there is one), the minister, the DBS/PVG signatory people and the Synod Safeguarding Officer on all matters around safeguarding.
- To ensure safer recruitment practices are operated in the recruitment of all workers (both volunteers and paid) including, but not exclusively, ensuring that the relevant workers have up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks.
- To review and ensure others' safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place when any church premises are let to an external organisation, informal group or individual.

To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues

- To be a named person that children / adults at risk, church members and outside agencies can talk to regarding any issue to do with safeguarding.
- To be aware of the names and telephone numbers of appropriate departments and teams within Social Care and the Police in the event of a referral needing to be made.
- To be aware of when to seek advice, and when it is necessary to inform Social Care, the Police or the Designated Officer (previously known as LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales of a concern or incident.
- To take appropriate action in relation to any safeguarding concerns which arise within the church.
- To ensure safe practice is in place for supporting people who pose a risk to children and adults at risk at church.
- To cooperate with Social Care or the Police in safeguarding investigations relating to people within the church.
- To ensure that appropriate records are kept by the church, and that information in relation to safeguarding issues is handled confidentially and stored securely.
- To inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer about any referrals made to the statutory authorities, or of any information received from the statutory authorities.
- To report safeguarding information annually to the Church Council and the Synod Safeguarding Officer, using the URC's Appendix H1 as part of the annual returns process, to enable them to monitor safeguarding in the Synod.

To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church

- To promote sensitivity within the church towards all those affected by the impact of abuse.
- To promote positive safeguarding procedures and practice and ensure procedures are adhered to.
- To arrange and/or promote opportunities for training in safeguarding to any relevant members of the leadership team and all people involved in regulated activities with children or adults (including Ministers, staff and volunteers), as recommended by the synod, and ensure that their training is renewed every three years.
- To attend appropriate training for the role, including refresher training every three years, and keep updated on matters related to safeguarding.
- To seek appropriate support and advice in carrying out this role.
- To make arrangements for a suitable person to carry out this role when on leave, and to publicise who the substitute is and the dates of the alternative arrangements.

Requirements for the role

- To have knowledge of policy and practice for safeguarding children and/or adults at risk.
- Good communication (written and oral) skills
- Be willing to attend appropriate safeguarding training/refresher training organised by the synod.
- Be willing to be easily contactable – and prepared to make contact details public to enable direct contact when needed.

Appendix 3: Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People



All workers of the church should agree to the following code of conduct when working with children and young people. The word 'child' refers to all those under the age of 18 throughout this document.

DO

- Do treat all people with dignity and respect
- Respect and promote the rights of children to make their own decisions and choices
- Encourage respect for difference, diversity, beliefs and culture
- Act inclusively, seeking to make everyone feel welcome and valued
- Use appropriate language
- Be a good role model
- Treat people with equal care and concern
- Take all reasonable adjustments for young people with disabilities and special education needs
- Listen to children and tell the Church Safeguarding Coordinator if you have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Refer to a more senior worker if a child does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning
- Encourage everyone to follow any behaviour agreement or ground rules and apply sanctions consistently
- Seek to diffuse aggressive or threatening behaviour without the use of physical contact
- Interact with children in a public place. If a child wants to talk one-to-one about an issue, tell another worker and find somewhere quieter, but still public, to talk
- Make sure that any electronic communication is done with parental consent and is transparent, accountable, recorded and adheres to safeguarding policies. Using church platforms and not private accounts
- Have a designated photographer to take, store and share photos of your group's activities, in line with the safeguarding policy
- Use physical contact wisely and in accordance with **Appendix 7** below; it should be:
 - in public
 - appropriate to the situation and to the age, gender and culture of the child
 - in response to the needs of the child, not the adult
 - respectful of the child's wishes, feelings and dignity
- Respect children's and young people's privacy
- Ensure that any communication online is done through a work or church account – this may require setting up an account specific for that purpose
- Ensure, where possible, parents or guardians are present in the building or other workers are aware when young people are communicating with you via social media. Communication with a child via social media should only ever take place when their parent or guardian and other adult workers are aware of these online interactions.
- Inform your line manager or point of contact of your intention to communicate online with families or young people and keep a record of times and dates when you do this.
- Keep up to date on policies, procedures and training, including safeguarding and health and safety
- Understand that your conduct outside of work including on line can impact on your work with children and young people

DO NOT

- Do not abuse the power and responsibility of your role for example do not belittle, scapegoat, put down, or ridicule a child or young person (even in 'fun') and don't use language or behaviour with sexual connotations (e.g. flirting or innuendo)
- Exclude children or workers from conversations and activities unless there is a good reason
- Overshare about your own situations
- Show favouritism (e.g. in selection for activities, in giving rewards, etc) or encourage excessive attention from a particular child (e.g. gifts)
- Threaten or use sanctions which have not been agreed
- Feel you have to deal with every problem on your own
- Use physical restraint unless they are causing harm to themselves or others
- Spend time alone with children out of sight of other people
- Contact them through private messaging
- Keep communication with children secret, while still respecting appropriate confidences
- Use child/young person's personal data for other purposes than activities consented
- Take photos or videos without consent
- Engage with children or young people through your personal social media or mobile account
- Assume that children should tell you anything you ask just because you are a worker
- Promise to keep anything a secret, it may be that if a child or young person is being harmed or at risk of harm, that you will need to share that information but only on a need to know basis
- Work in ways that puts your needs and interests before those of the children you work with
- Discriminate or leave discrimination or bullying unchallenged
- Interact with children you are working with from personal social media accounts

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with children and young people

on behalf of

[church name]

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4: Code of Conduct for Working with Adults at Risk



This code describes the standards of conduct, behaviour and attitude expected of all church workers working with adults, including adults at risk, to ensure that you are providing a compassionate, caring and supportive environment.

Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect (14.7 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014). The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has care and support 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.

All workers of this church should agree to the following code of conduct when working with adults.

Be accountable

- Be honest with yourself and others about what you can do, whether or not the adult is being provided with any services.
- Recognise your abilities and limitations.
- Only carry out or delegate tasks agreed in your role description.
- Be able to justify and be accountable for your actions.
- Ask your leader/supervisor for guidance if you feel inadequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your role.
- Tell your leader/supervisor about any issues that might affect your ability to perform your role.
- Always establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in your relationships with people.
- Never accept any offers of loans, gifts or benefits from anyone you are supporting or anyone close to them.
- Tell your leader/supervisor or person in charge of safeguarding if you are concerned that another worker is acting outside of this code of conduct.

Promote the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of people

- Always protect the rights of people and treat them with dignity, respect, and compassion.
- Ensure that a vulnerable adult is not treated, without justification, any less favourably than the way in which a person who is not an "adult at risk" would be treated in a comparable situation.
- Always act in the best interest of people, with their present and past wishes and feelings being considered.
- Put the needs, views and wishes of people first, helping them to control and choose the help-and support they receive.
- Always gain consent before providing help and support. You must respect a person's right to refuse if they can do so, but also report any concerns if you feel that someone does not have the capacity to consent.
- Always maintain the privacy and dignity of people who have help and support, and their carers.
- Promote people's independence, while helping them maintain existing family and social contacts.
- Always make sure that your actions do not harm an individual's health or wellbeing.
- You must never abuse, neglect, harm or exploit anyone.
- Challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour.
- Always take comments and complaints seriously; respond to them in accordance with the safeguarding policy and inform the safeguarding coordinator.

Work effectively with other volunteers/colleagues

- Understand and value your contribution and the vital part you play in the church.
- Recognise and respect the roles of other church workers/colleagues and those from other denominations and agencies; work in partnership with them.
- Work openly and co-operatively with other church workers/colleagues, including those from other denominations and agencies, and treat them with respect.
- Work openly and co-operatively with people who have help and support, including their families or carers, and treat them with respect.
- Honour your commitment to the church and be reliable, dependable and trustworthy.

Effective communication

- Make efforts to assist and facilitate communication, using whatever method is appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- Always explain and discuss any help and support you are offering/providing with the person; only continue if they give consent.
- Communicate respectfully with people in an open, accurate, effective and straightforward way.
- Communicate effectively with other church workers/colleagues as appropriate.
- Maintain clear and accurate records of the help and support the church provides, as appropriate.
- Recognise both the extent and the limits of your role, knowledge and ability when communicating with people who have help and support.

Respect people's right to confidentiality and decision-making

- Treat all information about people who need help and support, and their carers, as confidential.
- Ensure people participate as fully as possible in any decisions being made, with support in place to help that participation in a way understood by the adults.
- Only discuss or disclose information in accordance with legislation and church policy.
- Always seek guidance from your leader/supervisor regarding any information or issues that you are concerned about.

Training, policy and procedure

- Attend all necessary training which helps to support you in your role.
- Complete all necessary safeguarding training at least every three years.

Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion

- Respect the individuality and diversity of all people, including those we encounter and work with.
- Treat all adults equally and inclusively and do not discriminate on grounds of age, gender reassignment, ethnicity, race, religion/belief, cultural background, sexual orientation and disability.
- Promote equal opportunities and inclusion for the people we encounter and work with.
- Report any concerns regarding equality, diversity and inclusion to a leader/supervisor as soon as possible.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with adults, including adults at risk.

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 5: Reporting Form for Safeguarding Concern



Where a person is in imminent danger of harm or a criminal act may have been committed, the police must be notified immediately on 999. Otherwise, call 101 to report a crime or any other concerns that do not require an emergency response.

- Please fill in this form with the information available within 24 hours after becoming aware of a safeguarding incident or concern. You do not have to fill in all sections.
- Please ensure you are as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible, and do not interpret what was said using your own words.
- Record what you said as well as what the child, young person or adult said.
- Include details such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language.
- If you have formed an opinion please state it, making it clear that it is your opinion and give reasons for forming that opinion.
- The completed form must be passed on or sent by secure email to the designated safeguarding person, and immediately followed up after sending.

Date on which this form is completed				
Full name of the person reporting the concern/incident				
Relationship to child, young person, or adult concerned of being at risk				
Church details, if known	Synod	Church	Number	
Contact details of church or organization, if known	Address	Phone numbers	Email	
Full name of child, young person, or adult concerned of being at risk				
Date of Birth, if known				
Contact details, if known	Address	Phone numbers	Email	
Has the individual given consent to report? (or report as appropriate)	Yes		No	Reason for no consent:
If under 18, have the parents/carers /guardians of the child been informed?	Yes		No	Reason for no consent:

Please give a summary of the safeguarding incident/concern	
Date/time of incident	
What happened? Please provide detailed information about the circumstances and the person experiencing or being at risk of harm, abuse or neglect (preferably as a timeline)	
When did it happen? (date, time)	
Where did it happen? (specific location)	
What action/s were taken, and by whom?	
Name of anyone involved and in what way, including witnesses	
Other services or agencies involved <u>Note:</u> If referred to statutory authorities, or other services, please include name and contact details	
Next steps or recommendations	
INTERNAL USE	
Date received	
Full name of Designated Person	
Progress	
Conclusion	

Appendix 6: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse



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It is important to be able to recognise the possible signs of abuse. Observing any of the signs or symptoms does not necessarily mean that a person is being abused; there could be a perfectly ordinary explanation. However, the observation of multiple signs and symptoms, together with explanations which are inconsistent or do not 'ring true', should give more cause for concern.

Below is a comprehensive table of definitions, signs and symptoms of some of the types of abuse. The table has been compiled from a number of different sources, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. **Please note:** it is not an exhaustive list, and relates to the abuse of both children and adults.

Physical Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
To inflict pain, physical injury, impairment or suffering	• Hitting, slapping and beating. • Shaking, pinching, throwing and pushing. • Kicking, biting, burning, drowning and hair pulling. • Squeezing, suffocating, poisoning and using inappropriate restraint. • Parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. • Inappropriate use of restraint techniques or other physical sanctions. • Isolation or confinement.	• Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them. • Cuts, lacerations, puncture wounds, open wounds, welts. • Bruising and discolouration ◦ particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc. ◦ in unusual places (e.g. around the mouth), in unusual patterns (e.g. symmetrical) or in particular shapes (e.g. fingertip bruising or belt marks). • Black eyes, burns, broken bones and skull fractures. • If the person is seen to have injuries that recur or are in the same place on more than one occasion or are without plausible explanation. • Any injury that has not received medical attention or been properly cared for. • Poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene. • Loss of hair, loss of weight and change of appetite. • Repeated or unexplained tummy pains. • Person flinches at physical contact and/or keeps fully covered, even in hot weather. • Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or people.
Emotional Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The use of threats, fear or power gained by another's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes.	• Mocking, coercing, threatening or controlling behaviour. • Bullying, intimidation, harassment or humiliation. • The lack of privacy or choice, denial of dignity, deprivation	• Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour. • Becoming quiet, clingy or withdrawn or conversely becoming aggressive or angry for no apparent reason. • Denial and hesitation to talk openly. • Excessive fear or anxiety



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Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological stress. In children it can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development.	- of social contact or deliberate isolation. - Making someone feel worthless, a lack of love or affection or ignoring the person. - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Emotional abuse may well be indicative of other forms of abuse. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.	- Behaviour such as rocking, hair twisting or thumb sucking. - Changes in sleep pattern or persistent tiredness. - Loss of appetite. - Low self-esteem, helplessness or passivity. - Confusion or disorientation. - Implausible stories and attention seeking behaviour. - Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults. - Running away, school non-attendance, stealing or lying.
Sexual Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
For a child – forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. For an adult - Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour. No one should enter a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.	- Rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting. - Indecent assault, incest, being forced to touch another person in a sexual manner without consent. - Making sexual remarks, suggestions and teasing. - Indecent exposure, being forced to watch pornographic material or sexual acts. - Filming or photographing a child in sexual poses or acts. - Enforced or coerced nakedness or inappropriate photography of a person in sexually explicit ways. - Being spied on while a person is undertaking or receiving personal care activities. 'Sexting', grooming and using social media to share inappropriate content.	- Emotional distress. - Preoccupation with anything sexual and age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual behaviour. - Mood, attitude or behaviour changes. - Expressions of feelings of guilt or shame. - Itching, soreness, bruises or lacerations, particularly around the genital areas. - Difficulty in walking or sitting, or unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding. - Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections. - A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults. - Disturbed sleep patterns. - Torn, stained or bloody underclothing. - Significant changes in sexual behaviour or outlook. - A very young girl or a woman who lacks mental capacity to consent to intercourse becomes pregnant. - Underage Pregnancy/Termination.
Neglect	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs (physical and/or psychological) are not met.	- Failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services. - Failing to provide a warm, safe and comfortable environment.	- Person looking unkempt or dirty and has poor personal hygiene. - Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food.

In a child, neglect is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.	• Ignoring medical or physical care needs, including not providing adequate food or assistance with eating/drinking, or not providing sufficient or appropriate clothing. • Leaving alone or unsupervised. • Failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous (particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess the risks to themselves or to others). • Deliberately withholding medication or aids, such as walking sticks or hearing aids. • Denying social, religious or cultural contacts, or denying contact with the family.	• Person is dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions. • Dirt, urine or faecal smells in a person's environment. • Developmental delay in children. • Low self-esteem, socially isolated and poor concentration. • Home environment does not meet basic needs (for example no heating or lighting). • Health and safety hazards in the living environment. • Untreated medical conditions, pressure sores, rashes, lice on the person. • Depression or low mood. • Person and/or carer have inconsistent or reluctant contact with Health and Social Services. • Callers/visitors are refused access to the person. • Prolonged isolation or lack of stimulation. • Person who is not able to look after themselves is left unattended and so put at risk. • Not being helped to the toilet when assistance is requested. • Change leaving alone to 'child/vulnerable person being left alone or unsupervised'.
Self-Neglect	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
An unwillingness or inability to care for oneself and/or one's environment.	• Hoarding or having no possessions at all. • Living in squalor and neglecting self-care and hygiene. • Failure to provide oneself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, healthcare and safety precautions.	• Dehydration, malnutrition or obesity. • Untreated medical conditions and poor personal hygiene. • Unsanitary living conditions. • Inappropriate and/or inadequate clothing and lack of necessary medical aids. • Homelessness. • Not adhering to medical advice. • Not taking medication as advised/prescribed.
Financial Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.	• Theft, fraud or embezzlement of monies, benefits or goods. • Exploitation or profiteering. • Applying pressure in connection with Wills, property or inheritance, or financial transactions. • The abuse of influence, power or friendship to persuade a	• Unexplained loss of money. • Missing personal belongings such as art, jewellery and silverware. • Deterioration in standard of living, not having as much money as usual to pay for shopping or regular outings. • Unexplained lack of money, inability to pay bills or getting into debt.

	person to make gifts or change their will. • Being charged excessive amounts for services such as minor building works on a property. • Loans made under duress, threat or dishonestly extracted. • Mate-crime – where vulnerable people are befriended by those who go on to exploit them.	• Sudden changes in a person's finances or a disparity in assets and living conditions. • Person unable to access their own money or check their own accounts. • Cheques being signed or cashed by other people without someone's consent. • Recent acquaintances expressing sudden or disproportionate interest in the person and their money. • Reluctance on the part of the family, friends or the person controlling the person's funds to pay for necessary food, clothes or other items. • Recent changes of deeds/title of home. • Inappropriate granting and/or use of Power of Attorney. • Sudden change or creation of a will to benefit an individual significantly. • Someone else having possession of money/ bank cards. • Someone else reported making financial decisions. • Fraud.
Discriminatory Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.	• Ageist, racist, sexist, or abuse based on a person's disability. • Abuse linked to a person's sexuality. • Harassment, slurs or similar inappropriate use of language and treatment. • Withholding services without proper justification, or lack of disabled access to services and activities. • Lack of respect towards a person's culture, or deliberate exclusion.	• Low self-esteem. • Withdrawal and social isolation. • Anger. • Person puts themselves down in terms of their age, race, gender identity or sexuality. • Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves. • Preference not to receive care from particular individuals. • Feeling as though there is a lack of control based on age, gender, religion. • Signs of substandard service offered (health/education).
Institutional Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The mistreatment of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment.	• The inability of an institution to safeguard people from emotional or even physical harm and neglect. • Having fixed rules and routines by which people are controlled. • People prevented from acting within their rights.	• Inappropriate or poor care. • Being routinely referred to in a condescending fashion. • Disrespectful language and attitudes. • Adult being spoken to or treated like a child. • A person's privacy and dignity being routinely compromised.

The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.	- No access to personal possessions or personal allowance. - Inadequate staffing, poorly trained staff and a lack of leadership and/or supervision of staff or volunteers. - Inappropriate use of physical interventions and poor practice in the provision of intimate care.	- Failure to recognise the individuality of each person and applying a 'one size fits all' approach to support. - No evidence of support services care plans that focus on the individual's needs. - Inadequate staffing levels and the absence of individual care. - Lack of adequate procedures. - Poor record keeping/missing documents.
Domestic Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
Any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of age, gender or sexuality or social status. Rarely is domestic abuse a one-off incident.	- Physical, psychological, sexual or financial abuse. - Patterns of controlling and coercive behaviour. - Child to parent/carer abuse. - Abuse towards elderly family members. - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). - Honour based violence, committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and community. - Forced marriage. - Children can experience it by seeing and/or hearing the abuse, or seeing the injuries or distress afterwards, as well as being directly targeted.	- Unexplained bruises or injuries. - Unusually quiet or withdrawn. - Fear, anxiety or panic attacks. - Frequent absences from work or other commitments. - Stops talking about their partner/family member. - Is always accompanied by their partner/family member. - Becomes isolated and withdrawn from friends and other family. - Doesn't have control over possessions or money. - Anxious about being away from home and rushes to get back.
Spiritual Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. Coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The abuse of trust or misuse of power by someone in a position of spiritual authority (such as a minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply	- Forcing religious ideas or practices on to people, particular those who may be vulnerable to such practices. - Extreme pastoral interference in personal matters – reducing individual choice and responsibility. - The misuse of scripture or power to control behaviour and pressure to conform. - Oppressive teaching and isolation from others. - The requirement of obedience to the abuser, or the suggestion that the abuser has a "divine" position.	It is often difficult for churches to identify spiritual abuse because its definition may be more an issue of personal interpretation of common practices in the church or denomination. - Pastoral practices that 'force' people into accepting religious values or ideas. - A Feeling of confusion and uncertainty as to who, what or why they believe any more. - Deeply scarred – emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. - Feelings of betrayal leading to deep distrust, self-isolation and powerlessness. - A changed and damaged view of church – loss of church as a safe space.

emotional personal attack.	• Intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in people experiencing emotional, physical or sexual harm. • The denial of the right to have a faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God. • Exclusion of people from the full range of church life (no arrangements for gluten-free wafers or non-alcoholic wine at Communion, or promoting fear of involving those who are HIV positive). • Oversimplification of forgiveness and healing without regard to pain or suffering.	
Online Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The use of the internet (via email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, online games, live-streaming etc) to harm or harass in a deliberate manner. It can happen at any time and is not limited to a specific location – can be experienced even when alone. It can affect anyone at any age.	• Communications seeking to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, humiliate. • Threatening earnings, reputation, employment, safety. • Cyberbullying/Harassment – repeated offensive, rude, insulting messages. • Denigration – derogatory information and/or digitally altered photos. • Flaming – posting insults using vulgar/profane language. • Impersonation – hacking accounts and taking on someone else's identity. • Outing/Trickery – sharing someone's secrets or tricking them into revealing embarrassing information. • Cyber stalking – repeated online threats/activity making someone afraid for their safety. • Trolling – online provocations, starting arguments, threats and insults.	• Withdrawn, time spent alone, exclusion from social events. • Spend a lot more/less time than usual online, texting, gaming, on social media. • Reluctance to let anyone near their phone/tablet/laptop etc. • Change in personality – anger, depression, anxiety etc • Changing appearance, trying to 'fit in' • Staying away from school/work • Nervous behaviour. • Losing self-confidence. • Distressed/withdrawn.

	- Grooming – building emotional connection to gain trust for exploitation/abuse. - Sexting – sharing or coercion into sharing sexual, naked or semi-naked images/videos/messages.	
Modern Slavery	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. Includes human trafficking, where people are moved from one place to another into a situation of exploitation, using deception, coercion and violence.	- Domestic servitude – forced to work in private houses with restricted freedoms, long hours, no pay. - Criminal exploitation – pick pocketing, shoplifting, drug trafficking. - Forced labour – long hours, no pay, poor conditions, verbal and physical threats. - Sexual exploitation – prostitution and child abuse. - Organ removal, forced begging, forced marriage and illegal adoption. - Travel and identity documents removed.	- In a dependency situation, under the control and influence of others. - Malnourished or unkempt, wearing the same clothes all the time. - Travel, identity and financial documents held by someone else, or use of false/forged documents. - Living in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation, living and working at same address, few personal possessions. - In debt to others, low or no pay, excessive deductions made for food, accommodation, transport. - Unfamiliar with the neighbourhood, unsure of home/work address. - Scared, untrusting, withdrawn, anxious, avoiding eye contact. - Showing signs of abuse, having old/untreated injuries and healthcare issues. - In fear of the authorities and in fear of removal or consequences for family.
Radicalisation	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The process that moves a person to legitimise their support for or use of violence. The promise of an ideology which gives purpose and belonging. Can take place over a long time period or happen quickly. The person may not understand that they have been radicalised.	- Exposure to violent and inappropriate material. - Being recruited in person – online or face-to-face. - Joining extremist organisations. - Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues. - Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology. Extremist recruiters speak directly to the vulnerabilities people experience at times in their lives, e.g. sense of not belonging, low self-esteem, issues at home, involvement with gangs/criminal groups or identity crisis with their cultural heritage.	- The expression of extremist views - Accessing extremist websites/social networks or possessing extremist, violent literature. - Behavioural changes, anger and use of inappropriate language. - Becoming disrespectful and intolerant of others. - Using words and phrases that sound scripted, talking about 'us' and 'them'. - Sympathies, admiration or associations with known extremists. - Advocating violent actions or means. - Changing name or friends.

Child Sexual Exploitation	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
A type of sexual abuse. The child is given gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. The tricking or grooming of children to believe they are in a loving and consensual relationship. Can be both in person or online. The child may not understand that they have been abused. They may seem to be condoning or even encouraging the abusive behaviour.	• The use of violence, coercion and intimidation to force the child into sexual activity. • Invitations to parties where drugs and alcohol are freely given in exchange for sex. • Deceiving children into producing online indecent images/films of themselves. • Children being used to recruit other children into sexual exploitation. • Children being trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. • Sexual exploitation as part of gang initiation, status, protection or punishment.	• Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. they can't or won't explain. • Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour. • Swings and changes in mood or character, being secretive. • Gang-association and/or isolation from friends and social networks. • Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups. • Sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy. • Being frightened of some people, places or situations. • Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area. • Alcohol or drug misuse. • Going missing for periods of time. • Skipping school.
Self-Harm	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is often used as a way of coping with, expressing or releasing overwhelming emotions and distress. It may also be about converting emotional pain into physical pain, expressing something that is hard to put into words or feeling that they are in control.	• Cutting • Burning • Bruising • Scratching • Hair pulling • Poisoning • Overdosing • Intentionally putting themselves in risky situations • Overeating or undereating • Inserting objects into their own body • Hitting themselves or walls • Exercising excessively • Self-neglect (adults) Some may self-harm to create a reason to physically care for themselves, or to feel something instead of numbness or disconnection.	• Unexplained cuts, bruises and burns, which are likely to be on wrists, arms, thighs and chest. • Keeping themselves fully covered, even in hot weather. • Signs of depression, including low mood, tearfulness and a lack of motivation or interest. • Becoming withdrawn and a reluctance to speak to others. • Weight loss or weight gain due to changes in eating habits, including being secretive about eating. • Low self-esteem, such as an inclination to blame themselves for external problems and expressing that they are not good enough. • Alcohol or drugs misuse. • Bald patches from pulling out hair.

Appendix 7: Guidelines for Touch and Maintaining Behaviour



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The goal of these guidelines is to establish a caring, safe, and welcoming environment for all children and will seek to maintain orderly behaviour that contributes to worship and spiritual engagement. We seek to provide a consistent approach to guiding behaviour during regular weekly Children's Worship and for any other events taking place with minors. All adults volunteering with children will seek healthy relationships with children that affirm positive behaviour as well as correcting disruptive behaviour.

Guidelines on Touch

- All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the needs of the child or adult at risk, and not the adult.
- Touch should always occur in public. Giving someone a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Be sensitive to the individual's reaction to touch. If someone is not happy with physical contact, respect this and find another way of conveying your concern for them.
- Touch with children should be age-appropriate, and initiated by the child.
- As far as possible, be aware of the individual's culture, and the meaning that touch has to them.
- Adults should be able to monitor each other's behaviour with regard to touch and physical contact. They should feel safe and confident to check out issues, discuss any concerns and to constructively challenge anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

Appropriate Physical Contact:

- Brief hugs initiated by the child.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- High-fives and hand slapping.
- Holding hands while walking with small children.
- Sitting beside small children.
- Holding hands during prayer.

Inappropriate Displays of Affection:

- **Any form of unwanted affection.**
- Long hugs or embraces.
- Kisses on the face.
- Holding children over three years old on the lap.
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.
- Showing affection in isolated areas.
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth.
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth.
- Inappropriate tickling.
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult.
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth.
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development.

Guidelines on Correcting Behaviour

"Do ..." – ideal methods of correction:

- affirm children for behaving well and affirm their positive contribution to the lesson;

- offer restless or fidgety children something to do with their hands – a colouring page, an item to hold, or simply some paper and crayons;
- relocate children when needed without entirely excluding them from the group;
- restrain a child from hitting or hurting another child only when absolutely necessary and with gentle restraint;
- allow children multiple opportunities to comply with correction;
- ask parents to collect a child who is consistently unresponsive to correction;
- explain to children the reason for any correction;
- provide correction with a focus on love and guidance for the spiritual growth of the children.

“Don’t ...” – inappropriate methods of correction:

- use any striking or physical correction, except to restrain one child from harming another;
- shout or raise your voice for correction;
- relocate a child outside of the common area or to a place alone with a single adult;
- withhold affirmation or interaction from a child;
- deliberately silence a child or refuse to allow them to express their own view or contribute to the group during discussion times;
- mock, “make fun of,” or otherwise make a child feel unloved or undervalued.

Appendix 8: Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders



Policy statement

The American International Church (AIC) complies fully with the DBS code of practice when accessing an applicant's suitability for positions within the church which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order. We are committed to treating all applicants fairly and to not discriminate against any subject of a criminal record check based on convictions or other information revealed.

AIC will only request that an individual disclose details of convictions or cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. Where the position advertised is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order, a DBS certificate at either a basic or enhanced level can legally be requested. Where a position falls within the legal definition of a "regulated" activity, a check against the Barred Lists for Children and Adults will also be undertaken.

AIC will only ask potential candidates about convictions and cautions that are not protected in law. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all and encourage applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records and regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

AIC will only make an application for a criminal record check through the DBS service where the law indicates that this is proportionate and necessary to the position advertised, such as those roles which involve working with children and adults at risk in a regulated or unregulated activity. Where this is the case, application forms, job adverts and recruitment information will contain explicit reference to the fact that this position requires a criminal record check in the event that the applicant is offered the position.

At interview or during an appropriate discussion, AIC will ensure that an open conversation takes place with the applicant regarding any offences or other information that may be relevant to the position. Failure of the applicant to share any information that is relevant to the position sought may result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary position.

AIC ensures that all those who are involved with the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. AIC will also ensure that they have received appropriate training and guidance in the relevant legislation and understand the importance of confidentiality throughout the recruitment process.

AIC will discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before a decision is made whether to continue with the offer of employment. A risk assessment will be conducted with the applicant and only in cases where the disclosure impacts upon the applicant's ability to safely hold the offer of employment will it be withdrawn. This is provided that the information revealed has been brought to AIC's attention prior to disclosure being received.

AIC makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice, and makes a copy available on request.