



Upton Vale Baptist Church

Safeguarding Policy  
&  
Child Protection Procedures

April 2019

Upton Vale Baptist Church  
St Marychurch Road  
Torquay  
TQ1 3HY

# **Safeguarding Team Contact Details**

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## **Safeguarding Officer**

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## **Safeguarding Trustee**

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## **Safeguarding Team Member**

Joel Ward

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## **Safeguarding Team Member**

Suzanne Wesley

## **Safeguarding Team Member**

Sue Fordyce

## **Safeguarding Team Member**

Paul Hine

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## **Safeguarding Team Member (DBS Checker)**

Sue Maloney

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Helpful contact numbers, to be contacted in this order:

First instance for advice, available 24/7 in emergencies: CCPAS  
03030031111

If further advice needed: NSPCC 08088005000

LADO, is the Local area designated officer: 01803 208955

South West Baptist Association (SWBA): 01392 433533

If needed, contact the police on 101

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## Child Protection Policy

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# Policy Statement

## **Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk at Upton Vale Baptist Church**

The vision of Upton Vale Baptist Church ("the church") is:

**“to become a Church that helps others build church and is always making disciples who make disciples”**

In fulfilling this vision the church:

- has a programme of activities with children, young people and adults at risk
- welcomes children, young people and adults at risk into the life of our community
- makes our premises available to organisations working with children, young people and adults at risk

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in *The Children Act 1989* and 2004, *Safe from Harm* (HM Government 1994) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2013). And it also recognises its responsibility to safeguard adults at risk.

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children, young people and adults at risk associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

### **Prevention and reporting of abuse and responding to concern**

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent the neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children, young people and adults at risk, and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children, young people and adults at risk and to report any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

### **Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

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

### **Safe behaviour: a code of behaviour for workers**

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

### **Safe practice and safe premises**

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children, young people and adults at risk and will adopt ways of working with children, young people and adults at risk that promote their safety and well-being.

### **A safe community**

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

## Responsible people

The church has appointed **Ele Hine** as the Safeguarding Officer and **Rachel Martin** (Trustee) to oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees and to:

- take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected

The church has also appointed **Joel Ward, Paul Hine, Ele Hine, Sue Fordyce, Sue Maloney, Rachel Martin and Suzanne Wesley** as the Designated Safeguarding Team to:

- advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected under the oversight of the Safeguarding Officer
- Appoint a Deputy Safeguarding Officer in the absence of the Safeguarding Officer
- Ensure safe recruitment for all those working with children, young people and adults at risk, including references and DBS checks.
- Ensure safeguarding training is offered regularly to those who work with children, young people and adults at risk

## Policy and procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the foyer.

Each worker with children, young people and adults at risk, whether paid or voluntary, will be given a paper copy of the summary of the policy and procedures. They will be required to follow them and sign a declaration to say they will do so.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child, young person or, where appropriate, adults at risk from the church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed at least annually.

The policy statement will be read annually at a church meeting together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

## Adults at Risk

The term 'adult at risk' has replaced the previously used 'vulnerable adult'. The definition of "adult at risk" CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) is:

**Any adult, aged 18 or over, who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care of or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.**

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are sometimes in life where risks may increase or decrease. Some of these circumstances may include (with / when):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning, sensory or physical disability</li><li>• Mental health problems</li><li>• Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication</li><li>• Illness</li><li>• English is not their first language</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dementia or confusion</li><li>• Bereavement</li><li>• Old age and frailty (creating a dependency on or needing help from others)</li><li>• Past abuse or trauma</li></ul>
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## **PART 1 – Responding to Concern**

### **A. Responding to concern – children and young people**

#### 1) Understanding, Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

#### How to respond when someone wants to talk about harm or abuse

- Listen-and keep listening
- Don't question
- Avoid passing judgement on what you are told
- Never promise confidentiality
- Explain what you intend to do and don't delay in taking action
- Write down what is said – details below
- Contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding – or in their absence take action yourself

#### 2) What to do when a child talks about harm or abuse

You need to make a careful written record of what has been observed as follows:

- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking) including a description of any injury, its size and a drawing of its location and shape on the child's body.
- Write down exactly what the child has said and when s/he said it, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (eg. a description of the activity). Only make factual records.
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action taken and keep all hand written notes even if subsequently typed up.

A copy of these notes must be passed on to the Safeguarding Officer (directly or via any member of the Safeguarding Team) to assist them should the matter need to be referred to Children's Social Care Team. Any referral to Children's Social Care Team must be confirmed by the referrer in writing within 48 hours. All documents (including copies of everything sent to Children's Social Care Team) must be signed by the referrer, dated and kept at the UVBC Church office in the locked Safeguarding cabinet.

#### 3) Responding to concerns for a child or an allegation of abuse

Where possible, concerns must be passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Team members, but difficulty in contacting these individual(s) should not delay action being taken and the concerns should be passed directly to the Children's Social Care Team.

If there is a concern that a child may have been harmed or abused, the Safeguarding Officer will act as follows.

- 4.i) Where a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect:
  - Contact Children's Social Care Team if there are concerns that a child may have been deliberately hurt/ is at risk of 'significant harm'/is afraid to return home. Do not tell the parents, or other people involved.

- If a child needs urgent medical attention an ambulance will be called or they will be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken.
- Safeguarding concerns will be declared to the appropriate hospital safeguarding team member.

4.ii) Where there are allegations or concerns of sexual abuse:

- Contact Children's Social Care Team. DO NOT try to investigate the matter.
- In the case of very severe sexual assault (such as rape), which may have occurred over the last few days, and where it has not been possible to get an immediate response from Children's Social Care Team, contact the police.
- Do not touch or tamper with any evidence, such as stained clothing.
- DO NOT tell other people including the parents / carers; they could be involved.
- Keep information on a need-to-know basis so that any alleged perpetrator is not 'tipped off'.

Should the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Team members not feel it necessary to refer the matter to Children's Social Care Team but you (or anyone else) have serious concerns for the child's safety, then you will contact the relevant authorities directly. The safety of the child over-rides all other considerations and it is important to remember that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime.

If the allegation is against a Church leader who has responsibility for implementing the Policy, you will refer it to another member of the Safeguarding Team or, if that is not possible, directly to Children's Social Care Team or seek appropriate professional advice, eg. from the Regional Minister.

### **Responding to concern - adults at risk**

If you know or suspect an adult is being abused **or** may be at risk of abuse, **or** you have concerns about their wellbeing **you have to take action**. It is often not easy to recognize abuse or harm, but it is important to act if you suspect abuse and not wait until you are absolutely sure. This doesn't mean that you are jumping to conclusions or making judgements about the situation, it simply means that there is a safeguarding concern. Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language, communication skills and disability. You may need to ask the person to repeat themselves or to check that you have understood what they said, however you may suspect abuse because:

- You have a general concern about someone's wellbeing.
- You see or hear something which could be abusive.
- Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive.
- You have seen changes in the person's behaviour or living patterns.

In these circumstances, **do not** delay. Pass on your concerns to our church's Designated Person for Safeguarding (Ele Hine) within 24 hours and remember that it is not your job to investigate. If Ele is not available or is implicated in the concern, speak to another member of our church's Safeguarding Team or get in touch with our Local Association Safeguarding Contact. If an adult is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay. If the police or Adult Social Care Services are contacted, then the Baptist Union Association Safeguarding Contact should also be informed as soon as possible afterwards. This should be done by our Designated Person for Safeguarding, even if they weren't the person to whom the disclosure was made.

## **Making Notes / Completing a Safeguarding Incident Form**

Notes should be completed as accurately as possible and within 24 hours of one's suspicions of abuse or disclosure. Where possible the person's own words should be used – facts should be recorded not opinions. Any questions asked of the person should be recorded as well as the information / answers given. It is not our role to verify or prove that the information given is true. It is our role to listen, record and report any concerns, allegations or disclosures to the appropriate people, no matter who the alleged abuser is / abusers are.

## **What happens if the adult doesn't want any help?**

The mental capacity of the adult at risk is vital in dealing with what should be done. All actions should be based on the assumption that the individual has the capacity and the right to make their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. This includes upholding their right to follow a course of action which others may deem unwise or eccentric, including staying in a situation of abuse. Within safeguarding, mental capacity is whether or not someone has the capacity or ability to make decisions about themselves and their safety and well-being. There is a fine balance between the individual's rights to autonomy and their need for protection.

If the adult at risk doesn't want help it may still be necessary to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services, who can put a safeguarding plan in place so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
- When there is a risk of harm to others
- In order to prevent a crime

If at all unsure of whether or not to pass on information about abuse without permission, our Designated Person for Safeguarding should contact our Association Safeguarding Contact for advice.

## **What happens when a referral is made**

If a referral is made to Adult Social Care Services, about a disclosure of abuse, it is known as an "**Adult Safeguarding Alert (ASA)**". Firstly, they will check to see if the adult at risk (or alleged abuser) is known to them. If the individual(s) are known, then details of the disclosure will be passed on to the social worker involved, who, with their manager, will decide what action should be taken next. If the individuals are not known, to Adult Social Care Services, then it is likely that a duty worker and manager will make the decision of what to do next, possibly liaising with the police.

If there is an urgent need for the adult at risk to be protected, to be found alternative accommodation or for any other safety measures to be put in place, they will be given priority. If the adult at risk is in immediate danger of physical harm or their life is threatened, then it is appropriate for you to bypass Adult Social Care Services and contact the police for help.

Following the initial referral to Adult Social Care Services and the creation of an "ASA", a referral will be made to the local adult protection officer, who will start to investigate the alleged abuse. They will liaise with the adult at risk and discuss options and procedures and find out what the individual wants to happen. The adult protection officer will involve other agencies as necessary, to ensure a coordinated response to the alleged abuse.

The outcome will be communicated to the local Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). Safeguarding Adults Boards are multi-agency groups, (which may include Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Health Services, the Crown Prosecution Service & Voluntary Organizations) who work in partnership to promote and develop effective protection systems for adults at risk in their locality.

Generally, families will be informed when there is an allegation of abuse and what action is being taken. However, there are a few circumstances which may prevent this communication from happening. These include:

- If the adult at risk does not wish their family to be informed.
- If the alleged abuser is a member of the family.
- If a police investigation is likely to take place.

This process can be daunting and if at any stage the adult at risk wants someone to support them and help them through the process, then independent advocates are available through Adult Services.

### **B. Third Party Allegations and Referrals**

It is always best for allegations and referrals to be made by the person who has the concern. Where a third party alleges abuse towards a child to yourself, your role is to gather as much factual information as possible from this person, without trying to investigate beyond that third party. The third party will be advised that the information they have provided will be shared with the Safeguarding Officer and may result in a referral to the Children's Social Care Team Department with their details. This is so that Children's Social Care Team can contact them if necessary.

When allegations are made against a member or attendee of Upton Vale Baptist Church, neither the minister nor any church leader should not provide character references or attend court proceedings. South West Baptist Association (SWBA) provides people with qualifications and experience of working with the press. SWBA should be contacted for help with this, before the press is spoken to.

### **C. Allegations against Workers**

- The advice of Children's Social Care Team and the police will be sought before taking any action such as suspension of employment or a volunteer's role.
- During an enquiry, the worker will be supervised as closely as possible without raising suspicion during the period between the matter coming to our attention, the authorities being informed and the appropriate action being taken.
- The suspension of a worker following an allegation is by definition a neutral act but may be necessary because the priority is to protect children from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator.
- It may be necessary, for the sake of the child (or to satisfy the needs of an investigation) for the alleged perpetrator to worship somewhere else and in such cases the new church leaders will be informed of the reasons.

### **D. Pastoral care**

When an allegation/suspicion arises in the Church, a period of investigation will follow, which will be stressful for all involved.

- Support will be offered to the alleged perpetrator without compromising the children or their families.
- This is one reason for limiting information in relation to allegations of abuse on a need-to-know basis. In this way leaders not privy to the detail are free to offer support to other parties, including the suspected perpetrator.

- Where an investigation is under way, this support will be provided with the knowledge of the child protection authorities.
- The Church will ensure that one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, another offers support to the victim and their family, and another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator. It may be necessary to appoint another person to support the perpetrator's family.
- Where the perpetrator accepts some responsibility, they will be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be appropriate once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

## **E. False Allegations**

False allegations are possible: all allegations will be properly investigated in an endeavour to establish the truth.

## **F. Allegations against children/young people**

Children and young people are curious about the opposite sex. However, where a child is in a position of power, has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abusive. Where one child introduces another child to some age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child this is abusive. Such situations will be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

Instances such as these are investigated by the child protection agencies in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right. The possibility is that they have also been abused. Since sexual abuse can be addictive and other children could be victims now or in the future, it is important to take the matter seriously and we will need to deal with this as they would any other allegation. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of it. Most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens (or even younger).

## **PART 2 – Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision**

### **A. Application for employment**

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for anyone disqualified from working with children and young people to knowingly apply, accept or offer to work with children. The Act specifically includes trustees of charities working with children. This means that a person banned from working with children cannot serve as a trustee of a church. It is also a criminal offence to knowingly offer work with children to an individual who is so disqualified or to knowingly allow such an individual to continue to work with children.

It will be made clear in job advertisements, at interview and on application forms that all those having contact with children or young people will be asked to agree to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check being carried out before any appointment is confirmed.

#### 1) References

Formal references will be requested.

Where applicable an applicant's UK residency status and/or right to work in the UK will also be checked.

#### 2) Interviews

All prospective workers will have an interview.

### **B. Appointment and Supervision of Staff and Volunteer Workers**

These procedures should be followed by anyone wishing to work with children/young people in any capacity under the oversight of UVBC.

Volunteers and staff working within the Children's and Youth Ministry MUST:

- Be committed, born-again Christians
- Be respectful and honouring of both the church leadership and leaders of their ministry area
- Be emotionally stable (at the discretion of the Pastors)
- Have the ability to act both independently and as part of a team
- In the case where they have not been at Upton Vale for two years, be able to provide references from two referees who aren't family members, who have known the applicant for more than two years

Ideally volunteers *should* also:

- Have attended UVBC for at least 6 months
- Be a member of the Church

The Church's safeguarding policy as well as the practical expectations will be discussed with the volunteer/applicant. The volunteer/worker will be required to sign their agreement in acceptance of and agreement to the procedures.

Any staff member will have a written agreement which includes a clear role description, and volunteers will have a clear understanding of their role. Both staff and volunteers will have clear lines of accountability to the church leadership and an assigned supervisor with regular team or individual meetings to review procedures to ensure a common approach, sharing of concerns and identifying other matters that may need clarification and guidance.

It is also advisable to have a probationary period (say 6 months) before any staff appointment is confirmed.

The Safeguarding Officer, Pastors and Elders of the Church shall have the authority to determine that a person shall not work with children or young people within UVBC Ministries at their own discretion. This would be in circumstances of reasonable doubt about a person's conduct or character.

### 1) Training

It is important that all workers understand the agreed procedures for protecting children and young people.

Anyone working with children or young people must attend in-house Child protection training at least once every 3 years.

Safeguarding Officer must attend external safeguarding training at least once every 3 years.

Training for workers in relevant areas will be arranged, eg. first aid, food hygiene.

### 2) Young People

Young people under 18 may be used as helpers but such helpers will be responsible to a named worker and will never be in a position where they are providing unsupervised care of children. As they will never be in unsupervised care they don't need a DBS. However, those under 18 years old will be required to provide a reference from an unrelated adult who has known them for 2 years.

When a young helper reaches the age of 18 a DBS check will be required.

A young helper should ideally be two years older than the oldest children in the group they are helping in. These young helpers should be made aware of the safeguarding policy and the need to maintain their role as helper rather than participant, for the safety and clarity of the group. Specific training will be given to the young helpers when they are accepted in the role to reiterate the responsibility they hold. Young helpers will be well guided and mentored throughout their roles, by the leader of that group, and should never lead a session or be responsible for a group of children.

## **PART 3 – Safe Behaviour: a code of behaviour for workers/volunteers**

### **A. Overview/code of behaviour**

The aim of these general guidelines is to ensure quality childcare, protect children from possible abuse and workers from false accusation. Workers/volunteers should:

- treat all children /young people and adults at risk with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- age appropriate language and tone of voice.
- **NOT** engage in any of the following;
  - Invading the privacy of children or young people or adults at risk when they are using the toilet or shower.
  - Rough games including contact between a leader and a child or young person or adults at risk.
  - Sexually provocative games.
  - Making sexually suggestive comments.
  - Scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.
- When necessary control and discipline children, young people and adults at risk without using physical punishment.

Workers/volunteers should be aware of safeguarding themselves by:

- Ensuring that they are not left working alone with children and young people, but as part of a team showing mutual responsibility for each team member.
  - If there are insufficient leaders for groups, then internal doors should be left open.
  - At least two people are present before external doors are opened for an event.
  - Ideally, with mixed gender groups, the adults present would also be mixed gender. This would be especially ideal when the nature of the activity is sensitive, Bible and prayer material to ensure same gender leaders pray with and are available to chat with same gender children, young people and adults at risk. If having mixed gender leaders is not possible and the activity is not of a sensitive nature, that's fine, but leaders should ensure any questions or openings for such sensitive conversations are left for when a leader is available of the same gender as the child, young person or adult at risk raising the subject.

If workers do find themselves on their own they should;

- Assess the risk of sending child/young person home
- Phone another team member and let them know the situation
- Get a second trained leader as soon as possible
- Write down a record of what happened

If a child or young person wants to talk on a one-to-one basis you should make sure that:

- You try to hold the conversation in a corner of a room where other people are.
- Or if you are in a room on your own, leave the door open.
- Or you make sure another team member knows.
- Considering how many workers should be involved with the group and whether they should be male or female workers or both.
  - The only adults allowed to participate in children's and young people's activities are those who are designated as staff or volunteers in the children's/youth work. The leader of the activity should be aware of any other adults who are in the building.

Below are suggested ratios of adults to children, recommended for all activities with children and young people.

Age group	Adult Helpers	Number of Children
2 years and under	1	3
3 years	1	4
4 to 7 years	1	8
8 years or older	1	10

- Ensuring that the level of personal care (eg. toileting) is be appropriate and related to the age of the child whilst also accepting that some children have special needs. When an adult is helping children go to the toilet, or changing nappies, the door to the cubicle should be left open. That adult should have gone through the procedure for safe recruitment, and permission should have been attained from the parent or guardian of the child.
- Ensuring that no person under 18 years of age is left in sole charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.

## B. Taking Care of Touching

**All adults working/volunteering with children and young people must ensure that any physical contact is:**

- Kept public. related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- NOT sexually stimulating to the adult or the child, or perceived as such.

Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.

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

Team members must monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They are encouraged to help each other and should constructively challenge anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

## C. Mentoring and other one-to-one Pastoral care meetings

If a worker is working as part of a recognised mentoring programme or providing one-to-one pastoral care for the church with a young person or adult at risk:

- In the case of young people, the parents of all young people involved and one of the Pastors or a member of the safeguarding team must be made aware that the meetings are taking place. In the case of adults at risk, as above, one of the Pastors or a member of the safeguarding team must be made aware that the meetings are taking place.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time.
- Keep a basic record of dates of significant meetings, text messages and emails.
- Appropriate boundaries with regard to times and demand should be in place, ie. not phoning during the night, etc.
- Any significant details of that meeting, including any disclosures of abuse, criminal activity and/or self-harm, should be reported to the Safeguarding officer or, in their absence, another member of the Safeguarding Team.
- One-to-one pastoral care should be on a same-gender basis.

## **D. Visiting Children or Young People at Home**

It is sometimes the case that volunteers will need to make a pastoral visit of children at home on behalf of UVBC. If a situation occurs where it is needed then it can only be done with agreement of one of the Pastors.

## **E. Children with Special Needs**

If a child or young person attends a UVBC activity we will speak with the child/young person and/or their parents/carers and find out from them how best to assist the child or young person.

## **F. Children with no adult supervision**

When children turn up to and want to join in with church activities without the knowledge of their parents, we will:

- Welcome the child and try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number, and record their visit in a register.
- Ask the child if a parent/carer is aware of where they are. Phone and make contact.
- On leaving, give the child a consent form and explain it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.
- Without interrogating the child, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs (eg. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- If it is a Sunday and the child is dropped off by parents before the 10.30am service starts, this is not common practice and will be discouraged. On a Sunday, UVBC is a public place, there is no targeted activity until the children are sent out of the service at some stage during the service, and even then, the parents/carers need to remain on site until they collect their children or have received their children back from UV Kids work. A child of primary school age should be accompanied by an adult or child over the age of 14 on a Sunday morning.

## **G. Peer Group Activities for Young People**

All youth activities will be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with agreed recruitment procedures. It is accepted that groups aged 16+ may benefit from being led and run by peers. In this situation adult leaders will contribute to programme planning and reviews and will always be readily available on the premises when peer-led activities take place.

## **Electronic Communication**

- 1) Email and Instant Messaging (eg. MSN Messenger, AOL AIM, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook)

Email and Messaging services are sometimes used by workers to remind young people about meetings or to ask them to be involved in helping to deliver youth work provision. It is important that workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, and although it should be obvious when an email is ending, workers should never use inappropriate terms such as 'luv' to round things off. For the purposes of transparency, workers will copy in or 'BCC' another worker in email communications with young people. Where communication has been between a worker/volunteer and a single individual, records of this conversation should be saved by the worker in a secure location and refer to the safeguarding officer any concerns.

## 2) Mobile Phones

Particular diligence needs to be applied when workers use mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- All mobile phone use will be primarily about information sharing.
- It is accepted that the mobile phone numbers of our youth members (aged 11-18) will be known by youth workers and texts will be sent to arrange group events, eg. Bible study.
- Parents should be aware that youth workers have their children's mobile phone numbers.
- Where possible and ideally, workers should make contact with the young people in a group text, or via the parent.
- Workers should keep a log of all conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on/shown to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language, particularly when texting, and should not use words such as 'luv' or abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Video and photographs (see 6)

## 3) Social Networks

If a worker allows their personal site to be accessed by young people:

- It is essential that all content including photos is suitable.
- Be aware of age limits on social network sites.
- All communication should be kept in the public domain.
- Copy other workers into communication if needed to keep transparency.

## 4) Taking Video and Photographs of Children including those taken on mobile phones/tablets

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, churches must be very careful if they use still or moving images of clearly identifiable people. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.
- Many uses of photographs are not covered by the Data Protection Act 1998, including all photographs and video recordings for personal use, such as a parent/carer taking photographs at school sports days for the family photo album, or videoing a church nativity play.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.
- No pictures should ever be taken of children in any state of undress, in the context of swimming or at the beach in a swimming costume.

## **H. Gender identity and safeguarding**

It is quite possible to have those in our care in UVKids and Youth, who are wanting to be identified as a different gender from that with which they were born.

## **Toilet and changing facilities**

It would be inappropriate for someone who has not undergone gender reassignment surgery to use changing rooms of the opposite sex to their birth gender where there is an open area for dressing/undressing.

Even though we at Upton Vale want to promote equality and provide facilities which match the gender a young person identifies with, their peers may be less accepting and this can cause more anxiety for the person involved.

In the basement and in the hall one toilet or set of toilets is used for both boys and girls. Outside the Chelston Room, where Flames meets, there is a level access unisex toilet, which can be used for both boys and girls.

## **Residential trips**

As with changing facilities, there are often concerns as to how to arrange accommodation when organising residential trips which include a child or young person with Gender Dysphoria.

Advice from the 'Schools Transgender Guidance' publication from Cornwall Council suggests, "The sleeping arrangements will need to be thought about before a trip is undertaken; it is possible that the student would prefer to have a separate room for example. Each individual case and trip needs to be thought of separately and in depth discussions should happen well in advance with any and all appropriate bodies."

A risk assessment will need to be done in advance which takes into account the fact that you have someone experiencing Gender Dysphoria.

Again, it would not be suitable to place someone in a position where they are physically exposing themselves to peers of the opposite physical gender.

## **Pastoral issues**

It is evident that the struggle for children and young people experiencing Gender Dysphoria can highly impact their emotional health. In some cases, there are also issues such as social withdrawal, anxiety, low mood, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

Here are some helpful pointers to navigate pastoral needs with someone who shares with you that they're struggling with their identity:

- Confidentiality is paramount. We must not encourage discrimination by making it known that a child or young person is experiencing gender dysphoria.
- Keep a record of your conversation with a child and any advice given.
- Always follow guidance on speaking and interacting with children or young people for any reason.
- Encourage them to speak to their parents, if they haven't already done so.
- If their parents are aware, make contact to share with them that their child has confided in you.
- Think about the practical advice above to help minimise any social anxiety around activities.
- Pastoral care is mainly about giving time and a safe space to listen. Expressing personal views, for or against, should only ever be done at the invitation of the young person whilst always encouraging them to seek parental support.

- Should they express thoughts of self-harm or suicide, make contact with the safeguarding officer.

More information is available in the CCPAS publication "Gender identity and safeguarding".

## **PART 4 – Safe Practice**

### **A. Outings and overnight events**

#### 1) Transporting Children

These guidelines will apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children and young people, on trips organised by or on behalf of the Church. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between parties with parental responsibility.

Our practice on transporting children is as follows:

- Usually only those who have gone through the Church recruitment procedures for workers/volunteers will transport children. When this is not possible drivers will pick up and drop off at pre-arranged places, and there will be two adults in the vehicle, at least one, who has been recruited under the church recruitment procedures.
- All drivers will have read the Church's Child Protection Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Parental consent will be given for all journeys.
- At collection or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult.
- Drivers will be 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- The driver must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover: The driver should declare to their insurers that they are participating in the activity of transporting people for the church. 'Business use' cover may be required. The response of the Insurance company may be different if the driver is being reimbursed. The vehicle will need to be road worthy.
- Workers should avoid being alone with children in the vehicle. Two adults will be in the vehicle at all times. If, in exceptional and not ideal circumstances, a worker is alone with a child, young person or adult at risk for short periods, for example when spotting a child, young person or adult at risk is waiting for whom it would be unsafe to remain there, the child should always sit in the back of the vehicle.
- Drivers will not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Make sure all children and young people are returned to pick up point.
- All hired minibuses used to transport children will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance, a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.
- If parents transport each other's children around other than trips organised by the church, for example to and from activities, such arrangements are the responsibility of the parents involved and not the responsibility of the Church. This is also the case for any arrangements where lifts shared are arranged through church, these are also not the responsibility of Upton Vale. When parents are asked about lifts, they should be issued with a letter with tick boxes "I am happy to offer/receive a lift"

#### 2) Risk Assessment

Before undertaking any new activity, the activity leader will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and it is advisable to appoint someone specifically for this task.

#### 3) Insurance

Residential activity/camp organisers will ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for the event activity. If the trip is at a centre it is also important to establish that there is appropriate public liability insurance.

#### 4) Outings

- Before undertaking any outing or overnight activity, a special risk assessment must be carried out.
- In the case of adults at risk on outings and overnight events, circumstances of individuals at risk can vary so greatly. Those organising such outings or overnight events should contact the safeguarding team, who can advise on the best arrangements.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements, and these arrangements must not be changed without written agreement from the parents.
- Consent forms will be obtained for each overnight activity.
- There will be leaders with first aid and food hygiene certificates with the group.
- All adults on the trip must have gone through the church recruitment procedures.

##### i. Sleeping Arrangements (Outings and overnight events)

Sleeping arrangements for residential holidays will be considered carefully. Ideally, workers will not share sleeping accommodation with children. It may be acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with children/young people in a large dormitory or on an activity such as youth hostelling where it is customary practice. Arrangements will be age-appropriate, provide security for the child/young person and be safe for children/young people and workers. The activity leader will ensure that parents understand what the arrangements will be.

##### ii. Adventurous Activities (Outings and overnight events)

No child will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The residential activity/camp organisers will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, the residential activity/camp organisers need to ensure that the premises are licensed.

##### iii. Fire Safety (Outings and overnight events)

The residential activity/camp organisers will have a fire safety procedure, which will include the following:

- Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the residential activity/camp is in a building then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill will be practised on the first day of the residential activity/camp.
- When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. It will also comply with fire regulations.
- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (eg. a child who is hard of hearing).

##### iv. Safety (Outings and overnight events)

At all times, it is the responsibility of the workers to know the whereabouts of every child/young person participating in a residential activity/camp and this may include monitoring access on and off the site.

Where the campsite does not have its own night security, it is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure the whole site is secure at night, eg by providing night security personnel.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (eg. no running round tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).

#### v. Swimming Trips

There will be an increased adult to child ratio for all swimming trips and prior to the trip the swimming ability of a child/young person will be established. A swimming consent for each child (or a copy) will be taken by the group leader on the trip.

## **B. Bullying**

In order to prevent bullying the following procedures will be adopted:

- The children and young people themselves will be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable
- Children and young people should know how they can report any incidents of bullying
- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously
- Details will be checked carefully before action is taken
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible
- The parents of the bully and of the bullied will be informed
- An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour
- All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with actions that are taken.

## **C. Financial integrity**

Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transactions and gifts, as outlined below:

- Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done.
- Workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- Workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Any gifts received should be reported to the church trustees, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated church workers.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved.
- Workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest.
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the trustees. Workers should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.
- Expert legal advice should be sought on matters such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.

## **D. Pastoral relationships, particularly with adults at risk**

All those involved in pastoral ministry should work in a way that follows clearly defined procedures, which set out the boundaries to protect those carrying out the pastoral ministry as well as those receiving it:

- Workers should be aware of the power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust.

- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship, should be avoided.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency within a pastoral relationship.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers need to recognise the limits of their own abilities and competencies, and get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.

## PART 5 – Safe Community

### Working with Offenders convicted of sexual abuse against Children

#### FOREWORD

Upton Vale Baptist Church may not be an ideal church for those with a history of abuse against children to start attending due to the following reasons:

- Many children (anything from 70 to 100) in attendance during Sunday morning services
- We do not have a regular weekly evening service appropriate for ex-offenders
- We have large building with many areas children might be unsupervised/unobserved after Sunday Church groups have concluded
- Because we have so many families of multiple generations, there are few people capable of operating in the supportive monitoring role (i.e. who don't have regular contact with minors on a Sunday morning)
- Numerous other Churches in Torbay *are* more suitable as there are plenty without children's/youth work

**Due to these factors we have made the decision that we are not a suitable Church for a person to attend when they have been convicted in the past of sexual abuse against children.**

When someone already attending the Church is known to have abused children, the Safeguarding Team, under the guidance of the Safeguarding Officer, will effectively supervise the individual concerned, but in its commitment to the protection of children, will set boundaries for that person which they shall be expected to keep. The Safeguarding Officer will inform the Church Leadership Team of the terms of this supervision and the Church Leadership Team will ensure that the individual receives pastoral care.

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of sexually abusing children or young people is attending UVBC, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced a series of allegations about the sexual abuse of children and young people but has never been convicted (such allegations may be revealed on an Enhanced DBS Disclosure under relevant non-conviction information).

If an offender is on the Sex Offenders' Register they will be monitored under guidelines known as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In the latest guidance there is provision to require a written contract to be in place if the offender wishes to attend a place of worship.

In determining the details of the contract:

- There will be a discussion among the Safeguarding Team about who should be informed of the nature of the offence and the details of the contract
- The rights of the offender to re-build their lives without everyone knowing the details of their past offence should be balanced against the need to protect children and young people
- The Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Team and the Pastors should always be informed
- The Safeguarding Officer should determine whether the person is subject to supervision or is on the Sex Offenders' Register
- if so, the Safeguarding Officer should make contact with the offender's specialist probation officer (SPO) who will inform the church of any relevant information or restrictions that the church should be aware of
- The Safeguarding Officer should inform and take advice from the Regional Minister in the local Baptist Association.

An open discussion must be held with the person concerned in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract should be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person should be required to sign the contract. The contract:

- Will identify the meetings the person may attend
- Will specify that they will always sit apart from children and young people
- Will ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises

- Will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children or young people are present
- Will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children or young people
- Will state that the person will never be alone with children or young people while attending church functions
- Will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children or young people meet.

The contract should be monitored and enforced. Those who offend against children and young people can often be manipulative. If the contract is broken certain sanctions should be considered.