

Hollywood Baptist Safeguarding Overview

WHY DOES A CHURCH NEED A SAFEGUARDING POLICY?

- We want to be a church that fulfils our calling from God to love and look after the people that He places in our care, including children and vulnerable people of all ages.
- The law places upon us a duty of care that we take very seriously. This overview will help us navigate the legal as well as moral responsibilities placed upon us.
- This document will also help protect leaders and staff to ensure they are acting in accordance with the law and good practice.
- We also realise that the world in which we live in is fallen and that the mistreatment of children and others does occur. We must do all we can to protect the vulnerable, promote good practice and prevent abuse.

RECOGNISING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ABUSE

There are many reasons why a person abuses another human. Whatever the reason, abuse is always wrong and it is never the victim's fault. It is very important that abuse is stopped as soon as it is discovered for the sake of both the victim and the abuser. The sooner action is taken the more likely it is that the abuse will stop and that the victim will recover from his or her experiences.

It is a fact that the majority of victims know their abusers. In the case of child abuse, it is not only adults who are the perpetrators. Teenage abuse is a growing concern; this is when older children abuse younger children or their peers.

These are the main types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse**

Deliberately hurting a child/young person

Signs may include:

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Fear of physical contact, a shrinking back if touched

- **Neglect:**

The failure to provide for a child's basic needs

Signs may include:

- Constant hunger
- Inadequate clothing
- Constant tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene

- **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child.

Signs may include

- Delays in physical, mental and emotional development
- Continual belittling of oneself
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain
- Neurotic behaviour

- **Sexual abuse**

When others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. This can include physical and non-physical acts.

- Sexual knowledge, including drawing sexually explicit pictures, or use of language inappropriate for the child's age
- Being overly affectionate in a sexual way that is inappropriate to the child's age
- Regression to younger behavioural patterns such as thumb sucking
- Self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdosing, anorexia
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating

- **Exploitation**

The intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain.

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or possessions that cannot be accounted for
- Use of drugs and/or alcohol
- Experiencing health problems that may indicate a sexually transmitted infection

- **Bullying**

Deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the victim to defend himself or herself (Department of Education, 1999).

Signs may include:

- Being reluctant to participate in activities
- Being distressed or anxious
- Losing confidence and becoming withdrawn
- Having problems eating and/or sleeping
- Having unexplained injuries
- Changes in appearance
- Changes in behaviour

If you suspect any of these are taking place then you must contact the DSO (Designated Safeguarding Officer). More information on that process below.

RESPONDING, REPORTING AND RECORDING

Incidents and accidents

In the case of incidents and accidents e.g. someone not following our policies but where no harm occurred, or accidents where someone was accidentally hurt, these should be recorded in our Accident/Incident Report, stored in the office.

Responding to concerns

In the case of a signs of abuse being spotted or a disclosure of abuse being made to a leader the we follow the procedure outlined below.

Do

- Stay calm
- Listen
- Give time for the child to say what they want
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling
- Write down what was said to you or what you observed as soon as possible
- Write down the exact words that the child used
- Use the Report of Concern form
- Ensure that the Designated Person is informed without delay

Don't

- Panic
- Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Promise to keep secrets
- Investigate
- Under no circumstances should you attempt to deal with the problem alone

The Reporting Process

1. **Concern or Disclosure** - The person who has the concern should listen carefully to the person making the disclosure
2. **Respond & Record** - A record should be made of the disclosure containing just the facts of what was said
3. **Report to DSO** - Next, inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer of the disclosure and pass on all relevant details without delay. See contact details below.
4. **DSO Assesses Concern** - It is the DSO's responsibility to assess what happens next. Remember if a child or adult at risk is in danger or a criminal offence is suspected, then PSNI or Social Services must be informed immediately. Do not delay this by having a meeting. Remember that the task of deciding whether or not abuse has occurred rests with the professional agencies. If there is disagreement on whether or not to refer a concern to a child protection agency, any individual, as a concerned citizen, can still make a referral.



Hollywood Baptist Church DSO:
Gayle McKee
07951 106927

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It is important to note that though these individuals oversee safeguarding in the church we ALL have the responsibility to ensure this policy is followed and we care for others as best we possibly can.

SAFE STANDARDS AT HBC

Working with other leaders:

To ensure that we operate safely and in a way that honours our calling to serve God and the people in our care we should all be striving to:

- Show up for events when you are expected to be there. If for some reason you cannot be there it is your responsibility to notify your leader so that our ratio of leader to children is protected.
- Attend events early so that the team can discuss the plan for the programmed activity and to give opportunity to pray together.
- Be aware of where the incident and accident report forms are kept.
- Know what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern or disclosure.
- Never be alone with children out of the sight of other leaders.
- Refrain from unnecessary and unwanted physical contact with others

Engaging with children:

NEVER:

- Take children to your home without the child's parents and the leader of the organisation or other responsible person knowing
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child, even in fun
- Let allegations made by a child go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves
- Engage in rough or inappropriate behaviour
- Rely solely on your reputation to protect yourself

Ratios:

It is preferable to have a gender mix of leaders with a mixed gender group of children.

Under 8 years

0 to 2 years = 1 leader to 3 children

2 to 3 years = 1 leader to 4 children

4 to 8 years = 1 leader to 8 children

9 to 12 = 1 leader to 15 children with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

13+ = 1 leader to 20 children with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

Photography

Permission from parents/guardian should be sought before any photographs/videos are taken of the children by anyone representing the church. Similarly, photos /videos will only be published online or anywhere else with the permission of parent/guardians.

Social Media

Communication with young people via phone or online should only take place on the basis of parental consent being granted and should only be on the basis of communication not conversation.

BECOME A HELPER AT HBC

As a church our primary desire is to make Jesus known. All of the above is to help us to do that in a way that is loving, safe and vigilant to the potential of the mistreatment of the people in our care. Our policies apply to anyone over the age of 16 working with children/young people or vulnerable adults.

In order to become a helper at Holywood Baptist in any roles that involve children/young people or vulnerable adults we require that you:

- Complete an Access NI form (renewed every 3 years)
- Fill in a application form (including providing references)
- Undergo safeguarding training at the earliest opportunity

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

Hollywood Baptist Church DSO:

Gayle McKee
07951 106927

Deputy DSO:

Bertha McDougall
07748 676949

Pastor Aaron Williamson:

07540936750
aaron@hollywoodbaptist.org.uk

For more information on safeguarding or how to spot signs of abuse:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>

Our full Safeguarding Policy is available upon request

