



Safeguarding Procedures

**Safeguarding children, young people and
adults at risk**

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1. Safeguarding Procedures

1. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide Pastors, Elders, staff and church members with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all staff, Pastors, Elders, volunteers and others who act on behalf of the church.

3. Governance and oversight

The Trustees will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

3.1 Ensuring that they appoint from amongst their number a nominated Safeguarding Trustee who will act on their behalf to provide leadership and guidance on matters related to safeguarding.

3.2 Ensuring that the church leadership promotes the importance of safeguarding and leading the development of a culture that is a biblically faithful safeguarding culture.

3.3 Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained and skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy (DDSL) are appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced.

3.4 Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant Safeguarding Policy is implemented and that it is reviewed by the Trustees with input and support from the DSL and Deputy DSL annually.

3.5 That a clear statement in relation to safeguarding is included in the annual Charity Commission submission.

3.6 That any "Serious Incidents" (as defined in the Charity Commission Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>) are reported accurately and in a timely manner.

4. Recruitment and ongoing support of Pastors, Elders and staff

4.1 Management of recruitment processes

4.1.1 At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment and appointment of Pastors, Elders and staff will be trained in Safer Recruitment.

4.1.2 Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a DBS check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

4.1.3 Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions.

4.1.4 A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained by the Operations Manager.

4.2 Pastors, Elders and Staff

4.2.1 Prior to appointment all paid staff including Pastors will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation.

4.2.2 Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought, including, where possible, a reference from the current or previous employer.

4.2.3 The Single Central Record will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

4.3 Volunteer positions

4.3.1 Prior to appointment, all volunteers will be required to meet with a Leader of their activity to discuss their role to ensure their suitability and clarity of understanding of the role and its requirements.

4.3.2 For volunteers working with children and young people the Single Central Record will be updated as appropriate throughout the process, including DBS checks.

4.4 DBS Checks

4.4.1 Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role staff, Pastors and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check.

4.4.2 Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to start work prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a formal risk assessment will be completed.

4.4.3 Once formal notification of a clear DBS check has been received, the Single Central Record will be updated with the relevant information.

4.5 Issues arising from DBS Checks

Where issues are raised on the DBS check, this will be discussed with job applicants or church members by the DSL or DDSL and Pastors.

4.5.1. The applicant will be asked to present the DBS certificate to the DSL or DDSL.

4.5.2 The applicant may, if they wish to, withdraw their application.

4.5.3 If the application is withdrawn, consideration should be given to whether this required the triggering of the “Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people” ([see section 8 of this procedure](#)) process.

4.5.4 If the applicant self-declares the blemish and it has been discussed previously, the recruiter will check to ensure that the detail provided in the self-disclosure is consistent with the information on the DBS certificate.

4.5.5 If the applicant did not self-disclose, an open conversation about the circumstances of the blemish will be discussed with the applicant by the DSL or DDSL and Pastor or other Elder. Whether the discussion arises from self-disclosure or examination of the certificate, a risk assessment will be conducted to ascertain the applicant’s suitability for the role and the outcome will be recorded.

4.5.6 If the risk assessment concludes that the individual is unsuitable for the role, consideration will be given to whether the “Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people” ([see section 8 of this policy](#)) process needs to be started.

4.5.7 Once the details of the certificate have been recorded in the Single Central Record, the certificate will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained.

4.6 Training

4.6.1 Initial training will be provided. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the Trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance is up to date.

4.6.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years.

4.6.3 All Pastors, Elders, staff and church members involved in regulated activities will undergo some updated training annually.

4.6.4 A log of training and DBS checks will be maintained by the church.

5. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

5.1 Health and Safety

5.1.1 We aim to ensure that the health and safety of everyone who enters our church community is protected by:

- i. Regularly reviewing our health and safety policies to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance.
- ii. Maintaining and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments for both the premises and the activities of the church.
- iii. Key Health and Safety information will be prominent and best practice will be promoted through announcements and effective signage etc.

5.2 Awareness raising

5.2.1 We will raise awareness by ensuring that:

- i. Information about our policies, procedures and codes of conduct are publicly available and promoted by our leaders.
- ii. Details of our Safeguarding team are prominently displayed.
- iii. We implement and promote clear and transparent processes for the raising of safeguarding concerns or complaints.

5.3 When engaging in ministry to children and / or young people we will:

5.3.1 Ensure that registers of children attending, and leaders present are maintained.

5.3.2 Ensuring that those involved in such ministries have been appointed in accordance with our safeguarding procedures including DBS checks, preferably before commencement of role.

5.3.3 Ensure that consent is obtained for their attendance at the group and that contact details and information about any additional or specific needs are recorded.

5.3.4 Take all reasonable measures so that appropriate child: adult ratios are maintained in line with guidance:

- ✓ Crèche (0 - 2 years) - two adults for up to 6 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 3 children above the first 6.
- ✓ Footsteps (2 - 4 years) - two adults for up to 8 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 4 children above the first 8.
- ✓ Adventurers (4 - 6 years) - two adults for up to 16 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 6 children above the first 16.
- ✓ Explorers (7 - 11 years) - two adults for up to 20 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 8 children above the first 20.
- ✓ Frontline Nano (11 to 13 years) - two adults for up to 20 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 8 children above the first 20.
- ✓ Frontline (14+ years) - two adults for up to 20 children, 1 extra adult for every 1 to 8 children above the first 20.

5.3.5 Those over the age of 18 are deemed adults and are responsible for their own wellbeing, except for adults at risk.

5.3.6 Where the adult/child ratio will be breached, another DBS checked adult should provide (where possible) cover to ensure ratios are met. A review should take place afterwards in such circumstances.

6. Responding to and reporting Safeguarding concerns and disclosures

6.1. Managing immediate risk

6.1.1 Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the person to whom the disclosure was made should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual.

6.1.2 The person may seek advice from the DSL or DDSL, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.

6.1.3 In such urgent situations and if the DSL or DDSL cannot be immediately contacted, the person should contact either the Police on 999 or Social Services ([see Appendix B](#)) to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL or DDSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

6.2 Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads

6.2.1 Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL or DDSL.

6.2.2 The concerns will be discussed with the DSL or DDSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding.

6.2.3 Details of the concern should be recorded on the "Incidents and concerns reporting form" (see the [Supporting Documents](#)) either before, during, or immediately after the discussion with the DSL.

6.3 Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

6.3.1 In discussion with the person reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required

6.3.2 Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk:

- i. A Chronology will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file
- ii. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis.
- iii. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a "need to know" basis

6.3.3 Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care.

Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:

- i. To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect.
- ii. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse.
- iii. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness.

6.3.4 The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (see Appendix B of the Safeguarding policy.)

6.3.5 If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children's Social Care.

6.3.6 The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.

6.3.7 All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc. will be placed into the confidential file and will be maintained on an ongoing basis.

6.3.8 Confidential files will be stored securely and safely in the church office.

The Pastors, DSL and DDSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding.

7. Safeguarding allegations against Pastors, Elders, staff and church members

A safeguarding allegation is the claim or concern that someone who has access to people including children, young people and adults at risk has:

- Caused harm to an individual.
- Committed a criminal offence involving such a person.
- Behaved in a way that may indicate that they are unsuitable to work with such people.

7.1. When an allegation is made, the individual receiving the allegation should establish whether any immediate action needs to be taken to ensure the safety of the person making the allegation or others who may be directly or indirectly involved.

7.2. Details of the allegation must be passed to the DSL or DDSL as soon as reasonably possible ([see Appendix D](#) - Flowchart for concerns/allegations against a member of Pastors, Elders, staff and church members).

7.4. The person making the allegation should be informed of the actions that will be taken, including the expected timeframes, wherever appropriate to do so.

7.5. The DSL/DDSL must establish:

7.5.1. Whether any further immediate action is required.

7.5.2. How the individual accused will be supported and whether they need to be informed at this stage.

7.6. The DSL/DDSL will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the allegation is deemed to be of a serious safeguarding nature.

- 7.7. The DSL/DDSL will be responsible for managing the allegation internally. This will include but is not limited to:
- 7.7.1. Working with the Local Authority and other partners to ensure a timely resolution.
 - 7.7.2. Following instructions from the Local Authority and its partners as required.
 - 7.7.3. Ensuring that the person accused and the accuser are supported and informed, where appropriate, throughout the investigation.
 - 7.7.4. Ensuring the Pastors and Safeguarding Elder are notified that an allegation has been received (NB – this notification does not include any unnecessary detail).
 - 7.7.5. Ensuring that full records are maintained throughout the investigation.

8. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

8.1 Where the church becomes aware that an individual attending the church is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the church leaders including DSL or DDSL will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.

8.2 With the consent of the individual (if required), the church will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate.

8.3 The church leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated.

8.4 A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the individual and church leaders. The agreement will include:

8.4.1 The church's commitments to the individual who poses the risk.

8.4.2 The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community.

8.4.3 The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the church.

8.4.4 The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement.

8.4.5 When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed.

8.5 All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.

8.6 The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the leaders either:

8.6.1 With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk.

8.6.2 Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared.

8.7 If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on.

9. Concerns about practice and whistleblowing

9.1 Concerns and complaints about the culture or practice within the church are matters which we hope can be raised and discussed with leaders as part of normal church life. When this is not the case please see our Complaints [page](#) and [policy](#) for further information.

10. Codes of Conduct

Our conduct should be an outworking of our Christian faith and be in line with the principles, policies and procedures of Christ Church Dunstable.

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the policies and procedures relevant to their area of work and ensure that these are implemented. They should work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion and challenge.

Code of Conduct for those working with children and young people

- Treat children as individuals in a way that recognises their developmental stage and ability, respects their views and wishes and gives them appropriate levels of choice.
- Do not mistreat any child – no bullying, intimidation, coercion, humiliation or undermining.
- Act with fairness, avoiding favouritism or discrimination.
- Refrain from any physical chastisement and only use physical intervention as a last resort to ensure a child's safety.
- Make sure that any physical contact is age-appropriate and child-led as much as possible. There should be no sexual contact or behaviour aimed at developing a sexual relationship.
- Challenge any unacceptable behaviour in a responsible way and ensure appropriate peer behaviour.
- Be vigilant to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children.
- Maintain awareness of safeguarding practice, undertaking training as required, but at least annually.

Code of Conduct for those working with adults at risk

- Ensure that support is led by the person receiving the support and that their views, wishes, and choices are respected.
- Act with fairness and without discrimination or favouritism.
- Do not assume that physical contact is permitted, letting the other person take the lead.
- Use physical intervention only as a last resort to ensure the safety of the individual or of others.
- Be vigilant to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to others.
- Understand and implement the policies, procedures and risk assessments required for the role with adults at risk. This will include maintaining awareness of safeguarding practice and attending training as required, but at least annually.

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers providing pastoral care

(Please note: this code of conduct is not intended to cover disciplinary issues, although the broad principles would still apply)

- Ensure that the dignity and wishes of the individual are always respected so that there is little risk of coercion or abuse of power.
- Seek to act in the best interests of the individual, making sure that they understand their right to question, and ignore advice or suggestions that are given.
- Deliver challenges or difficult messages in a way that is non-derogatory and that conveys compassion and concern for the individual's emotional and spiritual wellbeing.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures accountability to church leaders and openness to discussion and challenge.
- Maintain vigilance to identify and report safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to the person seeking support.
- Undertake safeguarding training and on a regular basis but at least annually.
- Act with fairness, avoiding discrimination or favouritism. Language and behaviour must not be sexualised, aggressive or demeaning.
- Any physical contact must be led by the other person, and any physical intervention should be only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of the individual or the group.
- Only undertake activity for which they are physically and mentally fit.

11. Online and social media safety procedures

1. Definitions

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information and Communications Technology (ICT). This means anything which involves the use of mobile communication devices (smart phones, mobile phones), computers (laptops, netbooks, tablets) and other electronic devices (including games consoles), to communicate and access the Internet, emails, text messaging services (SMS and Multimedia Messaging Services), Instant Messenger, along with communication through social media sites and social networking sites.

Workers is used to refer to any Pastor, Elder, paid staff or volunteers at CCD.

For the purposes of differentiation a child is considered to be anyone up to and including the age of Frontline Nano (0-14) and a young person is anyone attending Frontline (14 - 17).

At CCD, our aim is that as technology progresses and changes, we will always use it to communicate in an open, respectful, appropriate and Biblical way with all people. We recognise that there are times when certain forms of communication are less helpful and may even be damaging. The aim of this procedure is to avoid such situations by placing certain limits and expectations on our workers and the children for whom they care. We will at all times comply with GDPR legislation with regards to storing, using and deleting personal data.

2. Conduct of Pastors, Elders, staff and church members in regulated roles

- Only provide personal contact details to a young person that is accessible through Church Suite, including your mobile telephone number.
- Where possible, there should be no electronic communication with children up to and including Frontline Nano age. In exceptional circumstances, consent must be sought from a parent or carer first.
- Only make contact with children and young people for reasons related to the work of the church and keep all records of electronic communication with individuals or groups including messaging and texting. Engaging online with young people should be an extension of a genuine face-to-face relationship, not a replacement for it.
- Generally, try to communicate in a group context (e.g. group chat or email if appropriate). However, there are times when it is appropriate to communicate one-to-one (see 'one-to-one communication boundaries' below).
- Email history should be kept and dated.
- When communicating online / over the phone with young people, it is advised that it should take place between the hours of 9am-10pm (Frontline ends at 9.30pm on a Saturday night).
- Workers should refrain from using video conferencing services such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams with children and young people on a one-to-one basis.
- Those under the age of 18 should not be given access to personal WiFi in a person's home during a church activity.

3. One-to-one communication boundaries

Interactions and communications should be made within a group context as far as possible. Where a one-to-one conversation is considered appropriate, be mindful of time.

If a conversation is becoming too intense, consider meeting face-to-face with the young person instead. If this happens, ensure this is in a public place and their parents/carers are aware and have given consent to the meeting.

Unacceptable forms of online one-to-one communication	Acceptable forms of group communication
Virtual conference services, Snapchat, Tiktok and other forms of social media.	WhatsApp, texting and emails.

4. Social media procedures

All social media interaction between workers and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administered groups.

Such groups must ensure:

- At least 2 leaders have administrator access.
- Parents and Carers provide consent for young people to participate in group broadcasting platforms such as WhatsApp.
- Workers should not add children or young people, who attend CCD groups, to their personal social networking page.
- There will be no private messages between adult workers and children/young people using personal social networking pages (e.g. Facebook). If a child or young person contacts an adult in this way, the adult will seek a more appropriate method of communication and speak with the ministry leader and DSL or DDSL for advice if needed.
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media or online activity must be referred to the DSL or DDSL. They can then determine if the matter should be reported to the statutory authorities or other appropriate agencies e.g. [CEOP](#) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).
- Text and any other social media posts should reflect our Biblical principles and desire to protect and care for our community.
- Pastors, Elders, staff and church members in regulated roles should make certain their privacy settings ensure the highest levels of security, in order to restrict children and young people being able to see any more than that which is relevant to communication within the group.

5. Online photos and videos

- Permission will be sought before any images are taken or displayed.
- The image will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought. If permission has not been given for storage of the image it must be deleted after use.
- If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Children and young people's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children and young people are involved, permission should be sought.

6. Acceptable Use policy

6.1 Pastors, Elders, staff and church members agree not to:

- Search for or download pornographic, racist or hate motivated content.
- Illegally copy or play copyrighted content where permission has not been given.
- Send, request or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Harass, insult or bully others online.
- Access the internet using another person's login details unless with prior agreement.

6.2 Where internet access is provided by Christ Church Dunstable

- We will exercise our right to monitor usage which includes access to websites, interception and deletion of inappropriate or criminal material or unlawfully copied text, video, images or sound.

7 Useful contacts:

7.1 [CEOP](https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/)

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