

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

POLICY STATEMENT

Our vision at St Peter's Baptist Church (SPBC) is that we become a movement of disciple-making disciples and grow to be a vibrant church of many more followers.

Involvement in the lives of children and young people will be central in achieving this vision and to do so, SPBC:

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

SPBC 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 2010).

As members of SPBC, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people associated with this 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

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and the duty of all to respond to concerns about their well-being and to report any child 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 and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding children.

Respecting children and young people

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

Safe working practices

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

A safe community

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

Responsible people

The church has appointed Rose Parker as Safeguarding Trustee to;

- oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures of the church's charity trustees

The church has appointed Peter and Carolyn Aldis as their Designated Persons for Safeguarding to:

- advise the church on any matters relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
- take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected

Policy and procedures

A copy of this policy statement is available from the Church Administrator.

Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be required to follow them.

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 or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed at least annually by the Designated Person for Safeguarding

There will be an annual report on Safeguarding by the Designated Person at the Annual Church meeting which will emphasise key points of this policy.

PROCEDURES

Our vision as a church is that we become a movement of disciple-making disciples and grow to be a vibrant church of many more followers. Involvement in the lives of children and young people will be central in achieving this vision and St Peter's Baptist Church (SPBC) welcomes the many opportunities in the life of the church this provides.

The biblical basis on which we do this is most clearly demonstrated in the manner that Jesus welcomed children and told us to do the same. We do however work in a fallen world and there are many reasons from legal obligations to good practice that require clear procedures within which SPBC will carry out its activities with children and young people and welcome them into the life of our community.

These procedures set out how SPBC will implement our Safeguarding children and young people policy statement in the 5 key areas.

1. Prevention and reporting of abuse

Abuse or neglect of children and young people can be physical, sexual or emotional. The signs and symptoms displayed by the child or young person accordingly can vary from an unexplained injury through to a change in a pattern of behaviour.

We recognise the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent such abuse of children and young people and their corresponding duty to be alert to and respond to concerns about their well-being and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. These duties are particularly relevant for those the church entrusts with leadership responsibilities in the various groups and activities of SPBC working with children and young people.

Procedure for reporting abuse

Once a concern is raised, a 3 stage process will be followed.

1. Record and Report (*Child or Youth Worker*)

- If the behaviour of a child or young person gives any cause for concern
- If an allegation is made in any context about a child or young person being harmed
- If the behaviour of any adult towards a child or young person causes you concern

The duty of the person raising or receiving concern is to record them and then report them to the Designated Person within 24 hours. The group leader should also be informed of the referral, provided they are not implicated in any way.

Where the report is made by a child or young person then it is important to listen carefully, asking open questions where clarification is needed, taking what they are saying seriously and reassuring them.

As soon as possible afterwards, they should make a written record of what was said by all parties to the conversation. This record, together with all known details of the child or young person and any other relevant information should be passed to the Designated Person.

The record will be kept secure and confidential and made available only to statutory agencies and the church minister where this is consistent with the child's welfare and possible pastoral responsibilities of others involved.

Where the child or young person is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, the Police or Children's services should be informed immediately.

2. Review and refer (*Designated Person*)

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to review the concern and to refer it on in the most appropriate way. The intention should be to assess in a considered way the risk to the child or young person and to initiate action best judged to protect them from harm.

- Advice may be sought from others:
 - within the church, including the Minister,
 - From the Regional Minister
 - From Children's services or the Police
- Undue delay should not be caused by this process.

Having reviewed the reported concern, the Designated Person must decide to whom to refer the report. Options include:

- Refer the matter back to the worker making the initial report where there is little evidence of harm, asking for continued monitoring
- Make a broader referral to others who work with the child asking for continued observation
- Speak directly to the adult about whom the concern was raised, but **ONLY** where the allegation does not suggest sexual abuse or serious physical abuse. These allegations will always be referred to the Police or Children's Services.
- Make a formal report to the Police or Children's Services. Where the child or young person is considered to be in imminent danger of harm and they have not yet been involved, the Police or Children's services should be informed immediately.

The Designated Person should keep records of all actions during the review and referral process and retain these securely.

3. Report and support (*shared responsibilities*)

This stage of the process involves shared responsibilities. Where a formal referral is made to Police or Children's Services, the responsibilities are as follows:

The Designated Person should:

- Report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- Report the referral to the Minister
- Report the referral to the Regional Minister

The Safeguarding Trustee

- Report the referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Children's Services when the allegation is against someone working with children or young people
- Where a worker has been removed from their post or would have been had they not resigned, because of the risk of harm they pose to children or young people, they have a duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.
- Where a worker has been accused of causing harm to children or young people, this constitutes a serious incident that should be included in the annual report to the Charity Commission.
- Keep a record of all safeguarding incidents and consider them in the annual review of the policy.

Support may need to be given to a variety of people involved in any reported incidents including the child, their family, church workers and volunteers and the minister and trustees.

Responding to concerns about the behaviour of a church worker.

The same process should be followed where the concern relates to a paid employee or volunteer in the church. Clearly every minor incident does not need to be referred to the Designated Person. The intention should be to encourage a positive culture in teams where child welfare is given the highest priority and inappropriate behaviour can be challenged at debrief sessions after meetings. Team leaders may need to keep a record of incidents whereby a pattern of behaviour over time can become clearer. In such cases, they will take steps to ensure the worker is more closely supervised.

Incidents and behaviour should be reported on to the Designated Person where:

- Workers feel uncomfortable about the behaviour of a fellow worker
- A worker causes harm or a risk of harm to a child or young person
- After repeated breaches of a code of conduct, whether or not these are wilful.

Where a referral is made of a paid employee or volunteer to the police or Children's Services, the Safeguarding Trustee will ensure the church leaders review the position of that person working with children as a priority. Normally this will involve the worker withdrawing from their responsibilities with children whilst the investigation takes place.

Where the concern involves the Designated Person or members of their family, the report should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee.

Where the concern is in relation to a Minister, the Regional Minister should be immediately informed in addition to the above procedures.

The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

2. Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

It is recognised that identifying volunteers to work with children and young people in SPBC may be done in a variety of ways, from an open request to a direct approach to an individual. The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary.

This care will include the following elements:

- A role description
- An application form, including a declaration that there is no reason why they should not work with children and young people
- An undertaking that they will work within agreed Safeguarding policy and procedure
- A face to face interview
- Take up of references
- Where permissible, a check of criminal record
- An agreed probationary period
- An induction programme
- Training including Safeguarding

Responsibilities are defined in the following process map for Team Leaders (TL) and Designated Person (DP)

1 *TL will draw up the role description*

- 2 *TL in conjunction with their relevant Cluster will be responsible for finding volunteers*
- 3 *TL will advise DP of volunteer*
- 4 *DP will supply volunteer with STG application pack and handle applications*
- 5 *DP will take up references*
- 6 *DP will obtain DBS disclosure where permissible*
- 7 *TL will conduct the interview together with another person after return of references*
- 8 *TL will make decision on appointment, informing Cluster and DP*
- 9 *DP will inform Team Leader when DBS received and volunteer can commence work*
- 10 *TL will be responsible for induction and training*
- 11 *TL will review volunteer after probationary period*
- 12 *DP will arrange Safeguarding Training*

Additional notes of clarification:

- a leader should not make decisions relating to a close family member
- SPBC recognise the benefits of giving young people under 18 experience in leadership. They will not however be included as a leader in considering safe ratios and relevant permissions will need to be obtained from their parents or carers just as for any other participant. DBS disclosures will not be sought for them.
- A more rigorous application process will be followed when considering the appointment of paid workers. The Trustees of SPBC will administer this.
- Procedures for vetting SPBC ministers are administered by the Heart of England Baptist Association.

Training

All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children. To help equip its staff, employed or voluntary, who work with children and young people, SPBC will ensure that they all receive Safeguarding training. It will normally provide training opportunities arranged by the Designated Person twice a year.

Timescales:

- Volunteers – within a year of appointment
- Team Leaders – before appointment
- Employed staff – within 6 months of appointment
- Refresher training – every 3 years

3. Respecting children and young people

The Trustees will adopt a Code of Behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that they are shown the respect that is due to them.

Abuse of trust

A leader in a group is always in a relationship of trust. SPBC recognises the confidence that parents and carers demonstrate in us when they allow their children and young people to attend our activities and we will do all in our power to ensure we do not abuse that trust. We recognise that a leader is not in an equal partnership with the child or young person and it is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that they do not misuse their position.

SPBC will not condone a romantic or sexual relationship between a leader and child or young person in their care, even where it is permitted by law or within a peer group. Any such issues will be dealt with in accordance with Safeguarding procedures.

Wherever possible, SPBC will not appoint young leaders in a peer group immediately below their own.

4. Safe working practices

SPBC is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being. To manage risk we have procedures in place in the following areas:

Parental consent

All children and young people taking part in activities with SPBC will be registered and details obtained of parents / carers, contact details and relevant medical and other issues to enable us to care for them and deal with emergencies.

Explicit consent will be obtained in the following areas:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Travel arrangements when transport is organised
- Taking the child or young person off church premises
- Overnight events
- Use of a child's image in church publicity material or on the website
- Electronic communication directly with the child or young person will be in accordance with the Code of Practice
- For children under 7, consent as to who may collect the child from the group.

Parents and carers will be given the following information:

- Name and contact details of the group or event leader
- Outline details of the group
- Informed that SPBC has a Safeguarding policy and that they can bring concerns relating to the welfare of their child to the attention of the Team leader
- Contact details for Designated Person

The group or event leader is responsible for obtaining parental consent forms and for keeping them securely.

Children, young people and SPBC Health and Safety Policy

Every member of SPBC who works with children and young people has a shared responsibility to ensure their safety in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.

Any incidents should be reported in accordance with that policy. Any accidents should be recorded on the Accident Book.

Risk assessments

Every team or event leader is responsible for conducting or ensuring a Risk Assessment is carried out. This may partially incorporate generic Risk Assessments of the building or of the group or event activity.

Activities that are out of the ordinary will require specific Risk Assessments. An activity away from the usual venue will require a specific Risk Assessment.

The Risk Assessment should:

- Identify the hazards

- Consider who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record the findings and implement them

Risk Assessments should be reviewed each term. Team leaders should consult SPBC Health and Safety Officer for assistance if they do not feel competent to conduct Risk Assessments. They will be stored in the Church centre office.

Risk assessment – ratios leaders to children and young people

Team or event leaders will carefully consider each activity and group to determine safe ratios of leaders to children and young people. This will include specific consideration of issues including;

- Any special needs of children or young people that will mean extra support is needed
- Behavioural issues
- Venue, in particular activities away from the church building
- Emergency situations such as dealing with an accident or a team member being unavailable at short notice
- Gender issues

The minimum recommended ratios of adults to children for SPBC are:

Age range	Indoor activities	Outdoor activities
0-2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4-7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8-12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably male and female) with extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably male and female) with extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably male and female) with extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably male and female) with extra adult for every 10 additional children

Dealing with situations where these ratios are not met

One-off situations

The remaining leaders will determine if it is safe to continue. Considerations will include:

- Whether risk can be reduced by changing activities or ways of working
- Unacceptable risk will automatically lead to cancellation

An incident report should be submitted to the Designated Person.

On-going situations

Where there are insufficient team members in a particular group to maintain recommended ratios, careful consideration will be given to ways of managing that risk. This could include:

- Can the programme be adapted to reduce risk?
- Could the time be altered to provide emergency cover from another group?
- Can children or young people numbers be capped to keep ratios acceptable?

Any such decision to run a group below recommended ratios over time will be made by SPBC Trustees, who will minute the reasoning and justification for the decision.

Transport arrangements

- Written permission will be obtained from the parent or carer of the child or young person.
- The driver will comply with the Code of behaviour
- Suitable insurance will be in place covering voluntary work or business use for a paid employee.
- Legal requirements of seat belts, child seats and restraints will be complied with
- Only fully registered volunteers or employees will be used to drive.
- Where a leader of a group provides transport to an activity, for the sake of clarity this will be considered as part of their responsibility and they will comply with *these procedures*.

Outings and overnight events

Risk assessments will be completed to cover all aspects of the event including:

- Ratios of leaders to children and young people
- Travel arrangements
- Venue
- Accommodation
- Activities.
- Emergency scenarios including fire precautions and evacuation

Clear responsibility will be allocated to leaders for sub-groups within the party of the children and young people.

Emergency contact details for a doctor, hospital A&E, police etc will be known and readily available.

At least one worker will be a qualified First Aider.

The person responsible for food will hold a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Insurance will be in place.

Specific parental consent will be obtained for any overnight event:

- Parent / carers should supply contact phone numbers and be provided with an emergency number, together with the venue address
- Any health or dietary issues should be detailed on the form. Any medication to be taken should be detailed and agreed procedures for their safekeeping and administration
- Consideration should be made of a meeting prior to the event with parents

Sleeping arrangements

- Males and females will sleep separately
- A mixed group of male and female children or young people must have mixed sex leaders accompanying them
- Sleeping arrangements for the adults will be subject to detailed consideration but will in any event not result in a single adult sharing a room with children or young people

Welcoming children into an all-age community

There are times that our work with children and young people overlaps with other activities of the church where a full age range of people are involved. Indeed it is our desire that this should happen and at times such as the beginning and end of Sunday worship it is a deliberate intention.

SPBC will do its best to make clear when it is taking responsibility for the children or young people. At times, however, responsibility for children and young people will not be clearly defined. At times they are clearly under parental responsibility, but a parent or carer may not be present. It is in part for this reason that SPBC encourages all its members to recognise the importance of Safeguarding and their regard for wider welfare issues of children and young people. Health and Safety issues in any event cannot be devolved whilst on church premises.

SPBC cannot take responsibility for unaccompanied children under 8 at church services without an agreement between their parent /carer and the church as to the nature and provision of its care.

Photography

- Signed consent should be obtained from parents or carers for photographs taken at church activities. Where possible it should clarify the intended use of the photos.
- Consent from the children should also be sought
- Displayed or circulated photos should not identify the child by name or enable their identity to be inferred.

Other users of SPBC

Any external organisation or business using SPBC and working with children or young people must provide a copy of their Safeguarding policy as part of their hiring agreement

5. A safe community

SPBC is committed to the prevention of bullying of children and young people.

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It can take a wide variety of forms and is never acceptable. SPBC recognise that it can take place within groups in the church and will seek to stop it wherever it can.

To help achieve this:

- Relevant groups will discuss bullying with the participating children and young people to agree a code of behaviour indicating it is unacceptable.
- Children and young people will know how to report incidents
- All allegations will be treated seriously and investigated with a view to ending it as quickly as possible
- Parents of parties involved will be informed
- Attempts will be made to change the bully's behaviour
- All allegations and incidents will be recorded together with action taken.

SPBC is a community that welcomes everyone

We believe that we have all failed in the eyes of God and all are in need of His forgiveness. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

This welcome to the sinner is set alongside the gospel imperative of our paramount duty to protect children and young people. When SPBC becomes aware of a person with a conviction for sexual abuse of children or allegations of such behaviour attending the church, it will take steps to manage that person's behaviour within the church community.

This management will always include involvement by the Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister. They will act in line with the best advice available from statutory bodies and the Regional Minister to manage the individual.

The protection of children and young people will be of the utmost importance in this process to ensure they are kept safe from harm.

Code of Conduct **for Youth and Children's Team Members**

As leaders of youth and children's work we are role models. The young people watch what we do and say very carefully and so it is especially important that we set a good example at all times.

The Bible says in 1 Timothy:

'Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect'.

1. As a member of a team you should be committed to the following:

- a. To arrive at the group or event at the time given by the leader.
- b. To pray before and after the event.
- c. To stay after the group or event has finished to share success and discuss any issues which have arisen at the event or group and to tidy up as a team.
- d. To attend the training organised by your team in order to develop your personal practice so you can improve your service to the children or young people.
- e. To adhere to all the policies and practices of St Peter's Baptist Church relevant to youth and children's work, in particular the Safeguarding Policy

2. Communicating with Children and Young People

- a. Make it a priority to interact with the young people, building relationships with them and being interested in what they have to say.
- b. Be aware that as a leader your words have a powerful impact on members of your group. Say positive things that affirm and build up the young people.
- c. Always speak with friendliness and respect to everyone.
- d. Listen to the young people and try to give a clear answer to their questions.

- e. Speak about your Christian faith honestly, openly and naturally when opportunities arise.
- f. Never make jokes at the expense of the young people or make fun of their appearance. Always challenge young people who are speaking in an unacceptable way to others.
- g. Don't shout at anyone, you can use a firm voice without shouting.
- h. Bad language and coarse joking are completely unacceptable.
- i. Avoid using mobile phones for personal use within the group as it gives the impression that you are bored or disinterested in the group.
- j. When having a conversation with another team member, make sure you don't mind young people hearing or being involved in the conversation. If you are not happy with this then don't have that particular conversation during the activity.

3. Communications between youth workers and young people using internet, email, mobile phone and social networking

NOTE: Children under 11 years of age should not be contacted directly. All communications must be with their parent/legal guardian.

- a. Many young people use the above methods of communicating all the time. When used effectively and safely they can be extremely effective tools. The aim is to promote 'visible' communication. Youth Leaders need to keep the same boundaries, and follow the same safeguarding practice, as in the physical world. Safeguarding promotes that one to one conversations with young people happen in full sight of others.
- b. One to one communication using internet, email, mobile phone and social networking should be minimal and only be used for imparting factual information, not for discussing problems or issues with young people since there is a serious risk of being misunderstood. Young people should not be contacted between 10pm and 7am.
- c. If a young person contacts you directly with an issue via internet, email, mobile phone or social networking, once you are certain they are at no risk of harm, arrange to meet them in a public place in full sight of others to discuss the issue. A Church Leader must be informed in this instance, usually the Minister for Youth or the Minister for Children.
- d. If you think that the young person is at risk of harm then you must follow the procedure for reporting abuse (Section 1).

- e. Youth Workers should 'save' significant conversations, keeping a log, stating with whom and when they communicated. Significant communications must be shared with a Church Leader (normally the Minister for Youth).

4. Social Media Profile

If you choose to have a presence on Social Media then always remember that others are looking up to you and will often follow you for inspiration, guidance and hope. Social Media is interactive, conversational and open-ended. Moreover, it happens in public, not private, space. As Gospel people our conversation should be 'seasoned with salt' (Colossians 4:6), credible, fair, honest, and respectful at all times. Remember that you are an Ambassador for Christ.

5. Disagreements among team members

- a. If you have an issue with another team member please don't discuss this during the event or group. Speak to them personally when the children or young people are not present. Raise the issue in the debrief if it is relevant to the group. If necessary speak to the leader about the matter privately.

6. Smoking and Alcohol

- a. Do not smoke when in the presence of the young people.
- b. Do not consume alcohol prior to or during an event or group and avoid joking about alcohol misuse or drunkenness.

7. Suspected Abuse of Children or Young People

- a. It is vital that you are familiar with the Safeguarding Policy which sets out the procedures to be followed if abuse is reported or suspected.

8. Guidance on being alone with children and young people

- a. Ensure that you are never in a room on your own with a child or young person.
- b. If you need to talk to a child or young person on their own, either do it in a quiet corner of the room in which there are other leaders or, if necessary, tell another leader and go into another room where you are still visible (eg in you are in the Lower Hall, go into the Youth Room and make sure the blinds are open).
- c. Ensure that the correct ratio of leaders to children and young people is maintained throughout the group or event, from the first child arriving to the last leaving.
- d. Regular one-to-one working (e.g. mentoring) must be specifically approved by the Church and comply with agreed procedures.

9. Transportation of children and young people

- a. Any transport arrangements to, from or during sessions should be carefully considered. Ideally two adults should be present in a vehicle. Where a child is alone, they should always sit in the rear. Parents and the group leader should be aware of the arrangements.
- b. Where using a minibus, ensure there are enough adults for the ratios applicable to the age group.
- c. Correct licence and insurance must be held by the drivers of any vehicle used for the transportation of children and young people.
- d. Each child and young person must have his or her own seat with a seatbelt. If the vehicle does not have seatbelts, then it should not be used.

10. Physical contact with children and young people

- a. Great care must be taken to ensure physical contact is appropriate.
- b. When physical contact is made with children or young people, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender and background.
- c. Physical contact should never be secretive or for the gratification of the adult and should be avoided in one-to-one situations.

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