



Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This policy first adopted / last reviewed: April 2026

This policy should be reviewed annually. The next review is due: April 2027

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Section 1:

Church details

Name of Organisation: Fressingfield Baptist Church

Address: School Lane, Fressingfield, Eye, Suffolk IP21 5RU

Tel No: 07926 867042

General Email address: church.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

Senior Leader Name: Stuart Balmer

Senior Leader Contact Telephone / Email: stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com / 07719 675457

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Admin) Name: [Stuart is covering]

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Admin) Contact Telephone / Email: stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

Safeguarding Officer (to report an issue): Tracey Debenham

Safeguarding Officer Contact Telephone / Email: safe.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

Charity Number: 1166572

Regulators: Charity Commission

Context

Fressingfield Baptist Church is an Independent Baptist church and affiliated to FIEC (The Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches)

Fressingfield Baptist Church (FBC) is an independent charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

The church has a formal membership and is led by Pastor Stuart Balmer with deacons: Martin Aylett, Adrian Marfleet, Will Horrex, Graham Browne, Emiel Grobler.

FBC is affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC). FIEC is a membership organisation and does not exercise any authority over the church.

At FBC we offer a number of activities at our premises for children and young people.

- On Sunday morning primary-aged children group
- A crèche is available during Church services for children aged 0-6 years
- A term-time weekly youth group for 11 – 16 year olds
- Weeknight clubs for primary school age children during school terms
- A parent and baby group meet each week
- A young people bible study group for 13 -18 yr olds that alternate between a week day evening and a Sunday afternoon.
- A Sunday lunch for 11-18 yr olds that meet once a month in church members homes .
- A young people band for 11-18 yr olds that get together to practice when possible.
- We have a church weekend away for all ages, where the parents are responsible for their children , although we do run some sessions during the weekend for 3-11 yr olds.
- We occasionally take the children on trips out. Eg bowling, walking around the village. We always ensure parental consent for each child we take out.
- Once a year we run a non-residential holiday club

Section 2: Governance and Leadership

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in

accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

All activities are open to both children of church members and children of those with little or no connection with the church.

- We will treat all who engage with the church through its ministries with courtesy and respect and will seek to uphold their inherent dignity and worth.
- We will seek to support and care well for anyone who discloses to us that they have been a victim of abuse or neglect and report this to statutory services in line with local procedures where required.
- We will seek to listen well to any concerns, complaints, or other expressions of dissatisfaction and to respond in a proportionate, impartial, transparent, and accountable manner.
- We will carefully examine any allegations made or concerns raised about any member or leader and respond appropriately.
- We will ensure that our staff and volunteers are competent to fulfil their roles and the legal duties associated with safeguarding.

Governance

The trustees will include a statement on safeguarding in their annual return as required by the Charity Commission. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be trained in the role and will update their safeguarding training every two years in line with best practice standards and Local Authority requirements. The trustees will ensure that those who act on behalf of the church are competent and appropriately trained.

Any allegations that may require a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission will be passed to the trustees as a matter of urgency and certainly within 48 hours. The Trustees will file the Serious Incident Report with the Charity Commission in accordance with their legal responsibilities. If the Trustees require advice or support in this duty, they will seek such from suitably qualified and experienced sources.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (IICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).

The board of trustees have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation, including referring to the relevant charity regulator.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- we are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people
- and there is open communication

Section 3

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults with care and support needs may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as someone under 18 years old,

An adult at risk of abuse is defined in this policy as an adult who has care and support needs, however, in addition, they are at risk of abuse, and because of their support need, are unable to protect themselves. Since these adults are unable to protect themselves, we have a legal duty to protect them.

To safeguard those in our organisation we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

This policy is in line with the following legislation.

Legislation

The legal framework for this policy is:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Children Act 1989
- Human Rights Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Child Protection Act 1999
- The Children Act 2004
- The Childcare Act 2006

- The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- The Common Assessment Framework 2005
- Children’s Families Act 2014
- SEND – HM Government 2014
- Information Sharing HM Government 2015
- Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Keeping Children Safe (In Education) 2016

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England and Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all paid employees will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A self-declaration form and the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS (England and Wales), has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme and induction is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation’s safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every **two** years.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead undertaking advance safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the governance board/board of trustees which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of potential harm or abuse and false or unfounded accusations.

All confidential documents must be stored in secure, locked storage. Only the Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead have access to these confidential safeguarding documents.

For some activities you will need specific forms, e.g. consent forms, risk assessments etc.

Section 4

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a worker or volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:
- The person in receipt of disclosures, allegation or concern of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Tracey Debenham, Safeguarding Officer

Tel: 07810 866194

Email: safe.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the disclosure, allegation or concern, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or, if the concerns in any way involve the Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to:

Name: (Vacancy - Designated Safeguarding Lead - currently temporarily covered by **Stuart Balmer**)

Tel: 07926 867042

Email: stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

If the concerns implicate both the Safeguarding Officer and the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Safeguarding Trustee:

Name: Martin Aylett

Tel: 07766 571606

Email: martin.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required: Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the **Cause for Concern** form and share this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible. Please see a copy of the cause for concern form in appendix 4.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer may first ring the **Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice**. Based on the concern, they may then then contact the relevant statutory services.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as:

- Chair of Trustees or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity regulator (Charity Commission for England and Wales) to report a serious incident.
- Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Concerns must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should not delay referral to the statutory services, the police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Officer is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

FBC Key Safeguarding Contacts

To report a safeguarding concern, your first contact should be:

Tracey Debenham – Safeguarding Officer

Tracey can be contacted on 07810 866194 or by email at safe.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com.

The Church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (oversight and administration) is: (vacancy – currently covered by Stuart Balmer)

Stuart can be contacted on 07719 675457 or email at stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com.

If you are unable to contact either Tracey or Stuart, please contact one of the below:

Suffolk Safeguarding Contacts - children and vulnerable adults

1. Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Referrals about Children at risk

If you are concerned about an immediate risk to the safety of a child please call **Customer First** on **0808 800 4005**.

In an emergency, call the Police on **999**

Reporting a child at risk to Suffolk MASH:

If you would like to discuss whether or not a referral is required, please call the Professional Consultation Line on **03456 061 499** to speak with a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) social worker.

To report a safeguarding concern about a child, you can fill in a referral form here:

<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marf#h1>

2. Suffolk Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) can be contacted here:

Telephone: **0300 123 2044** or email at LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

3. Children's Social Care can be found at Customer First:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/advice.page?id=NYFzl7NuJU>

Telephone: **0808 800 4005** (free from landlines and most mobiles)

Opening hours are Monday to Thursday 8am to 5:20pm, Fridays 8am to 4:20pm (excluding bank holidays)

Outside these hours this number will divert to the Emergency Duty Service who can deal with any matters that cannot wait until the next working day.

Referrals about Vulnerable Adults

The referral form can be found *here*: <https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/adultsa#h1>

Norfolk Safeguarding Contacts

If someone is in immediate danger call **999**.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, call **0344 800 8020**.

If you a member of the public and are concerned about a child call **0344 800 8020**

If you are a working with a child or young person in a formal or voluntary setting and not a family member or member of the public, you can contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service on their direct line: **0344 800 8021**.

Church Safeguarding Advisors

The Church's Safeguarding Advisors are Thirty-One Eight - thirtyoneeight.org. They can be contacted here:

Telephone helpline: 0303 003 1111

Email: helpline@thirtyoneeight.org

Handling safeguarding concerns

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse:

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Officer/ Safeguarding Lead Admin will:

- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.
- Contact MASH (Suffolk) or Children's Social Care (England) or Thirtyone:eight for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).
- For lower-level concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Care direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).

Allegations of sexual abuse:

In the event of allegations or concerns of sexual abuse, Safeguarding Officer/ Safeguarding Lead Admin will:

- Contact MASH (Suffolk) or the Children’s Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) for children and families and police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) on 101.
- Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Children’s Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland)/police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about an adult at risk:

Concerns or allegations of abuse or harm including physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Officer/ Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services on 999, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact Suffolk MASH or the Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions required. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

Spiritual abuse concerns:

The Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Lead Admin will:

- Identify support services for the Survivor i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people:

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead, will:

- Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO(England and Wales) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS (England and Wales) for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Local Authority Designated Officer (England and Wales if they are involved).
- Share information about the concern with the police.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:

The safeguarding Officer / Safeguarding Lead Admin will:

- Liaise with Suffolk MASH or Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service DBS (England and Wales) following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the police.

The legislation across all four UK nations (The Care Act 2014, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents 2015 (Northern Ireland) and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014) places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Care to decide not the organisation.

Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult:

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above).

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the Police (England and Wales), Police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). If the adult does not wish to report this to the police, then the Safeguarding Lead can pass on the information relating to the alleged Perpetrator, however, must not share details of the Survivor.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO(England and Wales), Children's Social Care (Scotland) or the Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role within your organisation, contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Handling of Complaints, Grievances or Any Other Expression of Dissatisfaction

Any concern, complaint or other expression of dissatisfaction will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The person to whom these should be reported is Stuart Balmer (covering vacancy of DSL)

Stuart can be contacted by phone on 07719 675457 or email at stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com

The matter will be examined impartially and proportionately, and once conclusions have been reached, the church will respond to the complainant.

If advice or support is required, this can be sought from Thirty-One Eight.

Managing Ex-Offenders, Those Who Are on a Barred List, or Others Who Pose a Risk to Vulnerable People

A formal risk assessment will be made which will include input from statutory services. Advice and support will be sought from Thirty-One: Eight where required.

A formal contract will be drawn up that outlines the church's commitments to the individual and any control measures required.

The contract will be formally reviewed and monitored on a regular basis.

How to Report an Issue

PROCEDURES IF ABUSE IS DISCLOSED, DISCOVERED OR SUSPECTED

If a Team member has any cause for concern either from something the child has told them or from their own observation they should:

- **NOT start to investigate (unless advised to do so)**
- **Consult the Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible**
- **NOT discuss any suspicions with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will record the concern and take the appropriate action. If appropriate they will inform the Suffolk Child Safeguarding Board.

These can be contacted by online chat or by phone:

- **Suffolk MASH** (Suffolk Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) for consultation: **0345 606 1499**
- **Suffolk County Council Customer First** (to report a concern about a child): **0808 800 4005**

IF A CHILD OR ADULT WANTS TO TALK ABOUT A CONCERN OR AN ALLEGATION, A TEAM WORKER SHOULD:

- **NOT promise confidentiality**
- **If possible, make sure there is another adult present**
- **TAKE NOTES OF THE EXACT WORDS USED, IN PEN, ALSO DATE AND SIGN IT.**
- **NOT approach the parents**
- **Contact the Safeguarding Officer and hand over notes and other information, as soon as possible**
- **If immediate action seems necessary, team workers should NOT ACT ALONE**

We also follow HM Government -Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers -March 2015. This includes sharing information with other organisations that FBC has contact with.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST TEAM LEADERS AND WORKERS

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the actions of any one of our Children's/Young People's workers, or those working with adults with care and support needs which may include an allegation of abuse. This needs to be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- We would contact and follow the guidance of the Designated Officer (DO) and the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board / Adult Services when investigating any complaint that a member of Team leader or worker has abused a child / adult with care and support needs.
- We will follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of one of the FBC teams has abused a child / adult with care and support needs, as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.
- We will cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- We will decide, in conjunction with the Designated Officer, the police and the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board / Adult services, whether to suspend any Team leader or worker accused of abuse, from their involvement in our children's and youth work or working with adults with care and support needs for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of an admission of guilt but is in place to protect the team leader, worker, children and their families or adults and their families throughout the process.
- Failure to adhere to this policy could result in individuals being excluded from working with the children's and youth groups at FBC / working with adults with care and support needs. In extreme cases individuals may be asked to resign their Church membership and could face criminal prosecution.
- We will notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with the safeguarding coordinator and anyone else who needs to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board / Suffolk Safeguarding Adults Board.
- If the suspicions involve both the Safeguarding Officer and the Designated Safeguarding Lead then the report should be made in the first instance to Thirty-One Eight at:
 - Telephone helpline: **0303 003 1111**
 - Email: helpline@thirtyoneeight.org

Appendix 1: Key Contact Details

FBC Key Safeguarding Contacts

To report a safeguarding concern, your first contact should be:

Tracey Debenham – Safeguarding Officer

Tracey can be contacted on 07810 866194 or by email at safe.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com.

The Church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (oversight and administration) is: (vacancy – currently covered by Stuart Balmer)

Stuart can be contacted on 07719 675457 or email at stuart.fressingfieldbaptist@gmail.com.

If you are unable to contact either Tracey or Stuart, please contact one of the below:

Suffolk Safeguarding Contacts - children and vulnerable adults

1. Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Referrals about Children at risk

If you are concerned about an immediate risk to the safety of a child please call **Customer First** on **0808 800 4005**.

In an emergency, call the Police on **999**

Reporting a child at risk to Suffolk MASH:

If you would like to discuss whether or not a referral is required, please call the Professional Consultation Line on **03456 061 499** to speak with a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) social worker.

To report a safeguarding concern about a child, you can fill in a referral form here:

<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marf#h1>

2. Suffolk Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) can be contacted here:

Telephone: **0300 123 2044** or email at LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

3. Children's Social Care can be found at Customer First:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/advice.page?id=NYFIzI7NuJU>

Telephone: **0808 800 4005** (free from landlines and most mobiles)

Opening hours are Monday to Thursday 8am to 5:20pm, Fridays 8am to 4:20pm (excluding bank holidays)

Outside these hours this number will divert to the Emergency Duty Service who can deal with any matters that cannot wait until the next working day.

Referrals *about Vulnerable Adults*

The referral form can be found *here*: <https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/adultsa#h1>

Norfolk Safeguarding Contacts

If someone is in immediate danger call **999**.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, call **0344 800 8020**.

If you are a member of the public and are concerned about a child call **0344 800 8020**.

If you are working with a child or young person in a formal or voluntary setting and not a family member or member of the public, you can contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service on their direct line: **0344 800 8021**.

Church Safeguarding Advisors

The Church's Safeguarding Advisors are Thirty-One Eight - thirtyoneeight.org. They can be contacted here:

Telephone helpline: 0303 003 1111

Email: helpline@thirtyoneeight.org

Appendix 2: Definitions

Abuse

Abuse is a general term that is used to cover a wide range of harm caused to people. It always involves a violation of the person's rights. It can take various forms as described under "Categories of Abuse" later in this appendix.

Adult at risk of abuse (sometimes referred to as adult in need of protection)

These are adults who have care and support needs, however, in addition, they are at risk of abuse, and because of their support need, are unable to protect themselves.

Since these adults are unable to protect themselves, we have a legal duty to protect them.

The Care Act 2014 states that adult safeguarding duties apply to any person aged 18 years or older who:

- Has care and support needs.
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- Is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

Adult with care and support needs

An adult who requires help or support with basic and essential day-to-day tasks such as:

- Getting up, washing, or dressing
- Cooking meals
- Cleaning the house
- Shopping
- Managing their finances
- etc.

Adults with care and support needs have the right to choose whether they want support or not.

Allegation (against a member of staff or volunteer)

An allegation is a claim that a person who has a role that provides access to a vulnerable person has used their position to exploit, abuse, or otherwise harm the person they should have been caring for.

Categories of abuse

This term is used to refer to the legally recognised forms of abuse.

When considering the safeguarding of children, abuse is categorised under four headings:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

When considering the safeguarding of adults, abuse is categorised under ten headings:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological (or emotional)
- Neglect
- Domestic
- Institutional
- Financial or material
- Modern slavery
- Self-neglect
- Discriminatory

Child

A person (including an unborn child) who has not yet reached the age of 18 years.

Child protection

Child protection is defined as the protection of children who have suffered, or are at risk of suffering, “significant harm”. It is our legal duty to report all Child Protection concerns to either Children’s Social Care or the Police as per local procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Frequently abbreviated to DSL, this is the person appointed by the church to take responsibility for many aspects of safeguarding, including, receiving safeguarding concerns from staff or volunteers, and passing them on to the local authority where their threshold is met.

Early Help / Child in Need

Early Help and Child in Need are the areas of safeguarding where a child who has additional needs is receiving targeted support to meet their needs. Support is consent based and so the parents (or the young person if deemed competent to make decisions for themselves) can choose whether to access the support.

Neglect

Neglect is one of the categories of abuse that is characterised by the failure to provide the basic necessities for life where we have a responsibility to do so.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a broad range of activities that range from the general duty of care that we have for everyone who comes into contact with the charity, through early intervention and targeted support to protection from significant harm. It relates to both children and adults.

Spiritual Abuse

This term has become widely used, although remains ill-defined and is not a legally recognised category of abuse. We understand this to be a term referring to emotional, psychological or spiritual harm caused within the context of a religious community, often, but not always involving the misuse of power, authority, position or scripture to manipulate, control and abuse others. This policy does not refer specifically to the different categories of abuse since it covers all forms of abuse and harm.

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterized by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuse, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism (Oakley and Humphreys, 2019).

Universal safeguarding

This refers to the general duty of care that we must provide for everyone who comes into contact with the church.

Vulnerable adults

This term is only used as a generic term. It is no longer used as a technical descriptor for a specific group of people. A vulnerable adult is less able to protect themselves and meet their own needs than an adult who has no vulnerabilities.

Appendix 3

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE

Children or adults in our care at Church groups and activities need to be protected from all kinds of abuse. Teams need to be protected from false accusation. Team members need to guard against actions which might be misunderstood, and situations which could render them vulnerable.

- a) **AVOID PRIVATE ONE-TO-ONE SITUATIONS**
Do not be alone with a young person where the activity cannot be seen, even when giving hospitality at home. In a private counselling situation, leave a door open, or ensure that another adult is within calling distance and that the young person knows this; if this is not possible, inform another adult that the interview is taking place.
- b) **HEALTH & SAFETY**
The Church will provide a safe, well-lit location.
- c) **SUPERVISION OF MEETING AND COLLECTING TIMES**
Children attending an activity will be registered. Children awaiting collection after meetings must be supervised and not left at risk.
- d) **LANGUAGE**
Always speak and behave respectfully to children and other workers, using appropriate and polite language, avoiding shouting, sarcastic remarks or unkind nicknames.
- e) **PHYSICAL CONTACT**
Watch body language, avoiding any actions that could be misunderstood; only touch a child to comfort him/her if it is absolutely essential.
- f) **TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**
Always ensure that parents are informed of any transport arrangements. If it is necessary to give a lone child or young person a lift they should sit on the back seat and seatbelts must be worn.
- g) **TOILET NEEDS**
Take special care if younger children need help with the toilet; if the parent is present get them to deal with soiling accidents, if not ensure another adult is present when washing or changing.
- h) **SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**
If away from home, do not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people and respect shower and toilet privacy. Show sensitivity and care when dealing with issues such as homesickness.
- i) **SAFETY**
Teams are responsible at all times for the children's safety.
- j) **ACCIDENT**
In the event of an accident occurring first aid treatment should be given and recorded in the accident book and signed by the person administering first aid. The child's parent or carer should be informed of the details of the injury and treatment, and where possible a parent/carer of the child should countersign the book.

k) AWARENESS OF SEXUAL MATTERS

This means avoiding sexually suggestive comments and participation in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.

Social Media Networking

The internet, with its many opportunities to socialise, communicate and to learn, is very popular with young people. Teams need to be aware of the risks that new technologies bring and how to manage these to safeguard the welfare of the children. The guidelines outlined below refer to emails, Mobile Phones, Facebook or any other means that are currently used or become available in the future.

1. EMAIL, TEXT & ONLINE

- Children under 16 years old cannot legally give permission for their contact details to be shared. Written permission from a parent or carer is needed for emailing or texting anyone under 16 years old.
- Take care when sending messages to use appropriate language and avoid words and phrases that can be misunderstood. Only send images that are appropriate and if including hyperlinks check all the content.
- Always copy another adult into messages to children under 18 years old
- Team members must be aware that the sending of personal communications may be called into question and need to be justified.

2. SHARING PHOTOS AND/OR VIDEO

- Only one leader or team member can be authorised to take photos or videos at any activity, using only the FBC camera provided. Nobody else may take photos or videos (e.g. on phones or using other cameras).
- Written permission from parents/carers must be given before any pictures or videos of children in church activities are published in any format.
- Any pictures/videos shared on websites and general social media will be without names and other information that could reveal the children's identities.

3. MAKING, & COMMUNICATING WITH, FRIENDS ONLINE

- Teams will not establish or seek to establish social contact with children/young people or vulnerable adults for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the team member should exercise her/his critical judgement in making a response.
- There will be occasions when there are social contacts between children and team members where for example these are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.
- Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults that some social contacts, especially where these are not common knowledge can be misconstrued. This can also apply to social contacts made through outside interests or through the team member's own family.
- It is recognised that team members can support individuals who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the individual/s comes to depend upon the team member for support outside their approved role. This situation should be discussed with the Named Person/Church Leaders and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

On no account should Social Media Networking be used for personal gain or for promoting friendships that are inappropriate.

RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE

1. TYPES OF ABUSE

Teams need to be aware of the causes of abuse in children and vulnerable adults.

- a) PHYSICAL - Where bodies are hurt or injured.
- b) EMOTIONAL - Where threats or taunts cause fear and when responsibilities cause distress because they are beyond the person's abilities.
- c) SEXUAL - Where adults or other young people use children or adults with care and support needs to satisfy their own sexual desires.
- d) NEGLECT - Where adults fail to care for children, young people and adults with care and support needs, leading to impaired health and development.

2. SIGNS OF ABUSE

While the following MAY suggest abuse, there may also be quite sensible other explanations. DO NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.

- a) PHYSICAL - Unexplained or hidden injuries and lack of medical attention.
- b) EMOTIONAL - Reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, attention seeking, running away, stealing and lying.
- c) SEXUAL - Preoccupation with sexual matters evident in words, play, drawings, being sexually provocative with adults, disturbed sleep, nightmares, bedwetting, secretive relationships with adults or children, stomach pains with no apparent cause.
- d) NEGLECT - Appears ill-cared for and unhappy, is withdrawn and aggressive, has lingering injuries or health problems.
- e) ADULT ABUSE – all signs of abuse are defined in the Care Act 2014 Chapter 14.
- f) RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM – Isolating themselves from family and friends, talking as if from a scripted speech, increased secretiveness especially around internet use.