

## **Safeguarding Policy**

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## The Safeguarding Policy

### SECTION 1

#### **Details of the place of worship/organisation**

Name of Place of Worship/Organisation: **Hope Church Lancaster**

Address: **Queen Street, Lancaster, LA1 1RX**

Tel No: **01524 841941** Email address: **secretary@hopelancaster.co.uk**

Membership of Denomination/Organisation: **Free Methodist Church**

Charity Number: **518178**

Insurance Company: **Church insurance (including public liability) with Congregational & General Insurance.**

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*The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children / vulnerable adults:*

We are a family church in the heart of the city. Our mission is to be a growing church where lives are transformed by Jesus Christ. Amongst other activities we have groups for children and early teens as part of our service on Sunday mornings, as well as a youth group for secondary school aged children on Monday evenings. We also seek to reach out to those with hurts, habits and hang-ups through our Celebrate Recovery programme and to reach and serve those coming out of prison or rehab through our close partnership with the Adullam Programme.

#### **Our commitment**

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable 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 building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service known as THIRTYONE:EIGHT

**The Leadership undertakes to:**

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide ongoing safeguarding training for all its workers and volunteers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with THIRTYONE:EIGHT and any amendments subsequently published. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse**

#### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection 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 vulnerable adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations 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 which states:

*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 which states:

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

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

- Definitions of abuse – see appendix 3
- Signs and symptoms of abuse – see appendix 4
- How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse – see appendix 5

### **Safeguarding awareness**

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

### **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. Procedures should be followed as below.

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the Acting Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Tim Morris (Safeguarding Trustee), mobile number: 07796 866421, who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Acting Safeguarding Co-ordinator, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Acting Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to the Lay Delegate, Nanette Wilkinson, mobile number: 07874 623370 (hereafter the "Deputy"). In their absence, it should be made to the Lead Pastor or one of the Elders, tel no: 01524 841941. If the suspicions implicate both the Acting Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, as well as one of the Elders, then the report should be made in the first instance to THIRTYONE:EIGHT, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0303 003 11 11 or email [info@thirtyoneeight.com](mailto:info@thirtyoneeight.com). Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children’s Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirtyone:eight as above.

The local **Children’s Social Services** office telephone number (office hours) is 0300 123 6720. The out of hours emergency number is 0300 123 6722.

The local **Adult Social Services** office telephone number (office hours) is 0300 123 6721. The out of hours emergency number is 0300 123 6722

- If an allegation is made against the Pastor, the trustees should be informed. If an allegation is made against a trustee, the Pastor and remaining trustees should be informed.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in the nominated secure electronic storage.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from THIRTYONE:EIGHT.
- Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinators or trustees should then immediately inform the insurance company and Free Methodist Church National Leadership.
- 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 church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Deputy have not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinators 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 Safeguarding Co-ordinators/ deputy 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.

Where appropriate the safeguarding coordinator/deputy should work with the support of relevant ministry team members or leaders (e.g. pastor, pastoral care lead, children's ministry leader) to clarify details of the allegation or suspicion.

If there is any doubt over how to proceed, Thirtyone:eight should be contacted immediately on 0303 003 1111.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

#### **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 Co-ordinators/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (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.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage the parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant 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 Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

#### **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

**The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult needs protection:**

**SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE**

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy, and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a severe injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

**ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **SECTION 3**

### **Prevention - Safe recruitment**

The Leadership will ensure all workers and volunteers 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 and a self declaration form
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed (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 is provided for the successful applicant if required
- 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

Where extra helpers are required for occasional events, or someone has joined a team but is awaiting DBS clearance they may work with children or young adults but should never be left unsupervised.

### **Management of Workers and Volunteers – Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership, we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## **SECTION 4**

### **Pastoral Care**

#### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the church.

#### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

## **SECTION 5**

### **Practice Guidelines**

As a church working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers and volunteers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers and volunteers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these will be developed.

### **Working in Partnership**

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation working with children or vulnerable adults and using our premises on a regular basis will have their own policy that meets Thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Leadership Safeguarding Statement**

The Leadership Team at Hope Church Lancaster recognises the importance of its ministry/ work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

This church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

**We are committed to:**

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation regarding people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers and volunteers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Co-ordinators/s in their work and in any action, they may need to take to protect children/vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting, and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring, and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the place of worship/organisation affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by Thirtyone:eight.

**We recognise:**

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.

- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.**

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Co-ordinators for this church.

Tim Morris:                   Acting Safeguarding Coordinator & Safeguarding Trustee

Nanette Wilkinson:   Lay Delegate

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the church office, Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) or the Church Secretary.

## **APPENDIX 2: Definitions of Abuse**

### **Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)**

Child Abuse has serious physical and psychosocial consequences which adversely affect health. It refers to any act or failure to act that violates the rights of the child, and that endangers his or her optimum health, survival, and development. Awareness of cultural factors must remain high as they influence all aspects from the occurrence and definition through its treatment and successful prevention. Any intervention, to be successful whether for data gather, prevention or even increasing public awareness, must take into consideration the cultural environment in which it is to occur. Background or baseline conditions beyond the control of families or caretakers, such as poverty, inaccessible healthcare, inadequate nutrition, unavailability of education can be contributing factors to child abuse. Social upheaval and instability, conflict and war may also contribute to increases in child abuse and neglect.

### **General Definition**

Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of an interaction, which is within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. There may be a single or repeated incidents.

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development. These acts must be within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. Acts include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

### **Neglect and Negligent treatment**

Neglect is the failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and causes or has a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to: - The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity. - The exploitative use of child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices. - The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

### **Exploitation**

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour and child prostitution. These activities are to the detriment of the child's physical or mental health, education, or spiritual, moral, or social-emotional development

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)'.

## **Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)**

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal, or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.'

### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

### **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property, or possessions

### **Neglect or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when

values, beliefs, or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

### **Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g., hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

### **Self Neglect**

In our current economic climate and following Covid-19 pandemic this form of self-abuse is on the increase, with declines in mental health being seen within all social groups. Signs of this include; hoarding inside or outside a property, neglecting personal hygiene or medical needs, person looking unkempt or dirty and has poor personal hygiene. A person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food. A person is dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions. Dirt, urine or faecal smells in a person's environment. Home environment does not meet basic needs (for example not heating or lighting).

### **Modern slavery**

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

## **Appendix 2: Signs of Abuse**

### **Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

#### **Signs Suggesting Physical Abuse**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which cannot be attributed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Physical signs of neglect (see below)
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc that do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- Changes in routine

#### **Signs Suggesting Emotional Abuse**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

#### **Signs Suggesting Abuse by Neglect**

Obviously, a clear distinction needs to be made between children in need of protection due to poverty, conflict or crisis and specific acts of maltreatment towards a child or children.

- Under nourishment, failure to grow
- Constant hunger, stealing or gorging food
- Untreated illnesses
- Inadequate care

#### **Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse**

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults

- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- Bed wetting and soiling

## **Signs of Possible Abuse (vulnerable adults)**

### **Physical**

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or overuse of medication and/or medical problems unattended

### **Sexual**

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

### **Psychological**

- Alteration in psychological state e.g., withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

### **Financial or Material**

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

### **Neglect or Omission**

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services, or social care
- No callers or visitors

## **Discriminatory**

- Inappropriate remarks, comments, or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

## **Institutional**

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bedtimes, visitors, phone calls etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g., denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational, or recreational activity

## **Appendix 4: Effective Listening**

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

## **HELPFUL RESPONSES**

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you
- I might need to tell someone else who can help you

## **DON'T SAY**

- Why didn't you tell anyone?
- I cannot believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, do not tell anyone else
- I promise I will not tell anyone

## **Appendix 5: Code of Conduct for adults in positions of trust working or volunteering with children at Hope Church Lancaster**

*For the purposes of the Code, a 'child' is a person under the age of eighteen*

1. All adults should dress appropriately and modestly. All children and young people must be treated with respect and dignity. Ensure that your language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
2. All adults should keep information about children confidential and not discuss it outside of children and youth meetings - this includes mentioning them on social media.
3. No adult should invite children to their own house unless there is a family/friendship link that exists independently of church activities.
4. If an approved activity (e.g., Youth Alpha) takes place in a private home, written permission must be gained from the parent or carer, and only named and approved (and DBS checked) adults must be present.
5. The giving of gifts or rewards to children in Hope Kids must be done for a clearly defined reason (e.g., a birthday, attendance, or a reward for a specific task/behaviour). Personal gifts must not be given to individual children unless there is an existing friendship with the parents of that child and their permission is received before giving the gift.
6. Adults shall not receive or send personal texts or emails to children/young people in their care. They shall not make or accept 'Friend' requests on social media from those under 18 years of age for whom they are in a position of trust.
7. All adults should refrain from 'horseplay' or 'play fighting' with children/young people.
8. If a school age child is upset, it is acceptable to put your hand upon a place such as an arm, back or head. Please do not hug them or place them on your knee. If a child initiates a hug, it is acceptable to hug them from the side (not face to face) for a brief period only. If a child climbs onto your knee, allow them to stay for a brief period but do not put your arms around them, other than to keep their balance.  
We recognise that babies and toddlers need to be held and comforted in a more physical way. Please exercise wisdom and caution in this area.  
Never force a child to go somewhere with you by physical means. This includes dragging them by the hand, pushing or prodding.
9. There should be no physical contact whatsoever with a child in any state of undress unless prior written permission has been obtained from parents (e.g., nappy changing or help with toileting).

10. Always aim to work within sight of another adult. If being alone with a child is unavoidable, ensure that you leave a door open. If accompanying them to the toilet, this is not always appropriate since privacy must be maintained. In this case, always wait outside the cubicle unless necessary.
11. The use of physical restraint shall only be used in circumstances where the child is in immediate danger.
12. Do not take photographs or film footage of children unless parents have given written permission for a specific use. Photos or videos taken with permission should be uploaded to the designated secure electronic storage area and then deleted from personal devices.
13. Please do not offer lifts to children unless parents have given written permission.
14. Do not allow unknown adults access to children. A parent may accompany a child for settling purposes, but any visitors must be accompanied by a known person.
15. On any day trips/residential trips, adults and children/young people must never undress together or share sleeping accommodation.
16. Praying for children must be restricted to a group situation. Do not touch the child, raise your voice, or use language that might frighten them, such as talking about demons or evil spirits.
17. All volunteers who deal with children are encouraged to complete training on safeguarding children before commencing and complete a refresher session every two years.
18. All volunteers working with children should have an Enhanced DBS check. An exception may be made for new volunteers while their DBS check is being processed. But in this situation, the volunteer MUST always be accompanied by another leader and never take a leading role.
19. Hope Church will keep a register of members with current DBS status.

**Appendix 6: Code of Conduct for adults in positions of trust working or volunteering with vulnerable adults at Hope Church Lancaster.**

*A Vulnerable Adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is or in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness and/or who is or unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. – No Secrets 2000*

20. All volunteers should dress appropriately and modestly. Bearing in mind that some of the older population find body piercings and tattoos distasteful and the volunteer should bear this in mind if visiting a Senior Citizen. All vulnerable adults must be treated with respect and dignity. Ensure that your language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
21. All adults should keep information about the vulnerable adult confidential and not discuss it - this includes mentioning them on social media.
22. No adult should invite a vulnerable adult into their own home unless it is in the context of a group meeting such as a Life Group or if there is a friendship which exists outside the volunteer's role. This could lead to misunderstanding, especially for vulnerable adults with mental health conditions or learning difficulties, or those who do not have the capacity to make decisions, as this could lead to contravening the Mental Capacity Act.
23. The giving of gifts to any vulnerable adult must be done for a clearly defined reason (e.g., a birthday, Christmas, Easter).
24. Volunteers should use discretion and sound judgement when using social media and text messages.
25. Any physical contact should be appropriate, and permission obtained. Some people, especially those with mental health conditions or learning difficulties may not like their personal space being invaded. Discernment and discretion should be employed. Three feet is the usual space someone may need to feel comfortable with a relative stranger.
26. If a vulnerable adult is upset, it is acceptable to put your hand upon a place such as an arm, back or head. But bear in mind the previous point about personal space. If a person initiates a hug, it is acceptable to hug them from the side (not face to face) for a brief period only.
27. Never force a vulnerable adult to go somewhere with you by physical means. This includes dragging them by the hand, pushing or prodding. Always seek permission. If the person is unable to communicate verbally, ask them to nod or shake their head if able. Observe the person's body language for signs of resistance or agreement.

28. There should be no physical contact whatsoever with any vulnerable adult in any state of undress, unless there is an urgent care need e.g., toileting and permission must be sought as stated in point eight. A record should be kept of any physical interventions which may be needed, so that the Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Deputy are aware.
29. Wherever and whenever, aim to work within sight of another adult. Anyone working on a one-to-one basis with a vulnerable adult must have a regulated activity check carried out. If accompanying them to the toilet, privacy must be maintained. In this case, always wait outside the cubicle unless necessary.
30. The use of physical restraint shall only be used in circumstances where the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger. Any interventions must be recorded and the next of kin/person with power of attorney for health informed with the permission of the vulnerable adult, if the danger is ongoing.
31. Do not take photographs or film footage of any vulnerable adult unless permission has been granted by the person or if they lack capacity, then their next of kin or the person with Power of Attorney for health. Photos or taken with permission should be uploaded to the designated secure electronic storage area and then deleted from personal devices.
32. The volunteer should not witness or take part in the signing of any legal documents which involves the vulnerable adult or any of their family or carers.
33. Do not allow unknown adults access to the vulnerable adult. In the case of someone declaring they have the Power of Attorney for the person then they must produce written evidence issued by a solicitor or the Court of Protection.
34. On any day trips/residential trips, vulnerable adults must never undress in front of or share sleeping accommodation with other adults.
35. Praying for vulnerable adults is permissible but consideration should be made to the person's mental state and capacity for understanding what is happening. Do not raise your voice or use language that might frighten them, such as talking about demons or evil spirits. With permission, it is acceptable to gently place a hand on the persons arm or hold hands when praying.
36. Where possible, find out more about the person's life and background, using discretion and approaching gently and sensitively. This enables support to be more personal and effective.
37. Do not assume that people with mental health conditions or learning difficulties cannot make decisions.
38. Ask the vulnerable adult how they like to be addressed and respect their decision.

39. Any intervention with a vulnerable adult should not be rushed. The person's privacy and dignity should be always respected. Assure the person that these interventions are confidential unless there is a threat of immediate danger to anyone.
40. Any intervention with a vulnerable adult should be in a way they can understand. Consider any physical (sight or hearing impairment) or mental (dementia, brain injury) health conditions. At each stage of the intervention, whatever it is, ensure that the vulnerable adult understands what has been said and has given consent or agrees. If the vulnerable adult becomes agitated or upset, then the intervention must stop. The volunteer must bear in mind what the trigger was and not use in future meetings
41. If a declaration of abuse is made by the vulnerable adult, the volunteer must stop any intervention and listen carefully to what is being said, as a report will have to be written. The volunteer should not press the person for information. It should be forthcoming. The volunteer must realise that it takes a lot of courage to admit to being abused and tact and diplomacy should be used. The volunteer should not be judgemental and will inform the vulnerable adult that the matter will be acted on in confidence.
42. All volunteers should familiarise themselves with the Hope Church Lancaster Safeguarding Policy.
43. All volunteers who deal with vulnerable adults will ideally complete training on Safeguarding Adults before commencing and ideally complete a refresher session every two years.
44. All volunteers will have a current DBS check.

**Policy reviewed and updated by Tim Morris (Acting Safeguarding Coordinator) and Marie Gildea (Church Secretary) April 2026**