

How to 'Stay SAFE'!

- S** – Say where you're going and who's going with you
- A** – Avoid being on your own
- F** – Find out where you could get help if you needed it
- E** – Enjoy yourself by staying safe

Thaxted Baptist Church

Safeguarding Children And Young People

Policy & Procedures

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

All leaders and helpers should be aware of any health and safety issues which may affect their group, e.g.

- Access to the building should be safe and well lit.
- Adequate heating and lighting.
- Sufficient space and appropriate activities for all children.
- First Aid kit and phone available.
- Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc).
- Check equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- No smoking should be permitted.
- Fire drills should be carried out at least annually.
- Food should be prepared carefully and hygienically.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

A policy based upon the following guidelines should be agreed for each different section of youth work.

- ⇒ Children should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling.
- ⇒ Good discipline is built on respect between leaders and children.
- ⇒ Minor incidents/offences should be dealt with immediately to prevent escalation and exaggeration.
- ⇒ Good discipline practices:
 - Chastise the individual / group
 - Criticise the conduct not the person
 - Move the child to a calm place away from others
 - Change the group activity
 - Stay with them until they have cooled down or for a reasonable time.
- ⇒ If the above fails to improve discipline, refer the issue to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee.
- ⇒ Allegations and incidents of bullying should be reported to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Trustee. (Bullying: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.")

RATIOS

When working with young people the following recommended minimum ratios apply:

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (if possible male & female) with another adult for every 10 extra children)	2 adults for up to 15 children (if possible male & female) with another adult for every 8 extra children)
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (if possible male & female) with another adult for every 10 extra children)	2 adults for up to 20 children (if possible male & female) with another adult for every 10 extra children)

- Special circumstances like behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability etc. If in doubt increase the ratio.
- In calculating the ratios of workers to children young leaders who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the leaders/helpers.

RISK ASSESSMENT

General risk assessment should be carried out regularly (e.g. Annually) and specific risk assessment as necessary.

This document is a summary of the good practice guidelines contained within the Baptist Union publication *Safe to Grow*.

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Responsible people:

Safeguarding Trustee

The church has appointed: M.Wayne Evans (01371 831706)

to oversee and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees.

Designated persons for Safeguarding

The church has appointed: Debbie and Ellen Sandom (01371 831548)

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

Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children in Thaxted Baptist Church

- As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safe-keeping of all associated in the church, especially children and young people, and will pray for them regularly.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or volunteer.
- The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to providing supervision.
- The church is committed to following the Home Office Code of Practice *Safe from Harm* and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its publication *Safe to Grow* (revised edition).
- We are committed to the prevention of bullying of children and young people. We will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church is managed appropriately.
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them.

PROCEDURES: RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT & SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

All workers should be provided with suitable training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children.

GUIDELINES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHILDREN'S LEADERS AND HELPERS

The following selection procedures should be followed...

- A written role description for each post;
- Applicants must complete an application form and may be asked to provide references;
- All applicants should be interviewed. Successful applicants will be appointed for a trial period of 6 months and CRBs applied for.
- A copy of these procedures will be issued and signed for.

The Church will recognise the calling of all leaders and helpers who work with children but their spiritual welfare must also be sustained by attending worship services or study groups regularly.

All leaders and helpers should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG LEADERS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

- * Training and supervision will be given to ensure that young leaders develop proper skills, attitudes and experience.
- * The Safeguarding Policy & procedures applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person so, when counting ratios of staff to children, young leaders count as children, not leaders.
- * The permission of parents or carers is needed for young leaders just as much as any other person under 18 years of age
- * Young Leaders should take charge of a group immediately below their own age. An age gap of at least two years is advised.

GUIDELINES WITH COLLEAGUES

If you see a colleague acting in ways which might give the wrong impression, speak to them or to one of the Safeguarding Team. Leaders and helpers should be comfortable enough with each other to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

In some cases, in acting on behalf of the trustees, the Safeguarding Trustee may also need to report to the Charity Commission.

If an allegation is made against someone who works professionally with children the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO should be alerted that a person who works with children has...

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If a church worker is the subject of an allegation they should step down from children's work until the matter has been investigated.

If the process may cause a church worker to be removed from their post the Independent Safeguarding Authority must be told.

If a church worker has been accused of causing harm to children or young people, it should be reported to the Charity Commission in the annual return.

As a concern is investigated and addressed, the church has a duty to SUPPORT **all** those who have been affected.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the Police or Social Services.

PROCEDURES: PREVENTION OF ABUSE

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse - Actual or potential physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

Emotional Abuse - Persistent treatment which may affect a child's emotional or behavioural development. e.g. implying that he/she is worthless or inadequate, or imposing unsuitable responsibilities.

Sexual Abuse - Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual indecency, either through suggestive materials like pornography or encouragement to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect - Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

Potential signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect may include:-

- Unexplained or inconsistent injuries in unlikely places.
- An injury that has not been treated/received medical attention.
- Disclosure of behaviour harmful to a child.
- Excessive changes in behaviour or mood.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Signs of neglect (malnourished, constant illness, lack of care).

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. Be aware that some signs or symptoms may have a natural cause.

PROCEDURES: REPORTING OF ABUSE

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed? The priority is to safeguard the children within the church.

Do

Listen and clarify
Give support
Explain what happens next
Take action

Don't

Minimise what is said
Show shock, alarm or disapproval
Question or push for information
Offer false reassurance

STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The person who receives information or has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person has a duty to RECORD their concerns in writing and REPORT such concerns to the Designated Person within 24 hours. A written record should...

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event;
- be legible and state the facts (including age & name of child);
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure;
- include a description of bruises or injuries;
- include an exact record of what the child said using their words;
- include what was said by the person reported to;
- include any action taken as a result;
- be signed and dated;
- be kept secure and confidential and made available to the Designated Person, the church minister (if appropriate) and any representatives of professional agencies (Police, Social Services).

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the Police or Social Services.

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

On receiving a report, the duty of the Designated Person is to REVIEW the concern and REFER to the appropriate people. In REVIEWing a report the Safeguarding Team...

- should use their experience & expertise to assess risk to children;
- should take account of other reports about the same child, family or adult;
- may speak with others in the church who have relevant information and knowledge towards making a decision;
- such conversations should not cause undue delay;
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance or advice;

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be REFERred on to. They may...

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report asking for continued observation;
- refer to others who work with the child/children in question for continued observation;
- refer to the adult in person if the concern has been raised about an adult. If there is any question of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse, Police or Social Services may be consulted;
- make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department
- All original reports should be kept and a written record made of the actions taken.

STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

The duty to REPORT is shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Minister. Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services the Designated Person should...

- ⇒ report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee;
- ⇒ report the referral to the Minister;
- ⇒ report the referral to the Regional Minister.