

We Are Hope Church

Safeguarding Procedures and Child Protection Policy



Vinces Road

Diss

Norfolk

IP22 4HQ

Tel: 01379 644224 email: office@wearehopechurch.net

Registered charity number: 1132992

Company number: 07027443

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the
welfare of all children.**

Aim

The purpose of Hope Church's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child at our organisation is safe and protected from harm.

This means we will always work to:

- protect children from maltreatment
- prevent impairment of children's health or development
- ensure that children are experiencing circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at Hope Church.

Introduction

Hope Church fully recognises the contribution it can make to protecting children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

Our policy applies to all children, volunteers, visitors and staff.

A child is someone under the age of 18 years old.

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. 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.

The policy and practice guidelines are based on the **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) and prepared in consultation with Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) **Safer**

Programme

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Designated Child Protection Officer (s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

Hope Church will establish and maintain an ethos where our children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or volunteer if they are worried or concerned about something.

All staff and volunteers will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will do with whatever they have been told.

General Procedures

When new staff or volunteers join our children's team they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our safeguarding policy and told who our Designated Child Protection Officer is.

All staff and volunteers will be asked to read this policy yearly after it has been reviewed and updated if necessary. They will sign to say they have read and understood the policy.

Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Services.

Parents will sign consent forms for their child's involvement in activities which includes any vital health or otherwise notable information. It may also request permission for photographs / videos to be taken for promotional purposes only.

Training

Safeguarding awareness

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 every three years. Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training every three years.

We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. This can be accessed via www.norfolkscb.org

Safer Staff and Volunteers

All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so. We ensure that we gain enhanced DBS checks where current Government guidance requires us to.

Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for our children. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

Responding to allegations of abuse

Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.

We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in Hope Church are safe to work with our children. We will always ensure that the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board's procedures are followed and advice taken from the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

All adults who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. There are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children these can be found in the NSCB **Safer Programme Safer Working Practice**.

The Designated Child Protection Officer should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in Hope Church. Under no circumstances should a worker 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 Kim Boardman tel no: 01379 644223 / 07733 320375 or Graham Blake tel no: 01379 644223 / 07868 725971 (Designated Child Protection Officers) who are 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.
- Should an allegation be made against the Designated Child Protection Officers, this will be reported by the staff member or volunteer raising the concern directly to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours of a concern or allegation being made. The LADO can be contacted via the referral/consultation forms under 'how to make a referral' at www.norfolkscb.org or a message left on **01603 223473**.
- A report should also be made to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- The Designated Child Protection Officers **may** need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern.
- Suspicions 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.
- The Leadership will support the Designated Child Protection Officers 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 CCPAS, although the Leadership hope that members of Hope church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Designated Child Protection Officers have not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Designated Child Protection Officer (s) 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 Child Protection 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.

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 Designated Child Protection Officer will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or CCPAS) 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 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 CCPAS (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 Designated Child Protection Officer (s):

- 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 CCPAS if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

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, Designated Child Protection Officer (s) 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 designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Records and Confidentiality

If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child in Hope Church we will record our concerns immediately and give this to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Any information recorded will be kept in a secure cabinet. These files will be the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Officer and information will only be shared within the organisation on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.

Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to. Copies of referrals will be stored in the file.

All information is confidential, however if there is a safeguarding or child protection concern about a child, then information can be shared with other agencies, namely the Police or Children's Services.

Reports of a concern to the Designated Child Protection Officer must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

Roles and Responsibilities

Our Designated Child Protection Officer will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children's Services using the procedure below.

Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the Designated Child Protection Officer who will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.

The Designated Child Protection Officer will ensure that all staff and volunteers have received appropriate child protection information and have been trained following guidelines from the Safer Programme.

The Designated Child Protection Officer will ensure that our safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually. The content of our policy has been written following consultation with the Safer Programme and advice from CCPAS.

Our organisation undertakes to remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.

Procedures for Handling Disclosures

A child may decide to disclose information that may indicate they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what the child has to say, and be very careful not to 'lead' the child or influence in any way what they say.

It is important that the adult remembers to:

- Stay calm
- Listen and be supportive
- Not ask any leading questions, interrogate the child, or put ideas in the child's head, or jump to conclusions
- Not stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events
- Never promise the child confidentiality – it must be explained that information will need to be passed on to help keep them safe
- Tell the child what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed)
- Record what was said immediately as close to what was said as possible. Also record what was happening immediately before the child disclosed. Be sure to sign and date the record in ink.
- Contact the designated person immediately to seek support

We are clear that the Local Authority and Police must lead any investigation in to any allegation regarding safeguarding.

If we have a concern about a child or children we will telephone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8021 immediately. We will be put through to a Social Worker who will take all of the relevant details. We will make sure we are prepared with full details of the child and family, plus what our concerns are, details of any support we have provided to the child/family and what we would like to happen. We will ensure we gain consent from the parent/carer unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for this.

The CADS worker will agree a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send us a written record of our conversation within 5 working days. The outcomes could include a full referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help. We will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will make careful records of all conversations, in ink, including the dates and

times of who we spoke to, the information shared and the action agreed. We do not need to send a written referral.

Full details on this process can be found at www.norfolkscb.org under 'How to Raise a Concern'.

We understand if we are unhappy about a decision made by CADS or MASH we can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on www.norfolkscb.org and contact the Safer Programme for more advice on this process.

Working Together 2015

What is abuse and neglect?

A form 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 others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse

(including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Useful Contacts

Children's Services 24 hours 0344 800 8020

Norfolk Police..... 101

In an emergency 999

Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team 01603 223473

There is always someone available during normal working hours

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) www.norfolkscb.org

Safer Programme..... 01603 228966

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service CCPAS 0845 120 4550

Named Designated Child Protection Officer

The following designated staff are in post;

Designated officer: Kim Boardman

Telephone number: 01379 644223 / 07733 320375

Designated officer: Graham Blake

Telephone number: 01379 644223 / 07868 725971

Policy Review

We will always make any changes immediately to our procedures in line with Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board's guidance on **www.norfolkscb.org**

This policy will be reviewed on 1st June 2023