

## **Key contacts**

### **Trustee responsible for Safeguarding**

Steve Wigginton

### **Church Safeguarding Team**

Bethany Ward-Smith – 07492351672

Rosie Pease – 07736424103

Natalie Hope-Gill – 07866596149

Matt Sedgewick – 07967809848

Tim Neale - 07967318906

Email: [safeguarding@hookchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@hookchurch.org)

### **Designated Safeguarding Team Leads**

Little Rascals – Sandra Fitzpatrick

Creche – Bethany Lee

Kidzone – Jane Sapey

Junior Church – Susi Neale

I.D/ idoS -Tim Neale

SOS – Alan Rigby

SSOR – Rachel Weber

### **DBS Checks**

Steve Wigginton – [stevejenwigginton@btinternet.com](mailto:stevejenwigginton@btinternet.com)

### **Christians in Safeguarding Services**

01162184420 – 8am-10pm [contact@thecss.co.uk](mailto:contact@thecss.co.uk)

### **Local Authority and Emergency numbers:**

In an emergency: **999**

**If the alleged abuse takes place within the Borough of Kingston the contact details are:**

- The Single Point of Access team is available from 8am to 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday, 8am to 5pm Friday.
- Call on **020 8547 5008**, or if you need to speak to someone urgently after hours or at the weekend, call the 'Out of Hours' team on **020 8770 5000**.

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 These guidelines are produced with the intention of supporting the youth and children's work at Hook Church. For guidance on safeguarding vulnerable adults, please consult the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy.

1.2 These policies are endorsed by Hook Church trustees with the support of the Eldership.

1.3 We believe God is honoured when persons created in His image are treated with honour and love for Christ's sake. Psalm 68:5-6A A Father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, Is God in his holy dwelling? God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

1.4 Children and Youth workers should have an understanding of the idea of 'contextual safeguarding'. This acknowledges that children and young people are influenced by and involved with a whole range of environments and people outside of their family, of which church or the church youth group is one. Children and young people may encounter risks in any of these environments and this can affect their behaviour and actions within the church environment. Contextual safeguarding also highlights the significance of our youth work as one area of influence in a child or young person's life that could play a significant part in a much bigger picture, and potentially lead to our involvement with other agencies or organisations.

## **2. General Information**

### **2.1 What is Safeguarding?**

Safeguarding encompasses:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment.
- Creation of safe and caring environment for children through
- Treating children fairly and equitably.
- Building trust and good communication
- An awareness of individual needs (health, allergies, special needs or disabilities)
- Setting appropriate discipline and boundaries.

### **2.2 Who is responsible for safeguarding?**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and where abuse is discovered or suspected it must be reported. The safeguarding of children and young people is a high priority for our church. Issues regarding the safeguarding of children should come to the Safeguarding Team.

### **2.3 Who oversees safeguarding?**

The various adults who lead our young people's ministries are responsible for ensuring the process is understood by their teams. These are our designated Safeguarding Team Leads

- This includes ensuring that all Children's and Youth team members are subject to an effective and clear recruitment procedure.
- Are DBS checked regularly and are suitable to work with children.
- Have been given a copy of this policy, have signed that they have received it and agree with it and know what to do if they have concerns.
- Are properly supervised and ensure that the safeguarding policy guidelines are followed.
- Maintain explicit and shared standards of safeguarding.
- Know who to contact for further information

**The Safeguarding Team at Hook is there to support Designated Safeguarding Team Leads with the above & any questions, concerns or comments.**

### **3. Recognising Abuse**

#### **3.1 How is abuse defined?**

The maltreatment or neglect of a child or young person: inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. This can be inflicted in a family, institutional, or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

#### **3.2 Types of Abuse**

- Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person. Signs of possible abuse include: injuries not consistent with explanation; or in abnormal locations; or that have not been treated.
- Emotional Abuse is persistent emotional maltreatment. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, for example when a child or young person witnesses domestic violence. This can also involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying). Signs of possible abuse include: changes in mood or behaviour; aggression; attention seeking behaviour; nervousness, obsession or phobias; persistent tiredness; running away/stealing/lying/self-harm.
- Sexual Abuse includes forcing or enticing a child or young person(s) to take part in any sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening (including viewing pornography). Signs of possible abuse include: allegations made by a child or young person; excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour; severe sleep disturbances; eating disorders.
- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. Neglect may include the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical treatment or response to emotional needs. Signs of possible neglect include: children being out late at night, or left home alone for extended periods; health and other needs not being taken care of.
- Coercive and Controlling Behaviour, linked with emotional abuse, could be defined as an abuse of power. It involves manipulation or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves

### **3.3 How might I recognise abuse?**

- Recognising abuse can be difficult as the signs of abuse aren't always obvious, and a child might not tell anyone what's happening to them. Children might be scared that the abuser will find out, and worried that the abuse will get worse. Or they might think that there's no-one they can tell or that they won't be believed. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening is abuse.
- Visit NSPCC for more information [NSPCC.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- If you have any concerns, or suspect either abuse or neglect, these must be reported as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Team (details on page 1) The team will liaise with the local children's services or contact Christians in Safeguarding and follow the advice they give. If you do not feel your concerns are responded to appropriately or in a timely way, please do contact Christians in Safeguarding directly or the Kingston Social Care Team.

## **4. Handling an allegation made by a child**

### **4.1 If a child or young person tells you of something that has happened:**

- Keep calm, try NOT to display shock (be aware of your facial expression).
- Take them to a place out of earshot but NOT out of sight.
- Look at the child or young person directly and show acceptance of what the child or young person says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Do NOT communicate blame (even when a child or young person may have broken rules) or question whether what they are saying is true.
- Be aware that the child or young person may have been bribed or threatened not to tell.
- Do NOT promise confidentiality; be honest that you will need to let someone else know.

### **4.2 After hearing an allegation**

- Make handwritten notes as soon as possible, write exactly what the child or young person said, along with other helpful details such as: the time and date where the allegation was made, what happened at the time and who else was present (notes should be given to the safeguarding team who will store them securely and keep them indefinitely).
- Inform the designated safeguarding lead of your team + the safeguarding team of the allegation as soon as possible and within 24 hours unless the allegation is against one of them in which case it will be referred to the trustee responsible for safeguarding (contact details on p1).
- Do NOT attempt to investigate or address the issue yourself. If there is serious and or immediate danger you MUST contact the police.

## **5. Appointing Children and Youth Workers**

### **5.1 Recruitment process (this is what I am proposing)**

- 1) Person expresses interest in helping at Youth Work to Tim Neale
- 2) Person attends 2 sessions to observe. In these sessions they should be fully supervised by a DBS team member and never left alone with the children or young people. If they like the observation & want to continue then follow the next steps.
- 3) Tim points them in direction of Steve Wigginton to process their DBS – They will need to provide identification documents.
- 4) One DBS check has come through someone from the safeguarding team to ensure they read through the safeguarding policy & understand the 5 points of child protection.

### **5.2 Eligibility Criteria**

- No history of violence or sexual offences
- No concerns raised about their suitability to work with children or young people
- Church Member (or shown to be committed to Hook if a young person)

## **6. Code of Conduct**

- Child protection training will be ongoing in team meetings.
- Listen to, respect and value children and young people at all times.
- Treat all children and young people fairly, without prejudice or favouritism.
- Challenge any unacceptable child behaviour in an appropriate way.
- Use language that is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.
- Behave in a way that is appropriate, and that avoids inappropriate relationships developing with any of the children or young people.
- No sexual contact is ever to take place between a youth worker and a child. Teams will work together to minimise scope for isolation of a child with an adult.
- Trustees will have responsibility for any disciplinary matters involving youth workers and they (under the guidance of the Bible) have the final say on what is appropriate and what is not.
- Risk assessments must be carried out for all events by the person organising the event and steps taken to mitigate any key risks identified.

## 7. Safeguarding Guidelines

### 7.1 Child to Adult Ratios

| Age   | Adult/Child Ratio |
|-------|-------------------|
| 0-3   | 1:3               |
| 3-7   | 1:4               |
| 7-11  | 1:6               |
| 11-18 | 1:8               |

**Notes:**

- The ratios are guidelines only: in certain situations, it will be necessary to have a higher number of adults than those recommended above.
- There must always be two or more adults for each group, and where appropriate these should include both males and females where the group is mixed gender.
- Where possible, if only two adults are supervising, the two adults should not be related in order to protect them if an allegation should be made. Teams will work together to minimise scope for isolation of a child with an adult.

### 7.2 Parents and Youth Leader Responsibilities

"The Youth Leaders are only responsible for the care of children and young people during the designated times of their meetings. Parents are responsible for their own children before and after the youth meetings."

## **8. Practical Guidelines**

### **8.1 Behaviour management**

Clear instructions should always be given, so that children and young people know what is expected of them. Expectations should be enforced in a consistent and positive way by all team members. Children or young people will need to be reminded of the expectations and given time and responsibility to respond to those. There should be a clear and consistent behaviour ethos in place for each team. It starts with mutual respect and listening. Verbal warnings follow if a child or young person will not listen. They may be removed from an activity for a time if they continue and then are asked not to attend for a period of time with a letter home explaining the situation. In extreme cases, it may be necessary to ask a child to no longer attend in the longer term. All children and young people must be treated with respect and must not be disciplined in a punitive manner. No physical punishment should be used on a child.

### **8.2 Consent Forms**

Parental consent forms must be completed for all activities and events. Once complete, they must be kept securely as they contain personal data and remain readily accessible throughout the event. For regular events (such as Sunday by Sunday or Friday by Friday), parents only need to fill out one consent form, provided these are held as accessible records. Consent forms must contain medical information.

### **8.3 One to One meetings**

One to one meetings must be arranged in advance with the consent of the parent/carer. Meetings must take place in a public setting, where the leader and young person is not alone. Discipleship and mentoring must only be done with children and young people of the same gender

### **8.4 Risk Assessment**

A suitable risk assessment should be in place for every activity involving the children and young people. If special or off-site events are planned, specific risk assessment should be undertaken for those circumstances.

### **8.5 First Aid**

As part of the organisation of all events, consideration must also be given to how to respond if a child does become ill or needs medical attention. The organiser must also ensure there is suitable provision for first aid, including nominating a trained first aider. Teams must have access to a medical kit and mobile telephone when off premises. Should medical assistance be required, this should be sought as soon as possible, and the child's parent/carer should be contacted.

### **8.6 Photographs and Videos**

From time to time photographs and videos may be taken for communications and publicity. This will be arranged in advance with the group leader, and parents will be asked to give their consent. No other photos of the children or young people should be taken or allowed to be taken by others without their consent.

### **8.7 Physical Contact**

Physical touch must be related to a child's needs and not the adults. Touch must therefore be age appropriate and initiated by the child, and it must always be in public. Any physical touch that could be misunderstood or misconstrued should be avoided. Tickling games and piggyback rides are not permitted. Holding a child's hand or them sitting on an adult's lap is only appropriate for infants and toddlers.

### **8.8 Toilet Trips**

Parents/carers should be asked to ensure their children have been to the toilet before bringing them to the group. Children who are independent in toileting may go to the toilet independently. Parents must assist their own children with toileting or nappy changing unless they have given written consent for leaders to perform this task.

### **8.9 Travel**

Travel to and from the events is the responsibility of the parent/carer. If a child is awaiting a lift home, there must always be two leaders present. For any events that involve the group travelling, children and young people must not travel alone with a single leader. Seat belts must be worn.

### **8.10 Operational Matters**

- Where concerns have to be acted upon, the London Child Protection Procedures will be followed.
- This policy will be reviewed every two years. Next update required in May 2024.
- A copy of the policy will be on display in the church
- The safeguarding team and designated safeguarding leads will refresh their training every two years and when significant changes are made to the national guidance.
- Support will be given from the Trustees to all affected by these procedures when issues arise.
- When using help from outside the church e.g. camp cooks and speakers, DBS is required as well as a reference from the home church

## **9. Use of online and social media**

- It is important to remember that communicating with young people one to one online, whether via messaging or video, is the equivalent of meeting that young person in a room on your own with no-one around.
- The leader obtains written consent to conduct a one to one over telephone or video.
- Both parties agree to a regular time. –
- Conversations happen in a public place in the house.
- They should NOT take place in a bedroom.
- The meeting can cease at any time if the child, parent or leader is not comfortable. –
- A note is kept of what has been discussed in the meeting

## **10. Adoption of this policy**

- The trustees of Hook Church, Surbiton, formally adopted this policy at the trustees meeting on the 19/09/2022.

## **11. Five Points on Child Protection**

Everyone working with Children and Young people should know these from memory.

- 1) DBS - Is yours up to date?
- 2) Toilets - Be aware of issues arising in toilets.
- 3) Touch - Be aware of 'touch' issues with children.
- 4) Isolation - Work as a team, to minimise isolation of team members with a particular child
- 5) Conversations - Write down significant conversations and tell the safeguarding team