

# **Gillingham Community Church Safeguarding Policy**

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## **Introduction to the safeguarding policy**

The policy and procedures have been divided into five sections covering all ten Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) safeguarding standards.

## Section 1

### Details of organisation

Name:	Gillingham Community Church
Address:	Unit 2, School Lane, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 4QT
Telephone:	01747 825611
E-mail:	admin@gillinghamcommunitychurch.co.uk
Charity number:	1129261
Company number:	06866358
Membership of:	Lifelinks (umbrella organisation) Evangelical Alliance Faithworks Churches Together
Regulators:	Charity Commission Companies House Information Commission
Insurance company:	Methodist Insurance (Church Shield Policy number 22/MPG/9126415)
Main venue:	Gillingham Primary School: the Church meets here every Sunday morning and on occasions during the week.  Children meet on Sunday mornings at the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bubbles (0 to 5years)</li><li>• Explorers (6 to 11 years)</li></ul>
Other venues:	CAP Centre: used as a base for the local work of Christians Against Poverty and for small group meetings. The Church runs a CAP Centre for local people who need debt counselling and support. This involves visiting homes, offering practical support and inviting clients to come to meetings and other events. The Church pays the wage of the CAP Centre Manager. Other workers are volunteers.

Other venues  
(continued):

Small groups (adults) meet weekly in homes

Youth group 12+ years meets every two weeks on Friday evenings in leaders' homes or go out for activities

Alpha Course meets weekly in a hired venue.

The Church uses other premises in the town from time to time for outreach activities.

## **Our commitment**

As Church Leaders 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."

Therefore, as Church Leaders, we have 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 attached practice guidelines are based on the ten *Safe and Secure* safeguarding standards published by CCPAS

The Church Leaders undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above;
- 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 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 CCPAS and the local authority (North Dorset District Council) 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.*

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 in our workers handbook *Safe from Harm* (See Appendix One).

#### **Safeguarding awareness**

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

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

### **Responding to allegations of abuse**

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The following procedure should be undertaken:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who is nominated by the Church Leaders 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 Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to the Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, the report should be made in the first instance to CCPAS. 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 CCPAS as above.
- Where required, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should immediately inform the insurance company and other strategic personnel within the Church.
- 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.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from CCPAS.

The Church Leaders will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy 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 Church Leaders hope that members of the Church will use this procedure. However, if the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-

ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Church Leaders demonstrate our commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to pass this information on to statutory agencies that have a legal duty to investigate.

### **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-ordinator/Deputy 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, (eg 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 directly for advice.
- Seek and follow advice from 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 Safeguarding Co-ordinator/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 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.

The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

### **Suspicious or allegations of physical or sexual abuse**

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/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 serious 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 CCPAS 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-ordinator, 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 Church Leaders will ensure that all paid workers, who are working with children, 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 short-listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A criminal records disclosure 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
- 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.
- All volunteers, who are working with children, will be CRB checked and given a copy of the *GCC Safe from Harm* booklet.
- The children's work leaders will be given a copy of this safeguarding policy.

#### **Management of workers - codes of conduct**

As Church Leaders we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Church Leaders 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 Church Leaders are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse that have contact with or are part of the Church.

The Church Leaders will counsel those who need help, where they feel their training and experience is appropriate. They will call upon the professional skills of members of the congregation or seek out help from outside agencies, where appropriate.

The Church Leaders are always ready to work co-operatively with other agencies for the good of those who have been affected by abuse.

#### **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 Church Leaders 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.

The Church Leaders will seek the help of CCPAS in forming a contract, which will set boundaries for the offender when they are in the Church environment. If the offender fails or refuses to keep to the contract, the Church Leaders will prohibit the offender from attending Church activities and events.

If it is believed the offender may go elsewhere, the local authorities, other local churches and organisations should be informed.

## 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 to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers, we have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in. and These can be found in our workers *Safe from Harm*, Appendix one.

### 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 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 our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding with all partners. It is our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of any letting agreement will have their own policy, which meets CCPAS's safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding 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.

The safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually before the Church AGM by the Church Leaders, Trustees and Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

There will be a safeguarding item on the agenda of each AGM to update and review safeguarding practices within the Church family.

A safeguarding poster with relevant phone numbers and names will be kept on the main notice board in the Welcome Area.

Forms and *Safe from Harm* booklets will be kept in a safeguarding box kept in a central place for all workers.

**Signed:** .....



**Church Leader**

**Date:** 29/11/10 .....

## **Appendix 1: GCC Church Leaders' safeguarding statement**

The Church Leaders of Gillingham Community Church recognises the importance of its work with children, 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 Church 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 of 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 in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers 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-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order 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 Church affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the *Safe and Secure* safeguarding standards developed by CCPAS.

**We recognise:**

- Children's social services (or equivalent) have 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, please speak to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators for this Church.

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Church Leaders or Co-ordinators/Deputies.

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been lodged with CCPAS, LifeLinks and North Dorset District Council.



**Signed:** ..... **Church Leader**

**Date:** **29/11/10** .....

This statement will be made available on the Church's web site  
[www.gillinghamcommunitychurch.co.uk/children](http://www.gillinghamcommunitychurch.co.uk/children)

## **Appendix 2: Contact numbers**

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Child Safeguarding Coordinator: Jayne Lock	01747 850765
Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator: Clare Williams	01747 826955
Adult Safeguarding Coordinator: Gale Cable	01963 364281
Deputy Adult Safeguarding Coordinator & Church Leader: Steve Gibbons	01747 835986
Church Leader: Hannah Gibbons	01747 835986
Church Leader: Graham Palmer	01747 825844
CCPAS	0845 1204550
Local children's social services office (office hours)	01258 472652
Out of hours emergency number	01202 657279
Local adult social services office (office hours)	01258 472652
Out of hours emergency number	01202 657279
Police child protection team	01305 222222
County Insurance Services: John Austin (insurance broker)	01747 828041
Methodist Insurance	0845 6061331

### Appendix 3: Safeguarding poster

# Safeguarding is a priority here

We are committed to following government and CCPAS guidelines on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good working practice, including safe recruitment of workers.

We work to a formal safeguarding policy and it can be seen on request from:

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child you can speak to:

\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a vulnerable adult you can speak to:

\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

They have been appointed by the leadership in this place of worship/organisation to respond to any safeguarding concerns.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
*Leadership of place of worship/organisation*



The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service is an independent Christian charity providing child protection advice and support throughout the UK.

You can contact CCPAS' 24 hour helpline on:

**0845 120 45 50**

#### Useful Contacts

CCPAS  
0845 120 45 50

Childline (for children)  
0800 1111

NSPCC  
0808 800 5000

Kidscape  
0845 120 5204

Stop it Now  
0808 1000 900

MindinfoLine  
0845 766 0163

Through the Roof  
01732 737041

Action on Elder Abuse  
0808 808 8141

