

Larkfield Community Church Safeguarding Policy

Name of Organisation: Larkfield Community Church

Registered Office: 55 The Ferns, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6NE

Meeting on Sunday mornings at Brookfield Junior School, Swallow Road, Larkfield, Kent



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Membership of Denomination/Organisation: Assemblies of God in Great Britain & Ireland

Charity Number: 1120956

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Next review: February 2023

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

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. 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 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 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 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 whenever possible, 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 adults with care and support needs.

We will review our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult with care and support needs, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this organisation.

Jude Johnson, Safeguarding Coordinator
Pam Bedford, Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator

safeguarding@larkfieldcommunitychurch.org.uk

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an 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 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. 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 indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in this policy:

- Appendix 1 Definitions of abuse
- Appendix 2a Signs and indicators of abuse in children
- Appendix 2b Signs and indicators of abuse in adults
- Appendix 3 What to do if you are concerned that abuse may have occurred - children
- Appendix 4a How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse
- Appendix 4b What to do once a child has talked to you about abuse
- Appendix 5 Detailed procedure for responding to abuse (what the Co-ordinator will do)

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 on a regular basis run by ThirtyOne:eight, formally known as CCPAS as part of their induction.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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.

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care and support, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with, or are part of Larkfield Community Church. This will take the form of opportunity to join a small group, times of prayer ministry, practical assistance and fellowship.

Working with offenders

When someone attending Larkfield Community Church is known to have abused a child/children, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. Guidance will be sought from Thirtyone:eight and an individual plan will be tailored specifically to the individual circumstances and informed by risk assessments from the statutory agencies and advice from Thirtyone-eight.

Prevention

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all paid workers 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 by a panel, where at least one member has completed Safer Recruitment training.
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (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
- 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.

The process for volunteers will ensure:

- There is an understanding by all parties of the requirements of the role and personal attributes required through informal interview.
- An application form and a self-declaration form is completed.
- Safeguarding has been discussed at informal interview and on appointment to volunteer role.
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary
- Suitable training is provided for the volunteer
- The volunteer has completed a probationary period and had opportunity for discussion.
- The volunteer has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs 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 or unfounded accusation.

We have specific good practice guidelines for the activities we are involved:

Consent forms are an integral part of keeping children safe and parents will be required to complete a consent form before their child can take part in activities where their parent is not present.

- Recommended ratio of adults to children:

0 to 2 years	1 : 3
2 to 3 years	1: 4
3 to 8 years	1: 8
9 years +	1: 10
- As far as possible ensure that a worker is not alone with a child. Sometimes it is advisable to leave doors open or for a group to share the same accommodation. Where confidentiality is important, ensure that others know that the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building.
- No person under 16 years can be approved as a Children's worker. As helpers and under the direct supervision of an approved Children's worker, they must not be left in charge of any children of any age; neither should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- Whilst physical contact between adults and children can be quite healthy and acceptable in public places it is discouraged in circumstances where adult/child is on his/her own. Social distancing requirements must be adhered to as appropriate in line with government guidelines.
- Workers are discouraged from inviting a child to their home or being alone with them without the knowledge of the child's parent or carer.
- If transporting a child on their own, then it is better that the young person occupies the rear seat. Inform another adult when you leave and when you arrive. Appropriate social distancing guidelines and measures must be taken if travelling in private vehicles and public transport.
- On residential holidays, adults should not share sleeping accommodation with children.

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 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 regard 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. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, 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 adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Appendix 1

Definitions of abuse for children

Physical injury

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy – where a parent or a carer invents symptoms of a physical disorder in the child and then seeks medical help whilst persisting with the abuse in order to gain attention for self.

Sexual abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. 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.

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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.

Organised abuse

Organised abuse is sexual abuse where there is more than a single abuser and the adults concerned appear to act in concert to abuse children and/or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for sexual abuse.

Appendix 2a

Signs of Possible Abuse (children and 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:

Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse*

Sexual

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate 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

Emotional

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- 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

Neglect

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

Appendix 2b

Signs of Possible Abuse in Adults

Physical abuse

- History of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries.
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems left unattended.
- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Bruising and discolouration - particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Recurring injuries without plausible explanation
- Loss of hair, loss of weight and change of appetite
- Person flinches at physical contact &/or keeps fully covered, even in hot weather;
- Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or people

Domestic violence

- Unexplained injuries or 'excuses' for marks or scars
- Controlling and/or threatening relationship including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence and Female Genital Mutilation.
- Age range extended to 16 yrs.

Sexual abuse

- Pregnancy in a woman who lacks mental capacity or is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosures or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming
- Emotional distress
- Mood changes
- Disturbed sleep patterns

Psychological abuse

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia
- Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour, excessive fear or anxiety
- Changes in sleep pattern or persistent tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Helplessness or passivity
- Confusion or disorientation
- Implausible stories and attention seeking behaviour
- Low self-esteem

Financial or material abuse

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents or loss of money
- Sudden inability to pay bills, getting into debt
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property
- Missing personal belongings
- Inappropriate granting and / or use of Power of Attorney

Modern slavery

- Physical appearance; unkempt, inappropriate clothing, malnourished
- Movement monitored, rarely alone, travel early or late at night to facilitate working hours.
- Few personal possessions or ID documents.
- Fear of seeking help or trusting people.

Discriminatory abuse

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance care
- Low self-esteem
- Withdrawn
- Anger
- Person puts themselves down in terms of their gender or sexuality
- Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves

Institutional Abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Withdrawn
- Anger
- Person puts themselves down in terms of their gender or sexuality
- Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves
- No confidence in complaints procedures for staff or service users.
- Neglectful or poor professional practice.

Neglect and acts of omission

- Deteriorating despite apparent care
- Poor home conditions, clothing or care and support.
- Lack of medication or medical intervention

Self-neglect

- Hoarding inside or outside a property
- Neglecting personal hygiene or medical needs
- Person looking unkempt or dirty and has poor personal hygiene
- Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food
- 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)
- Depression

Appendix 3

What To Do If You Are Concerned That Abuse May Have Occurred - Children

1. You must report concerns as soon as possible to **Jude Johnson** (hereafter the "Co-ordinator") who is nominated by the Church Leadership Team to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of the Co-ordinator the matter should be brought to the attention **Pam Bedford** (hereafter the "Deputy Co-ordinator"). To contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator email safeguarding@larkfieldcommunitychurch.org.uk
2. If the suspicions in any way involve the Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to the Deputy Co-ordinator. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the Co-ordinator and the Deputy Co-ordinator, then the report should be made in the first instance to the:
 - Thirtyone:eight P0 Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.
Tel: 03000 003 11 11 . email: info@thirtyoneeight.org
 - Alternatively contact Social Services on 03000 41 11 11 at Brenchley House, County Hall, Maidstone, (out of hours telephone 03000 41 91 91).
3. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated in paragraph 2.
4. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although we hope that members of the church will use this procedure. If, however, you feel that the Co-ordinator or Deputy has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation direct. We hope by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the church to effective child protection.

A more detailed procedure can be found in Appendix 5 (Detailed procedure for responding to abuse (what the Co-ordinator will do))

Appendix 4a

How to Respond to a Child Wanting to Talk About Abuse

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help;

General points

- Accept what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful things you may say or show

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says).
- Thank you for telling me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

Don't say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises.
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

Concluding

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
- You might have to consider referring straight to the Police and/or Social Services to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse or self-harm.
- Contact the person in your church/organisation responsible for co-ordinating child protection concerns or contact an agency such as Thirty:one eight for advice or go directly to Social Services/Police/NSPCC.
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

Appendix 4b

What to do Once a Child Has Talked to You About Abuse:

The Procedure:

1. Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of the interview), writing down exactly what the child said, write what you said in reply to the child, when he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes, even if these have been typed subsequently, for an indefinite period. Use the form 'Responding to Abuse – Worker's Action Sheet.
2. Report your discussion as soon as possible to the Co-ordinator. If the latter is implicated report to the Deputy Co-ordinator. If both are implicated, report to Thirty:one eight or to Social Services if preferred.
3. You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated in the above point.
4. Once a child has talked about abuse, the worker and leader may consider it unsafe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the Social Services and/or Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home or go missing/flee.

Helping Victims of Abuse

*****As a church we are committed to supporting victims of abuse and encouraging them in their faith, demonstrating God's care and love through His people*****

Appendix 5

Procedure for responding to abuse (what the Co-ordinator will do)

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The procedure below should be followed:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Jude Johnson (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") tel no: 07941 431052 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 Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Pam Bedford. If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, 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. Alternatively contact Kent 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 03000 41 11 11. The out of hours emergency number is 03000 41 91 91.

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 03000 41 61 61. The out of hours emergency number is 03000 41 91 91.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator **may** need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern. This may include the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or a member of the Leadership team.
- 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 Thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership 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 Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of Larkfield Community Church will use this procedure. If, however, 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 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-ordinator/ 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.

Procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

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 Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Authority Safeguarding Partners procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Designated Officer formerly called the LADO. If a Designated Officer is not involved, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will contact Thirtyone:eight and/or DBS if the situation is that the nature of concern leads to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs.

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, will contact Kent Adult Social Services for advice and guidance and act in accordance to their direction.

Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Co-ordinator will:

1. Contact the Social Services Duty Social Worker for children and families and/or Police Child Protection Team directly. **The Co-ordinator will NOT speak to the parent.**
2. If, for any reason, the Co-ordinator is unsure whether or not to follow the above, then advice from Thirty:one eight will be sought and followed. Thirty:one eight will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.
3. **Under no circumstances** will the Co-ordinator attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the Co-ordinator is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the Police Child Protection Team/Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
4. Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the Co-ordinator, the absence of the Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to the Police/Social Services Department.
5. Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the Co-ordinator or Deputy as to the appropriateness of a referral to the Police/Social Services Department, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Police/Social Services Department, and should do so without hesitation.
6. The Leadership Team will support the Co-ordinator or 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.

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 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 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-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 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.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Leadership Safeguarding Statement

The Elders and Trustees of Larkfield Community Church, hereafter referred to as “The Leadership”, 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.

We are committed to creating and enabling a healthy culture in order to minimise any coercion and control within our church. The following statement was agreed by the leadership/organisation.

This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs 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 adults who have care and support needs and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery 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 adults with care and support needs.
- We believe in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our church where the value of all people is recognised, and challenges are responded to appropriately.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and 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/adults with care and support needs.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this 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 has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- 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.