

Lighthouse Community Church

Safeguarding Policy

Section 1

Details of our place of worship.

Name of place of worship/organisation

Lighthouse Community Church

Address

Hardley Green,
Hardley,
Southampton.
SO45 3NZ

Tel No:

02380 243306

Email Address

admin@lighthousecommunitychurch.co.uk

Website

www.lighthousecommunitychurch.co.uk

Senior Leader

Roy Dyer

Senior Leader Contact Telephone/Email

07795 953305

rddyer@gmail.com

Safeguarding Coordinator Name

Sandra Delemare

Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone/Email

07906408570

sandra.delemare@gmail.com

Safeguarding Deputy Name

Hazel Flowers

Safeguarding Deputy Contact Telephone/Email

07751 676866

hazel.flowers1@btinternet.com

Membership of Denomination/Organisation

Assemblies of God

Contact details

Email: info@aog.org.uk

01777 817663

Charity Number

1050455

Regulators

thirtyone:eight.co.uk

0303 0031111

Insurance Company

Case Insurance administrated by Chris Knott Insurance

The following is a brief description of our Church and the type of work/activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs.

We are a community serving church offering a very warm welcome to you and your family.

We believe:

- The Bible is the world's best-selling book of all time. We believe it is the Word of God. It is total truth and provides us with principles for every area of life.
- We believe in One True God. We believe He is alive and wants to have a personal relationship with us. He co-exists in three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He was born of a virgin and lived a sinless life. While He lived on earth He performed supernatural miracles. He died to take away the sins of the world. He was crucified on a cross, buried in a tomb, was resurrected from the dead and He ascended into heaven. We believe He will return to earth a second time in the future.
- We believe man has sinned against God. Adam and Eve were the first humans and were created pure but wilfully broke God's laws. As a result all of us have sinned and need forgiveness. 2

- We believe there is salvation only through faith in Jesus Christ. He died on the cross that our sins may be forgiven. He was buried and after three days He was raised from the dead. Sin and death could not defeat Him.
- We believe you must be born again to go to heaven. When you put your trust in Jesus and believe in what He did for you, the Holy Spirit changes you on the inside.
- We believe in water baptism. In this way we follow Jesus' example.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit baptism.
- We believe the Holy Spirit gives us special gifts. He empowers us and gives us the ability to do what Jesus did here on earth.
- We believe we should live holy lives. Through obedience to the principles and teachings in the Bible we can live lives that please God.
- We believe in supernatural healing. We pray for the sick because we believe God still works miracles today.
- We believe that everyone who has become a Christian should remember Him by regularly participating in communion.
- We believe in eternal life and judgement. Those who have committed their lives to following Jesus will spend eternity with Him in heaven. However those who have not will be punished for their sins.

(Taken from the Assemblies of God website of which we are associated)

As members of the Lighthouse Community Church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, with special reference to children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

We offer a time of praise and worship on a Sunday morning as well as various group activities throughout the week such as:

- Youth & Young Adults
- Parent/Toddler group
- Ladies' events
- Connect/home groups
- Bible study
- Oasis Lunch club
- Biker's events
- Men's events
- Worship/Prayer events
- Warm space/ drop-in sessions

We also host outside events such as:

- Living after loss
- Various training/meetings

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 of the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop to their full potential, be 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 any 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 worker/volunteers 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 Safeguarding Team in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other Organisations.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility:

It is the responsibility of each one of us to help prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected in line with church policy.

The church is committed to upholding the law in all safeguarding issues.

All church members who are involved in working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs must familiarise themselves with the church's safeguarding policies, as should trustees and support team members.

Anyone can have access to our safeguarding policy upon request, or view it on the LCC website at lighthousecommunitychurch.co.uk.

Section 2

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse perpetrated by 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 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:

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.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5

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 here in our policy.

Making our church safer for children

- No unaccompanied children to be left in the small back rooms.
- Children/young adults (12 – 16 years) using the large back room during the service should be accompanied by another person 12 or over with parents' permission.
- Helpers must be over 16, and over 18 to be on their own with a group, this only after a DBS check has been carried out.
- No one other than DBS checked allocated workers should be on their own with a child who is not their own (or their sole responsibility)
- No children 11 and under in the kitchens.
- Children/young adults (12 – 16 years) to be supervised in the kitchen.
- No children in any store cupboards.
- Please stop and question any child under 11 going out of the front door on their own
- Children should not be on the stage unless taking part in the service.
- Children should not be running around inside the church for their safety and the safety of others.

Parents/carers please note that if your children are not in the care of our children's team they are your responsibility.

It's important to note that:

If a parent needs to be spoken to about a child's behaviour, or any other problems, it needs to be done away from the main congregation with another team member present. Parents do not like negative comments being made about their children; please try to include something positive. Please speak where other people cannot hear, and have someone else there who can back you up.

If any parent has to be spoken to it should be noted on an incident form, so that it can be referred to. Also any accident or injury should be recorded on one of our accident /incident forms which are available from the office.

It is important to note that parents/carers are responsible for their own child/children at all times when in the church building and in the church area outside including the car park. The only exception to this is where children are with allocated workers in the rooms at the back of the church.

Safer recruitment

The leadership will ensure all 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 data barring service application form.
- Those short listed have been interviewed.
- 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.

Safeguarding training

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

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.

Management of Workers – Code of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all worker/volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers/volunteers have been issued with and signed a code of conduct.

Section 3

Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship 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 and volunteers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusations.

As well as a general code of conduct for all workers and volunteers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

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 with care and support needs. 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 and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. 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.

We believe 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.

Section 4

Signs and symptoms of abuse:

Physical abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or causing 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.

Physical signs and symptoms include:

- Bruising, especially trunk, upper arm, shoulders, neck or fingertip bruising
- Burns/scalds especially cigarette
- Human bite marks
- Fractures especially spiral
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs
- Serious injury with lack of/inconsistent explanation
- Untreated injuries

Psychological/Emotional signs and symptoms include:

- Unusually fearful with adults

- Unnaturally compliant to parents
- Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Aggression towards others
- Wears cover up clothing

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

Physical signs and symptoms include:

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Unexpected pregnancy especially in very young girls
- Soreness to genitalia area, anus or mouth
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain

Psychological/Emotional signs and symptoms include:

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualised behaviour in young children
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity
- Sudden changes in personality
- Lack of concentration, restlessness
- Socially withdrawn
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behaviour, onset of wetting – day or night
- Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust
- Eating disorders, hysteria attacks

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by

someone they know – for example a family member, friend or professional.

Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. They could be a person in a position of trust.

A person in a position of trust is anyone who is caring, training, supporting, in sole charge of or at a place where a child or adult is enrolled or receiving treatment.

Roles they might occupy include leadership roles, youth leader, befriender, listener, Sunday school teachers, volunteer workers, nursery workers.

Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. It is important to realise that, when a child or adult is abused within a church setting, it is not just the victim being abused. It is likely that the perpetrator will have placed themselves in a position of trust or even leadership and there are others who have also been groomed in order for the abuse to have taken place and not be reported. The others who have been 'groomed' are likely to be parents or carers, relatives, friends and church members/members of the wider faith community.

Child sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation of children and young people involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection gifts, or money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them sexual activities

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is 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 children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

The classic description of emotional abuse is a “Low Warmth High Criticism” style of parenting. However, some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may sometimes occur alone.

Physical signs and symptoms include:

- Physical, mental and emotional lags
- Acceptance of punishments which appear excessive
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse
- Running away

Neglect

Neglect is 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 it may involve a parent 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs

Neglect is often insidious, increasing gradually over a period of time. Difficulties can arise when people become accepting of the levels of neglect and sometimes desensitized.

Physical signs and symptoms include:

- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation, potbelly, short stature
- Poor skin and hair tone
- Untreated medical problems
- Failure to thrive with no medical reason

Psychological/Emotional signs and symptoms include:

- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Frequent lateness/non-attendance at school
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging
- Multiple accidents/accidental injuries

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is to use something or someone to bad effect or for a bad purpose, especially regularly or repeatedly. Spiritual abuse happens when a spiritual authority, such as a cult leader or abusive pastor, seeks to control individuals and ensure obedience. Spiritual abuse is closely associated with [spiritual manipulation](#) and is *not* God's plan for promoting spiritual growth.

A spiritually abusive group might claim that they are God's sole channel of communication and that they alone can rightly interpret God's Word. They might claim that salvation depends upon belonging to their church and that, since God speaks through them alone, there can be no further discussion on what the leaders say. Or the leaders might point to God's blessing on their work—proved by increased baptisms, perhaps—and push members to contribute more generously to their expansion projects. Pushing for more money, promising that God will repay, and piling on guilt can be signs of covert abuse.

Abusive groups also place great emphasis on performance-related works—attending every meeting; volunteering to help at local, regional, and national events; and devoting required minimum amounts of time to witnessing and sharing their faith. Members are constantly reminded that the end of this world is imminent and so there is very little time left to spread the “good news.” Everyone must do more in the advancement of “God's work.” The dedication of each member is tracked and measured by the amount of time, effort, and money he or she gives to the cause. If an individual's efforts begin to slip below expectations, it will be noticed.

Spiritual abuse can occur when church or cult leaders misuse Scripture to bolster their own authority and keep their members under their thumb. For example, a spiritual authority may use [Hebrews 13:17](#) (“Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority”) to demand blind loyalty and unthinking obedience. A leader might say, “God has given me authority over you; thus, to disobey me is to disobey God.” If members grow uneasy and think about leaving, all the leader has to do is say, “If you leave this group, you will never go to heaven, because only *we* have the truth.” This type of manipulation is appalling, but it occurs more often than one might think. Our loyalty is due Christ, the Head of the church ([Ephesians 1:22](#)), not a particular organization, church, or leader.

Cults and abusive churches pre-emptively insulate members from any information critical of the group. Members are taught early on to be sceptical of any negative report about the group and that the biased media only lies about them. These “lies” are identified as a form of persecution, which “proves” they must be the one true religion. So, for example, if journalists report on leaders who have been found guilty of child abuse, the organization simply tells its members they cannot believe anything the newspapers say about them—it’s all lies and smears. If simple denial doesn’t work, they move on to rationalization and wishful thinking. Spiritually abusive leaders can become so adept at thought and information control that those under their sway will actually defend their new identity over their former identity.

The more committed to the abusive church a person becomes, the more isolated he becomes from non-members and the more he fears punishment if he tries to leave. Some people, after a lifetime of emotional investment in a religious group, simply do not know how they could survive if they left. They have no friends other than their fellow church members. They may have cut off contact with family members. They probably have no interests (social or intellectual) outside of their group. Such is their fear of being ostracized that many stay put, keeping their misgivings to themselves.

Spiritually abusive ministries

- **Have a distorted view of respect.** They forget the simple adage that respect is earned, not granted. Abusive leaders demand respect without having earned it by good, honest living.
- **Demand allegiance as proof of the follower’s allegiance to Christ.** It’s either his/her way or no way. And if a follower deviates, he is guilty of deviating from Jesus.

- **Use exclusive language.** “We’re the only ministry really following Jesus.” “We have all the right theology.” Believe their way of doing things, thinking theologically, or handling ministry and church is the only correct way. Everyone else is wrong, misguided, or stupidly naive.
- **Create a culture of fear and shame.** Often there is no grace for someone who fails to live up to the church’s or ministry’s expectation. And if someone steps outside of the often-unspoken rules, leaders shame them into compliance. Leaders can’t admit failure, but often search out failure in others and uses that knowledge to hold them in fear and captivity. They often quote scriptures about not touching God’s anointed or bringing accusations against an elder. Yet they often confront sin in others, particularly ones who bring up legitimate biblical issues. Or they have their circle of influence take on this task, silencing critics.
- **Often have a charismatic leader at the helm who starts off well, but slips into arrogance, protectionism and pride.** Where a leader might start off being personable and interested in others’ issues, he/she eventually withdraws to a small group of “yes people” and isolates from the needs of others. These ministries and churches harbor a cult of personality, meaning if the central figure of the ministry or church left, the entity would collapse, as it was entirely dependent on one person to hold the place together.
- **Cultivate a dependence on one leader or leaders for spiritual information.** Personal discipleship isn’t encouraged. Often the Bible gets pushed away to the fringes unless the main leader is teaching it.
- **Demand blind servitude of their followers, but live prestigious, privileged lives.** They live aloof from their followers and justify their material extravagance as God’s favor and approval on their ministry. Unlike Jesus’ instructions to take the last seat, they often take the first seat at events and court others to grant them privileges. They typically chase after wealth—at any cost, and often at the expense of the very people they shepherd.
- **Buffer him/herself from criticism by placing people around themselves whose only allegiance is to the leader.** These leaders and churches view those who bring up legitimate issues as enemies. Those who were once friends/allies swiftly become enemies once a concern is raised. Sometimes these folks are banished, told to be silent, or shamed into submission.
- **Hold to outward performance but rejects authentic spirituality.** Places burdens on followers to act a certain way, dress an acceptable way, and have an acceptable lifestyle, but they often demonstrate licentiousness, greed, and uncontrolled addictions behind closed doors.

- **Use exclusivity for allegiance.** Followers close to the leader or leaders feel like lucky insiders. Everyone else is on the outside, though they often long to be in that inner circle. If someone on the inner circle speaks up about abuses, lapses in character, illegal acts, or strong-arming, that insider immediately moves to an outsider. Fear of losing their special status often impedes insiders from speaking up.

Section 5

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under NO circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- Documenting a concern
The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern by completing an accident/incident form
- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Sandra Delemare
0790608570
Sandra.delemare@gmail.com

The above 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:

Safeguarding Deputy
Hazel Flowers
07751676866
hazel.flowers1@btinternet.com

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
Tel: 0303 003 1111
Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone-eight helpline for advice. They should then contact the social services in the area the child or adult lives

Name of local authority

Children's Social Services

Tel: 0300 555 1384

Out of hours Tel: 0300 555 1373

Adult Social Care

Tel: 0300 555 1386

Out of hours Tel: 0300 555 1373

Police Protection Team Tel: 0845 045 4545

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and /or nature of the concern
 1. Roy Dyer (chair) or Phil Weaver (trustee) responsible for safeguarding, who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident
 2. Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18
- 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, Deputy, Chair or Trustee 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 this place of worship will use our 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 any of the Safeguarding team 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 where necessary 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 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.

Allegations of sexual abuse

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

- 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 or Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.
- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will only speak to the parent/carer if advised to do so

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

Suspicions 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, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who has 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, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy 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/Deputy, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the workers/volunteers
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

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

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Social Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Services to decide not the Church.

Section 6

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is 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 Lighthouse Community Church.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the Lighthouse Community Church is known to have abused children, is under investigation, 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. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

Section 7

Photography/Video

Lighthouse Community Church believes that the taking of photographs and videos during activities and events is a positive thing but that safeguarding guidelines need to be observed.

With Toddler groups, parents/carers are told that they are able and welcome to photograph their own child/children but must be very careful to ensure that no other children are in the same photograph. If there are other children in the photograph then parents/carers **MUST** give written approval for this to be shown anywhere outside the church including social media.

We do not have any photographs of children on our website, if at any time in the future we review this policy it will be done through the trustees/support group with the consultation of church members.

In accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), our Data protection policy states that if a photograph is to be taken and shared, permission is asked for and a form will be completed and signed.

Section 8

Anti-Bullying

It is an unfortunate fact that any group of children, young people and adults with care and support needs has the potential for incidents of bullying within it. We need to be realistic about this and to deal effectively with cases of bullying in all of our activities. We will take a firm line against bullying whilst at the same time recognising that the bully often needs help. Most bullying has several things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour
- It is repeated often over a period of time
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- It often happens at a time when it is difficult to observe it
- It can take many forms:
 1. Physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
 2. Verbal – name calling, insulting, racist remarks
 3. Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, excluding someone from groups

We will respond to bullying by:

- Encouraging victims and witnesses to speak out
- Respecting the individual by criticising the behaviour not the person

- Involving parents, whilst being careful in individual cases where it is possible that this would be unwise

Section 9

Data and Barring Service (DBS)

We have a specific church employee, Beryl Gough, who has the responsibility for processing all DBS applications.

Anyone working with children, young people or adults with care and support needs, either paid or volunteers, will be asked to complete a data barring service application form, and then complete a DBS application on line using the churches safeguarding service (thirtyone:eight). The police then carry out the appropriate searches on each individual application. An email is sent to Beryl to advise that the process is complete. This application can then be checked on line to see the results, and whether there is any information which needs to be taken into consideration before allowing the individual to take up their role.

Once an application process is completed we invite the individual to join the “update system”. This allows us and any other organisation for which the individual wants to volunteer or work to check their application on line instantly. If there are any concerns or convictions they would have been added to the individual’s records. We therefore operate a system whereby we make an annual check with the individual’s permission, so that our records are always up to date.

It is best practice in the church to ask trustees to complete a DBS application.

These records are held in a locked cabinet in the church office.

Section 10

Allergies

If we are made aware of anyone who has any allergies we will do our best to accommodate them and to reduce their risk within the church premises.

No part of this publication may be shared, distributed, or transmitted to any party outside of the member organisation, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually:

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

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Signed by:

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February 2026

To be reviewed February 2027