

MOUNT HERMON CHAPEL ADDINGHAM

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Children and Adults at Risk

Introduction

Mount Hermon takes safeguarding seriously.

We believe in fostering a caring environment where safeguarding is something that is imbedded into everything that we do. Every child and adult has the right to protection from abuse, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, origin, property, sexuality, birth, belief or other status as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We believe the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount, they should be able to live to their full potential free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse, they have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or exploitation. We therefore as the church will follow recognised good practice as set out in this policy in order to protect the vulnerable people in our church and community.

We will adopt and annually review all the procedures in the policy (or more frequently if the need arises).

Even though we understand that safeguarding is a whole church responsibility, the church leadership will appoint a safeguarding officer and a deputy safeguarding officer who will have specific responsibilities for safeguarding.

The church will follow a safer recruitment process when selecting people to work with children or adults at risk, whether paid or voluntary.

Church activities will be organised in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to everyone involved.

The church is committed to ensuring that everyone who works with children and vulnerable adults has the correct supervision and training.

The church believes that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and incompatible with a Christian way of living, we also recognise that domestic abuse can affect both adults and children.

Known offenders who are part of our congregation will be carefully supervised, including using contracts to protect people from the risks associated with them.

Any concern or allegation of abuse will be reported to the church safeguarding officer and will be responded to appropriately, which will include referring to the relevant authorities if necessary. We will co-operate with any investigations and maintain confidentiality of investigations to those directly involved.

Any concern or accusation about a member of staff, voluntary or paid, that meet the relevant criteria will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Aim of this policy

The aim of this policy is to set out how we as a church intend to ensure that we are protecting the children and vulnerable adults within our church and our community. It includes clear actions to be taken in the event of a disclosure or concern being raised.

This policy has been adopted by the leadership of the church and has been shared with all members of the church through a church meeting. A copy of our policy statement (see Appendix 1) will be displayed within the church and a full copy of this policy is available on the church website. A hard copy will be made available on request.

Organisations who hire our building do so on the understanding that they must have either a safeguarding policy and named safeguarding officer in place (we as a church will check that a policy is in place but will not be responsible for carrying out the policy) - or they must agree to operate under the church safeguarding policy and will report directly to the church safeguarding officer (the church will be responsible for checking that the policy is being adhered to, which includes checking of staff and volunteers and taking the lead in any event of concerns or allegations).

Confidentiality

We have a duty of care to both adults and children to maintain confidentiality at all times, except in cases where to do so would put the individual or another person at risk of harm.

Recognising abuse

It is important to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, but defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection can be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting.

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. For detailed definitions of abuse and signs and symptoms of abuse see Appendix 2.

Protecting the vulnerable in our church and community

The church has a named safeguarding officer and a deputy safeguarding officer who will be responsible for safeguarding issues.

Name of appointed safeguarding officer.....

Contact details:- Phone number.....

E-mail address.....

Name of appointed deputy safeguarding officer.....

Contact details:- Phone number.....

E-mail address.....

Activities and events within the church will be organised in such a way as to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships whilst minimising the opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusation. Consent forms will be used for children's activities, appropriate records will be kept and adequate insurance will be in place.

As a church we will follow safer recruitment processes for all workers and volunteers who have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, which includes:

- Obtaining disclosure and barring service checks (DBS)
- Applicants completing an application form
- Applicants completing a probationary period
- Interviewing candidates
- Taking up references
- Providing workers with a job description including safeguarding responsibilities
- Completion of self-declaration forms

Such workers and volunteers will be given full safeguarding training and support in their role.

The leadership of the church and all paid staff and volunteers will work within a code of conduct set down by the church (see Appendix 3) and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed.

If we become aware of someone within our congregation who is known to have harmed children or adults in the past, the safeguarding officer will co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities to put in place a plan to minimise the risk of harm to children and adults. This may include supervision, pastoral care and the possible use of a contract to ensure the individual keeps to expected boundaries, which may include times they are not allowed to be in the church premises.

What to do in the event of a disclosure or allegation of abuse

If a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure or an allegation against someone it is important that it is dealt with in a calm and caring manner, the following should be observed:

- Stay calm and listen carefully (preferably without interrupting)
- Do not investigate or ask any leading questions
- Assure them that what they tell you will be treated confidentially but do not promise to keep secret what they have told you
- Explain that you will have to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm
- Inform the church safeguarding officer as soon as possible (unless they are implicated in the allegation, in which case inform the deputy)
- Make a written record of the disclosure or allegation and date and sign it, this should then be given to the safeguarding officer and kept securely

Procedure to follow in the event of a concern of abuse

If there is an immediate risk of harm you should contact the appropriate emergency services.

Where it is judged that there is no immediate risk of harm the following will occur:

- The concern will be reported to the church safeguarding officer who will decide if a concern warrants a referral to the statutory authorities
- A confidential report will be made and kept securely and a copy passed to the authority if a referral is made
- The person about whom the allegation is made should not be informed if it is judged that to do so could place another person at risk, in any event if authorities are involved they should be consulted before any decision is made

Allegations against a church member or volunteer

For any concern relating to children the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted. Any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the LADO, this will cover communication with the worker, any suspension and investigation. The LADO will decide when to inform the worker and the church will follow this advice.

For concerns relating to adults, adult social care will be contacted.

If the church withdraws permission for an individual to work with children or adults at risk, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired or been made redundant, a referral must be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if it believes that the individual has committed an offence that would lead to inclusion on a barred list.

In such cases the church must also inform the Charities Commission if they are registered as a charity.

Supporting those affected by abuse

The church leadership is committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the church.

Review

The leadership of the church will review this policy annually and amend and update it as required.

Date of the last review.....

Policy reviewed by.....

Appendix 1

Safeguarding policy statement

This safeguarding policy statement has been agreed by the leadership of Mount Hermon Chapel Addingham.

This church is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and to ensuring their well-being.

- We recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church
- We believe that all children and adults at risk have the right to know they are valued within our church and can safely access every aspect of church life
- We respect the rights of all children and adults at risk as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- We recognise we have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect of children under 18 years of age
- We recognise that we have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial and institutional abuse and neglect of adults at risk
- We recognise that domestic abuse can affect both adults and children and is inconsistent with the Christian way of life
- We recognise that we have a responsibility to help prevent extremism
- We will report to the relevant authorities any abuse that we discover or suspect
- Where we suspect a criminal offence has been committed, we will contact the police as soon as possible
- We understand that adult services will be responsible for investigating all allegations and suspicions of abuse relating to adults at risk, and children's services where there are concerns about a child
- We acknowledge that the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will have responsibility for dealing with all allegations about people working with children, whether paid or voluntary

We as a church are committed to:

- Providing a safe and loving environment, where safeguarding is taken seriously and there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse
- Ensuring that we keep up to date with any national and local developments relating to safeguarding
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure everyone works within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy
- Supporting the safeguarding officer in their work in order to protect children and adults at risk
- Following safer recruitment procedures for all paid staff and volunteers having unsupervised contact with children and / or adults at risk
- Providing training and supervision for all staff and volunteers that work with children and adults at risk
- Providing support and pastoral care to all those in the church who are affected by abuse
- Providing an environment where people feel valued and empowered to speak to us if they are suffering harm
- Supporting and supervising those who may pose a risk to children or adults by implementing contracts of behaviour, whilst remembering the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount

If after a risk assessment is carried out it is found that someone poses an unmanageable risk to those in need of protection and cannot safely attend our church, we will ensure they are supported and offered pastoral care whilst signposting them to appropriate agencies.

Signed on behalf of the church leadership

Name.....

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix 2

Definitions of abuse

What constitutes abuse and neglect in children

The following definitions have been taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and apply in England.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

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

Emotional abuse

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

Sexual abuse

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

Child sexual exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and / or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.

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, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Extremism

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to:

- sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination
- justify discrimination towards women and girls
- persuade others that minorities are inferior
- argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

What constitutes abuse of adults at risk

Abuse in any form is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person, it may consist of a single act or repeated acts. Abuse can be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be neglect or an omission to act, it can be coercion to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not or cannot consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and can result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the infliction of pain or physical injury which can be caused deliberately or through lack of care.

Psychological or emotional abuse

These are acts that can cause mental distress or anguish. It can also be behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult at risk's emotional health and development.

Neglect, or Act of omission

This is repeatedly depriving an adult at risk of any assistance they need to carry out important activities of daily living, including failure to intervene in behaviours which can be dangerous to the adult at risk or to others.

Sexual abuse

This is engaging a vulnerable adult in any form of sexual act which they have not or cannot consent to, or where the other party is in a position of trust or authority and uses that power to override the lack of consent.

Financial or material abuse

This is the inappropriate use, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions from a vulnerable adult, including coercing people to invest or bequeath money solely for the benefit of the perpetrator.

Discriminatory abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk because of factors such as age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability. Discriminatory abuse can link to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of an adult at risk by a regime or individuals within an institution such as a hospital or a care home or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor care and neglect or poor professional practice.

Signs of possible abuse in children

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries
- Frozen watchfulness

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

This is a cultural (not religious) procedure whereby parts of a female genitalia are removed – can also be referred to as female circumcision. This is normally undertaken on pre-pubescent girls, who are either taken abroad for the procedure or a ‘practitioner’ will come to the UK. There can be no anaesthetic and no sterile equipment used. Complications include serious infection, septicaemia, numerous gynaecological problems and in some cases death.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home

- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia

Signs of possible emotional abuse

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Negative statements about self
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying

Signs of possible neglect

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice
- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the carer does not respond to
- Frequently hungry
- Overeating junk food

Signs of extremism

- Involvement in gangs or association with known terrorists
- Family holidays to countries with known terrorist links
- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger

Possible effects of abuse

The sustained physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect of children can have major long-term effects on all aspects of their health, development and wellbeing. Children can grow up to feel worthless, unlovable, betrayed, powerless, confused, frightened and mistrustful of others. They might feel, wrongly, that the abuse is their fault.

Possible effects of physical abuse

Physical abuse can lead directly to neurological damage, physical injuries, disability and in extreme cases death. Physical abuse has been linked to aggressive behaviour in children, emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties.

Possible effects of emotional abuse

If a child suffers sustained emotional abuse there is increasing evidence of adverse long-term effects on their development. Emotional abuse has a significant impact on a developing child's mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. It can be especially damaging in infancy and can be as important as the other more visible forms of abuse, in terms of its impact on the child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may be features in families where children are exposed to such abuse.

Possible effects of sexual abuse

Disturbed behaviour including self-harm, inappropriate sexual behaviour, sadness, depression and loss of self-esteem have all been linked to sexual abuse. Its adverse effects may last long into adult life. The severity of the impact on the child is believed to increase the longer the abuse continues, the more serious the abuse, the younger the child at the start, and the closeness of the relationship to the abuser. The child's ability to cope with the experience of sexual abuse, once recognised, can be strengthened by the support of a non-abusive adult carer who believes the child, helps the child understand the abuse, and is able to offer help and protection. Some adults who sexually abuse children were themselves sexually abused as children.

Possible effects of neglect

Neglect can seriously impair a child's health, physical and intellectual growth and development, and can cause long term difficulties with social functioning, relationships and educational progress. Extreme cases of neglect can cause death.

Signs of possible abuse in adults

Possible indicators of physical abuse

- Multiple bruising
- Fractures
- Burns
- Bed sores
- Fear
- Depression
- Unexplained weight loss
- Assault (can be intentional or reckless)

Possible indicators of neglect and acts of omission

- Malnutrition
- Untreated medical problems
- Bed sores
- Confusion
- Over-sedation
- Deprivation of meals may constitute 'wilful neglect'

Possible indicators of psychological and emotional abuse

- Fear
- Depression
- Confusion
- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Deprivation of liberty could be false imprisonment
- Aggressive shouting causing fear of violence in a public place may be an offence against Public Order Act 1986, or harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Bruising
- Soreness around the genitals
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- A preoccupation with anything sexual
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Rape
- Indecent assault

Possible indicators of financial and material abuse

- Unexplained withdrawals from the bank
- Unusual activity in the bank accounts
- Unpaid bills
- Unexplained shortage of money
- Reluctance on the part of the person with responsibility for the funds to provide basic food and clothes etc
- Fraud
- Theft

Possible indicators of organisational abuse

- Inflexible and non-negotiable systems and routines
- Lack of consideration of dietary requirements
- Name calling, inappropriate ways of addressing people
- Lack of adequate physical care – an unkempt appearance

Possible indicators of self-neglect

This includes various behaviours – disregarding one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings resulting in a risk that impact on the adult's wellbeing – this could consist of behaviours such as hoarding.

Possible indicators of modern slavery

Modern slavery is an international crime, it can include victims that have been brought from overseas, and vulnerable people in the UK. Slave masters and traffickers will deceive, coerce and force adults into a life of abuse, callous treatment and slavery.

Possible indicators of domestic abuse

Definition of domestic abuse:

- Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse... by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so-called 'honour-based violence', female genital mutilation, forced marriage.
- Age range extended down to 16

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse

Abuse can be experienced as harassment, insults or similar actions due to race, religion, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation.

Possible indicators of sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation is a subset of sexual abuse. It involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive 'something' (eg accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Appendix 3

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working within our church

This code of conduct is principally designed to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk involved in any activity within our church. It will help you by identifying required standards of behaviour as you carry out your role as a worker or volunteer. Following this code of conduct will reduce the likelihood of any misinterpretations of your actions. It is key for you to remember that you have been allocated a position of trust and responsibility and you must act in accordance with this.

- DO treat all of those involved equally with respect and dignity – offensive, discriminatory or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated
- DO understand your role in any policies and procedures eg safeguarding policy or health and safety policy – be clear about what you should do if a concern about the safety or welfare of any vulnerable person arises
- DO co-operate fully with other volunteers and professionals
- DO consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance
- DO show respect for your peers and participants, and treat them how you would want to be treated yourself
- DO understand that inappropriate behaviour will be followed up by the Designated Safeguarding Officer in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer as appropriate
- DO act as a role model for young people, your behaviour may influence others
- DO ensure that permission is sought from parents for any photographs or videos of children or young people
- DO remember that your behaviour towards participants to whom you are in a position of trust should reflect your role. Sexual relationships with anyone under the age of 18 in your care will be treated as an abuse of trust and dealt with through disciplinary procedures
- DO be vigilant of changes in behaviour and inappropriate conduct in other workers and volunteers and report anything untoward to your Designated Safeguarding Officer
- DO maintain professional boundaries with all children and parents that you work with

There are a number of things that you must ensure do not happen whilst you are working or volunteering in this organisation:

- Never spend time alone with children out of sight of others
- Never take or drop off a child alone unless you are following agreed procedures and have agreed safeguards in place
- Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching or physical abuse
- Do not take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or young person or affects their self-esteem
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Do not allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored
- Never make a child cry as a form of control
- Do not do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves
- Do not make promises you cannot keep. All allegations or disclosures on child protection issues must be reported on
- Avoid favouritism and special friendships

This code of conduct protects the children, young people and vulnerable adults we work with. It protects you as a worker or volunteer and the organisation, by reducing the risk of anyone working with us using their role to access children or adults at risk to cause harm.

It also helps to identify practices that could be misinterpreted or lead to a false allegation being made.

Any breach of the code of conduct may lead to action being taken.

Serious breaches may result in a referral to Police, Social Services or the Local Designated Officer (LADO).

All workers or volunteers are expected to report any breach to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Mount Hermon Chapel – safeguarding - relevant contact details

Safeguarding officer

Name:

Tel:

E-mail:

Deputy safeguarding officer

Name:

Tel:

E-mail:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Name:

Tel:

E-mail:

In the Bradford district, these are the numbers that you can ring for advice and to make a referral:

- During office hours (8.30am – 5pm Monday to Thursday, 4.30pm on Friday) call Children’s Social Services Initial Contact Point on **01274 437500**
- At all other times, Social Services Emergency Duty Team on **01274 431010**
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at **IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM**, contact the police on **999**
- For all general enquiries, please contact Children’s Specialist Services on **01274 435600**