



Our Safeguarding Policy

For the protection of children, and of adults with care and support needs.

The Leadership of Ladyfield Church is committed 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. Children 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. Adults with care and support needs also have a right to protection.

We have a comprehensive safeguarding policy and code of conduct, which is accessible on our website [Ladyfield.org] with a printed copy available in the main foyer.

If you have any concerns about the protection of children or adults while on our premises, or simply any questions about protection, please contact one of the following, who will deal with your concern in strict confidence:

Stephen Heal	Ladyfield Safeguarding Co-ordinator	01249 783817
Shan Shiles	Ladyfield Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator	01249 652159

Ladyfield Church is a member of an independent safeguarding specialist organisation called thirty-one:eight. While we would prefer you to raise any concerns with us first, you can call their helpline on 0303 003 11 11. There is also much helpful information on their website thirtyoneeight.org especially their range of help leaflets.



Or if you prefer you can contact the Integrated Front Door for Wiltshire Council's MASH:
Phone 0300 456 0108 (during working hours)
Phone 0300 456 0100 (out of hours – 24/7)
E-mail mash@wiltshire.gov.uk

**If something doesn't feel right . . .
it probably isn't right. . .
so please report it . . .**





Hungerdown Lane, Chippenham, SN14 0BA

Safeguarding Policy for Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

November 2021

		Date
Prepared by	Stephen Heal	November 2021
Approved by	Trustees	8 November 2021
Next review due		November 2022

Ladyfield Evangelical Church Safeguarding Policy for Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

A member of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC)

Name of Designated Safeguarding Co-Ordinator: Mr Stephen Heal, telephone 01249 783817

Name of Deputy Safeguarding Co-Ordinator: Mrs Shan Shiles, telephone 01249 652159

Charity Number: Exempted from registration through membership of the FIEC

Insurance Company: Ansvar Insurance

1. Introduction

Ladyfield Church undertakes the following activities with children:

- Under 5s: parent and toddler groups, crèche during church services
- 5-11s: Sunday school classes on Sunday mornings, midweek children's clubs and occasional holiday clubs.
- mid-week youth groups (ages 11-18)

Children from local schools are sometimes welcomed to learn about Christianity and Christian places of worship. These groups are overseen by teachers. Members of the church go into some schools to lead assemblies and at secondary level to participate in religious and marital education lessons.

Children of all ages are welcome in the main church services but must be supervised by a parent / carer.

Adults with care and support needs are welcomed to the main church services but there are no regular specific activities for them. There may be an annual Christmas lunch for the Gateway Club, an organisation for adults with learning difficulties.

2. Our commitment

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. Children 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. Adults with care and support needs also have a right to protection. We have therefore adopted the procedures set out in

this safeguarding policy and code of conduct 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 the churches safeguarding organisation **thirtyone:eight**, to which Ladyfield Church subscribes.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures.
- Ensure that activities involving children or vulnerable adults are supervised and assisted only by those appointed for this role: in this document these are referred to as 'workers', including both volunteers and employees.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and regularly review the Code of Conduct attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation.
- support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Deputy in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

3. Prevention

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.

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.

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers are appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- A disclosure and barring check is completed before volunteers begin to work through the church.
- Qualifications, where relevant, have been verified.
- A suitable training programme is provided including safeguarding training, using copies of this safeguarding policy and Code of Conduct.

Safeguarding training

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 safeguarding training on a regular basis.

A record will be kept by the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator of all those appointed as workers, their training and their agreement to comply with this Policy and Code of Conduct.

4. Code of Conduct

As an organisation / 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 to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation. We therefore have a code of conduct for workers with children and vulnerable adults, which is appended to this policy.

5. Responding to allegations of abuse

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

- Any person with concerns or who is aware of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Stephen Heal (the Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

Tel: 01249 783817

Email: officeladyfield@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 Lead, then the report should be made to:

Name: Shan Shiles (the Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

Tel: 01249 552159

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 or Deputy should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

Name of local authority: Wiltshire

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Integrated Front Door

Tel: 0300 456 0108 (Mon-Fri 8:45am – 5:00pm)

Or: 0300 456 0100 (out of working hours – 24 hour service)

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, including:
 - The Church Elders and Trustees, who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident. [Unless the concerns relate to the behaviour of the Elders or Trustees.]
 - Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) if the allegation concerns a 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 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 the place of worship / organisation 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 Lead(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.

5.1 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 Lead/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families (through the MASH as detailed above) 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker / volunteer whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to the Wiltshire Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) , 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 additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the DOFA if they are involved.

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

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regard to 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 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 Services to decide not the church.

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 who have contact with or are part of the church.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the 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.

7. Appendices:

1. Code of Conduct
2. One page summary for notice boards – at the front of this document



Hungerdown Lane, Chippenham, SN14 0BA

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

What is a Code of Conduct?

1. This code of conduct:
 - sets out minimum standards of behaviour for church volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults;
 - provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards;
 - aims to protect the reputation of both volunteers and the church;
 - aims to protect the rights and interests of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved with the church.
2. This code of conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.
3. This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

Who does it apply to?

4. This policy applies to all volunteers at Ladyfield Evangelical Church, and potentially to any person employed by the church who works with children or vulnerable adults. (Note: a child is any person under the age of eighteen).
5. It applies to those who regularly work with children and / or vulnerable adults. Other people may occasionally contribute to the church's work, for instance as visiting speakers. These people will not be subject to the full requirements of this policy but will not be left unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults.

What is my responsibility?

6. Church volunteers need to:
 - read this policy;
 - ensure they understand it;
 - ask if there are any points that are unclear;
 - use this code of conduct, alongside other church policies, to guide them in their role.
7. Breach of this code of conduct may lead to suspension or removal from working with children and vulnerable groups.

What are the main points?

8. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of behaviour from church volunteers.
9. Volunteers represent the church and are trusted to act in a way which promotes the church's interests and protects its reputation.
10. Volunteers are accountable for their actions and should seek advice if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

Volunteer responsibilities

11. All volunteers know that:
 - They are in positions of trust in relation to children or vulnerable adults. They ensure that the power imbalance is never used for personal advantage or gratification. They avoid behaviour which might be interpreted by others as an abuse of the position of trust and report any incident with this potential to the church's leadership.
 - they have a duty to protect the interests of children or vulnerable adults and accept the obligations inherent in that responsibility.
12. Certain behaviours are at odds with a position of trust. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Harassment or discrimination.
 - Loss of personal civility including: personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects), unwanted physical contact (pushing, shoving, hitting) or the threat of this.
 - Using offensive or demeaning language in front of children.

Communication with children, including social contact outside of the church

13. Volunteers use their judgement when requesting or accepting any social contact (including through social media). They must not accept any request from children they work with at the church for contact via any social media platform.

14. Volunteers do not make sexual innuendos, nor make any comments trivialising alcohol or drug abuse.
15. Occasionally, children may develop an infatuation for a volunteer. In such situations, the advice of the safeguarding lead must be sought. Volunteers should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is beyond reproach.

Gifts, rewards and favouritism

16. Volunteers only give gifts, rewards or treats to children as part of the church's wider policy. No individual favouritism must be shown.

Physical contact including intimate/personal care and behaviour management

17. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Any physical contact will be in response to the child's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, background and any care plan.
18. The use of physical intervention including the use of reasonable force will always be a last resort to maintain a child's safety and / or good order. Any instances should be reported to the safeguarding lead.
19. Volunteers understand that:
 - on a daily basis, it may be entirely appropriate and proper for volunteers to have physical contact with children and that they do so in ways appropriate to their role and in relation to the child's individual needs.
 - some children are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Whenever possible, adults seek the child's permission before initiating contact and are sensitive to any signs that the child may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.
 - they have a responsibility to ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate.
 - they must never touch a child in a way which may represent a misuse of authority or considered indecent.
 - physical contact must never be secretive, nor for the gratification of the adult.
20. If a volunteer believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances must be immediately reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy and recorded in writing. If appropriate, the safeguarding lead will consult with the Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA).
21. Volunteers understand that a child who has suffered previous abuse or neglect may associate physical contact with such experiences. They recognise that such a child may seek out inappropriate physical contact and know to deter the child sensitively to help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. Volunteers know that they must never indulge in play that involves rough-and-tumble or fun fights.

22. Children with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday activities. The arrangements are understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Volunteers always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently.

One to one situations

23. Volunteers carefully consider the welfare needs of children when with them in a one to one situation. All spaces in the church are set up to allow any activity to be easily observed by other volunteers in the church. Windows and doors are kept sufficiently clear from display materials to allow rooms to be overlooked. Internal doors remain open when practicable.

Confidentiality

24. In the course of their work at the church, volunteers may become aware of sensitive information about an individual. Information should only ever be shared in the best interests of a child. Any information which causes concern that a child may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm must be reported to the safeguarding lead.

25. Volunteers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or improper disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions.

26. Volunteers must not use any information obtained in the course of their work to cause damage to the church or for personal gain or benefit. Nor should they pass information on to others who may use it in such a way.

Mobile Phones

27. Volunteers should take great care when using personal mobile phones for any purpose while working with children. If it is necessary to take or make calls, text messages or access social media, this should be done away from children, preferably in a different room.

28. Mobile phones may be used to take photographs of groups of children. In line with GDPR legislation and the Ladyfield Data Protection Policy, these images should not be taken without the child's consent or published without parental consent. They should not be stored for longer than necessary.

Dress

29. Volunteers should ensure that their dress is appropriate to their role at the church, the activities they are involved in and any health and safety requirements related to these.

Misconduct

30. All volunteers should conduct themselves in a matter which will not bring them or the church into disrepute.

31. It is essential that volunteers inform the Safeguarding Lead of any police investigation, charge, caution, reprimand, fine or conviction immediately. All such disclosures will be handled in confidence but this may result in a suspension from volunteering while an investigation takes place. If a volunteer is subject to an investigation by social services then this must also be brought to the attention of the safeguarding lead immediately.

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:22