



**Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young  
People and Vulnerable Adults**

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## Glossary of roles

Role name	Description
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>The Directors of Real Life Church, Sutton Coldfield</b>
<b>Employed Workers</b>	<b>Anyone in paid employment in Real Life Church</b>
<b>Workers</b>	<b>Employed Workers or volunteers working with Children and Young People in Real Life Church, who has been DBS checked for Real Life Church and who has signed the Safeguarding Commitment</b>
<b>Helpers</b>	<b>People who have supervised contact with Children and Young People through activities organised by Real Life Kids or Real Life Youth who do not have a relevant DBS check and/ or have not signed the Safeguarding Commitment</b>
<b>Young Leaders</b>	<b>Helpers who are under the age of 18</b>

## 1. Details about Real Life Church

Name of Organisation: REAL LIFE CHURCH, SUTTON COLDFIELD

Meetings Address: SUTTON COLDFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, JOCKEY ROAD,  
SUTTON COLDFIELD, WEST MIDLANDS, B73 5PT

Tel No: 07929124592

Email address: info@findreallife.co.uk

Membership of Organisation: Part of the Catalyst Sphere of the New Frontiers  
family of churches

Charity Number: 1149821

Company Number: 8182165

Real Life Church, Sutton Coldfield is registered with the Charity Commission and  
with Companies House. (Hereafter referred to as Real Life Church.)

Registered Address: 3 Aragon Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 6BQ

Insurance Company: Public Liability Insurance with Ansvar Insurance (Policy No.  
CHF 6068817)

**The vision statement of the church is: We believe God has called us as a people to be a large, influential, reproducing church that is all about Jesus and good to our community.**

In fulfilling this vision

- We welcome children and young people into the life of our community
- We have a programme of events for children and young people
- We seek to teach children and young people about Jesus and demonstrate biblical values to them
- We welcome vulnerable adults into the life of our community and seek to care for them

Real Life Church meets on Sunday mornings at the Sutton Coldfield Grammar School for Girls. We use a meeting hall for teaching and worship and other rooms where children and young people receive age appropriate teaching and activities. We do not have sole use of the school; other groups use the premises at the same time as we do. From time to time we organise and run children's parties or events and we run fortnightly evenings for young people. At present Real Life Church does not work specifically with vulnerable adults although we would welcome vulnerable adults into our Sunday morning meetings and the life of Real Life Church.

## **1. Our Commitment**

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop to their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS).

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its Workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.

- Ensure, as far as is possible for us in rented premises, that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- File a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with CCPAS and the local authority (Children's Social Services) and any amendments subsequently published. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

The leadership safeguarding statement for Real Life Church is shown in Appendix 1.

## **1. Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse**

## **2. Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

In order to safeguard those in our meeting places and organisation we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary*

*support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

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

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

## **1. Definitions of abuse**

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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The four definitions of abuse operating in England are based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)' under the headings; neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. Detailed definitions are provided in Appendix 2.

The following definition of vulnerable adult abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000): 'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons'. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Detailed definitions under the headings; physical

abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial or material abuse, neglect or act of omission, discriminatory abuse and institutional abuse are provided in Appendix 3.

## **1. Signs and symptoms of abuse**

Various signs could be indicators that child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect) has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life. A detailed list of possible signs of abuse is provided in Appendix 4.

Various signs could be indicators that abuse of a vulnerable adult (physical, sexual, psychological, financial or material, neglect or omission, discriminatory or institutional) has taken place. A detailed list of possible signs of abuse is provided in Appendix 5.

## **1. How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse**

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't promise confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.



HELPFUL RESPONSES	DON'T SAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have done the right thing in telling me</li> <li>• I am glad you have told me</li> <li>• I will try to help you</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why didn't you tell anyone before?</li> <li>• I can't believe it!</li> <li>• Are you sure this is true?</li> <li>• Why? How? When? Who? Where?</li> <li>• I am shocked, don't tell anyone else</li> </ul>

## MAKE A RECORD

As soon as possible after a child tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

### The record should:

- Be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- Be legible and state the facts accurately (if hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- Include the child's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- Include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- Include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed
- Include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words
- Include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- Include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- Be signed and dated
- Be kept secure and confidential and made available only to:
  - the Safeguarding Team
  - the church leader (as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved)

–representatives of the professional agencies involved

## **1. Safeguarding awareness**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all Workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our Workers will receive training to support them in their role, as appropriate.

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

## **1. Responding to allegations of abuse**

**Under no circumstances should a Worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. They should follow the procedures as below:**

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Mr Andrew Pinder (07967 676414) (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Pete Brindley (07786 924306) or Mrs Ade Larigo (07766 462945) (hereafter the "Deputies"). If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputies, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services or take advice from CCPAS as above.

- Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company and the person within the Catalyst Sphere of New Frontiers who oversees Real Life Church: Andy Martin (07979 497736).
- 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 a Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from CCPAS.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputies in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from CCPAS, although the Leadership hope that members of Real Life Church will use the procedure detailed above. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the 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.

The local Children's Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 0121 303 1888. The out of hours emergency number is 0121 675 4806.

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 0121 303 1234. The out of hours emergency number is 0121 675 4806.

The Police can be contacted by calling 101 or 999 if life is in danger or a crime is being committed.

## **1. Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

## **1. Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse**

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or CCPAS) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (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 CCPAS (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

## **1. Allegations of sexual abuse**

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

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or the Police. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by CCPAS if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

## **1. Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection**

### **1. Suspicions or allegations of physical or sexual abuse**

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively CCPAS can be contacted for advice.

## **1. Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children**

If an accusation is made against a Worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the Worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

### **1. Prevention**

### **2. Safe recruitment**

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

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed by the person recruiting (children's work leader, youth leader etc.)
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate

- A criminal records disclosure has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period of 3 months
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy, knows how to report concerns and has signed an undertaking to work within the policy and procedures.

All Directors/Trustees of Real Life Church will also have an enhanced criminal records disclosure performed prior to their appointment.

## **1. Young Leaders (under the age of 18)**

In law young leaders under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that the young leader is helped to develop their skills, attitudes and experience. A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children. When considering ratios of staff to children the young leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader. The Safeguarding Policy and procedures applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person. The permission of parents or carers needs to be sought for the young leader just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age.

## **1. Pastoral Care**

### **2. Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate and providing support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of Real Life Church. Where possible, care will be co-ordinated through life groups but professional help will be sought where necessary.

#### **1. Working with offenders**

When someone attending Real Life Church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the individual's involvement in activities relating to Real Life Church will be supervised and the individual will be offered pastoral care. To ensure commitment to safeguarding the Leadership will set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. The boundaries will be informed by risk assessments and advice from CCPAS or other statutory agencies, as appropriate.

#### **1. Practice Guidelines**

As an organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable Workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

At present Real Life Church activities are focussed on work with children and young people; guidelines appropriate to other groups will be added as the church's activities develop in the future.

#### **1. General code of conduct for Workers**

The following sections describe general practice guidelines which will be followed by Workers involved in Real Life Church activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults. Specific additional guidelines for individual activities will be added when needs arise.

## **1. Duty of care and position of trust**

Before individuals start working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, they need to understand and acknowledge the duty of care they have and the responsibilities and trust inherent to their role. Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult Worker and a child is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, this should be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The trusting relationship between Worker and child, young person or vulnerable adult means the Worker should never:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

## **1. Safeguarding principles**

Workers will be expected to adhere to the following safeguarding principles when running activities on behalf of the church, where Children, Young People and vulnerable adults are not accompanied by a parent or carer:

- Ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.



- Consideration given to the number of Workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both (see below).
- Ensuring that Helpers act in a manner consistent with these guidelines.
- Having a clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a Worker is working alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Ensuring that the level of personal care (e.g. toileting) provided is appropriate to the needs of the individual and is only provided by Workers or the parent/ carer of the child/ young adult/ vulnerable adult.
- Clear guidelines on personal privacy e.g. avoiding activities such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised.
- Only Workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Other adults should not be allowed free access except as stated in Section 5.1.7.
- Making a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time.

Leadership will ensure that appropriate ratios apply in activities with children or young people in accordance with the guidelines below.

<b>Age range</b>	<b>Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities</b>	<b>Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities</b>
<b>0-2 years</b>	<b>1:3 (minimum 2)</b>	<b>1:3 (minimum 2)</b>
<b>3 years</b>	<b>1:4 (minimum 2)</b>	<b>1:4 (minimum 2)</b>
<b>4-7 years</b>	<b>1:8 (minimum 2)</b>	<b>1:6 (minimum 2)</b>
<b>8-12 years</b>	<b>2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children</b>	<b>2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children</b>
<b>13 years and over</b>	<b>2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children</b>	<b>2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children</b>

## **1. Registration and record keeping**

When a child becomes involved in an activity run by Real Life Church, where they are not accompanied by a parent/carer, it is important at the outset that a general information and consent form is completed and returned giving contact details of parents/carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements.

A register of those attending such activities should also be maintained, together with a register of Workers and Helpers. This should reflect arrival and departure, particularly if the participant does not attend the whole session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities.

Any issues of concern that arise during a session will be recorded and reported to the Kids/ Youth team leader. These concerns will be sent to the member of the Leadership Team responsible for Kids/ Youth work and kept on an electronic log. Parents will also be informed where this is appropriate.

It may, at times, be inappropriate to release information to a parent or carer that has been disclosed by a young person, without first consulting the statutory agencies.

Concerns can be raised many years after an event and therefore records should be kept indefinitely as advised by insurance companies.

### **1. Guidelines for discipline**

Workers in Real Life Church activities will behave in a manner that supports church values and as excellent role models to the people under their care. When behavioural correction of Children or Young People is required the following guidelines will be followed.

- Do not compare a child, young person or adult with another in the group; rather encourage and affirm and, if possible, give them responsibility for appropriate tasks.
- Build healthy relationships and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect others to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give the quieter and/or well behaved attention and resist allowing the demanding individuals to take all your time and energy.

- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- If children and young people in particular are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.
- NEVER smack or hit anyone and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.
- Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry you may deal with the situation unwisely.
- Set boundaries and make sure everyone understands what action will be taken if not adhered to.
- Every person is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows therefore each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.

For those who are continuously disruptive:

- Encourage Workers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.

## **2. Health and safety**

Building and equipment safety and risks associated with regular church activities will be managed by means of risk assessments which will be reviewed annually or when a significant change in activity or facilities takes place. The person responsible for ensuring risk assessments are carried out will be appointed by the Leadership and recorded on the Health and Safety Policy. Individual risk assessments for activities other than regular activities will be the responsibility of the activity leader.

A first aid kit and accident book will be made available. A number of medically qualified people attend the church regularly and will be able to provide first aid if required. All accidents, however minor, should be recorded in an accident book. In the event of an accident, the parent/carer of a child or young person should be asked to read and sign the accident book. Whether a vulnerable adult can sign the book will depend on the nature and extent of their disability. If the child, young person or vulnerable adult is not collected at the end of a session, the parent or carer should be contacted to explain what has happened.

Food will not be prepared on the premises but snacks and drinks will be provided during church activities. Workers should follow good personal hygiene and

ensure that all food and drinks are stored appropriately. Hot drinks should not be carried through a children's activity area and not be placed unattended within the reach of young children. Fresh drinking water will be available at all times and children's snack times will be supervised. Appropriate systems will be in place via registration forms to ensure children do not have access to foods/drinks to which they are allergic.

### **1.Intimate care**

It is recognised that from time to time young children may need assistance with toileting during church activities. Workers should adhere to the following guidelines.

- Only Workers may take Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults to the toilet.
- Ensure that another adult is informed when you are taking a child to the toilet.
- The level of personal care, e.g. toileting, must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst accepting that the child may have special needs.
- Try to ensure that the child's parent/carer or at least another adult is present if a child has soiled their underclothes and needs washing.

### **1. Parents/carers staying with children's activities**

There may be occasions where parents or carers ask if they can stay to watch the children's activity. It is important to be open and transparent. Real Life Church will apply the following guidelines to ensure that the involvement of people who are not Workers is appropriate.

1. Parents/carers can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made.
2. It can help certain children settle into a group if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a Worker but they would be required to undertake the same recruitment and selection procedure as with any other Worker.

Children under the age of 3 years remain the responsibility of their parent/ carer at all times and should not be left unsupervised.

For some children with special needs, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This will be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

### **1. Praying with children and young people**

It is important to make parents/carers aware that prayer is an integral part of church life and that we may pray either individually or corporately for their child at the child's request. In the unlikely event of a parent/carer requesting that their child does not receive individual prayer this must be respected. Prayer for children must always be carried out using the following guidelines.

Prior to praying, always make sure you have the child's permission and always pray in an open area where other leaders and/or children are around. Where possible people known to the children should pray and only those authorised by the church leadership should be involved in this ministry.

Ask the child if there is anything specific they are requesting prayer for and listen to their reply. Speak quietly and calmly; never shout or raise your voice. Don't laugh at or dismiss out of hand if they want to pray for something you consider irrelevant (e.g. my cat's poorly). While listening to the child be alert to child protection issues and take appropriate action directly. If they do not have specific needs or requests, simply ask God to bless them.

If you have prayed about a specific issue it may be helpful to write it down afterwards and give it to the child so that, if they want, they can let their parents/carers know and remember it themselves.

If a child/young person becomes distressed, stop praying. Stay calm and gently ask them if they would like to say what has caused their distress. Depending on the child's response you could consider whether they would feel more comfortable with someone else. If unsure or the child/young person remains distressed do not continue praying but stay with them until they are calm, offering them reassurance and complete acceptance. Then talk to the child's parents/carers, assuming you have no child protection concerns.

When praying, consider your body language, particularly in relation to things like your height and the height of the child/young person. Try to ensure you are on their level rather than towering over them and also avoid crowding. Refrain from placing your hands on a child/young person's head as they may find this frightening or threatening. If you think they may appreciate something like an arm round a shoulder or their hand being held always ask them if this is what they

would like before doing it. Remember also that a child/young person may not, for example, understand things like 'speaking in tongues' and it is important therefore not to do anything that may cause confusion or distress.

Use clear uncomplicated language. Reflect back what the child has said to you, to show you have understood their prayer request. If a child says they are feeling tired, you could reply "let us pray for you as you are feeling tired". Keep the prayers simple and short so you can then be confident your prayers have been understood by the child.

Avoid giving specific advice about problems involving decisions. A child or young person could be very susceptible to suggestion, particularly if they are distressed. Even if you believe you have heard from God about their situation, it would be far wiser to pray this through on your own or with another leader. Never advise a child/young person to stop taking medication or cease seeing professionals involved in their care or welfare.

Never promise confidentiality. Should a child/young person wish to disclose to you a situation such as abuse within a prayer ministry context, you have a duty to pass this on to your church's child safeguarding coordinator and possibly Children's Social Services or the police. You may need to gently give clear boundaries but reassure the child that if you share anything about their situation with someone else it will be on a 'need to know' basis only and you will make sure they are supported and cared for.

A child should never be told they are demonised, possessed or oppressed by the devil or evil spirits.

### **1. Filming or taking photographs**

From time to time the church may wish to take photographs or video of activities for legitimate use in line with the church's vision and objectives, and may post them to the church website or Facebook page.

Permission must be obtained from any children involved before taking photos/video and the church must obtain documented permission from their parents/guardians.

It must also be made clear why the image(s) are being taken, what it will be used for and who might look at the pictures.

### **1. Electronic Communication**

The following policy applies to electronic communication by people who work with children or young people on behalf of Real Life Church.

- Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age (up to year 6) is inappropriate and will be avoided.
- Parental consent will be obtained prior to communication with young people under 16.

Other guidelines for use of electronic communication with young people are in Appendix 6.

### **1. Transport of Young People**

Parental consent will be obtained prior to transporting young people (under the age of 18) for a Real Life Church event. All drivers will be DBS checked, will be over the age of 21 and have held their licence for a minimum of two years. Vehicles used will be roadworthy, have a valid MOT certificate, road tax and appropriate

insurance. Drivers must be in a fit state to drive, this includes not being under the influence of alcohol or drugs and using necessary medical interventions, such as glasses or prescribed medication, where deemed appropriate. Drivers must drive safely adhering to the highway code and speed limits



## **1. Working in Partnership**

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We will therefore develop clear guidelines in regards 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.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Signed by Mr Andrew Pinder on behalf of the Directors of Real Life Church, Sutton Coldfield

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **Appendix 1. Leadership Safeguarding Statement**

The Leadership of Real Life Church, Sutton Coldfield recognises the importance of its ministry /work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the leadership of Real Life Church on 11th September 2014.

Real Life Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.

### **Specifically:**

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of Real Life Church unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

**We are committed to:**

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by Real Life Church.
- Supporting parents, carers and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in Real Life Church affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

**We recognise:**

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.**

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult then please speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for Real Life Church.

Mr Andrew Pinder, Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Mr Pete Brindley, Mrs Ade Larigo,, Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinators

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been lodged with CCPAS and the Birmingham City Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Signed by Mr Stuart Crane, Leader of Real Life Church, Sutton Coldfield

Signed:

Date:

## **Appendix 2. Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)**

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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)'.

### **What is abuse and neglect?**

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 a stranger for example, via the internet. They 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 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 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 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 (including cyberbullying), 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 of a child, 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **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 care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Appendix 3. Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)**

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'.

### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

### **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

### **Neglect or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

### **Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

## **Appendix 4. Signs of Possible Abuse (Children and Young People)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

### **Physical**

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

### **Sexual**

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia\*

### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying



**Neglect**

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

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

## **Appendix 5. Signs of Possible Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)**

### **Physical**

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

### **Sexual**

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

### **Psychological**

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

### **Financial or Material**

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

### **Neglect or Omission**

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

### **Discriminatory**

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

### **Institutional**

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

## **Appendix 6. Guidelines for Electronic Communication with Young People**

Electronic communication is an easy way to communicate with young people in particular. However, there are dangers associated with electronic communication that call for vigilance:

- Electronic communication is often an extremely informal mode of communication which can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood.
- Because of the informal style of electronic communication workers can easily cross appropriate boundaries in their relationships with young people.
- Some adults who are intent on harming children and young people choose to use electronic communication as a way to meet and 'groom' children.

These guidelines are written to try to maintain healthy and safe relationships between adults and children while at the same time recognising that electronic communication is essential in that process.

Electronic communication must never become a substitute for face to face contact with young people.

Parents or carers and children and young people themselves have the right to decide if a worker is to have email addresses or mobile phone numbers.

Workers should only use electronic means of communication with those children and young people from whom appropriate consent has been given.

Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided.

Only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of the church or one of the church's organisations.

Workers should not share any personal information with children and young people and should not request any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role.

Workers should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives. Clear, unambiguous language should be used and the use of unnecessary abbreviations should be avoided.

Electronic communication should generally be restricted to between the hours of 6.00 am and 11.00 pm.

Official church emails to young people will be sent from a church e-mail account or through ChurchSuite, where all messages sent are stored and subject to review.

Any photos or video taken on personal mobile phones should not be uploaded to social networking sites without parental permission.

### **Instant Messaging Services (IMS) or WhatsApp**

The use of instant messenger services should comply with the guideline above on the nature of electronic communication.

Where a young person in need, or at a point of crisis, uses this as a means of communicating with a worker

- Significant conversations should be stored if possible, and
- A log kept of who and when they communicated.

**Social Networking sites**

Adults serving as part of the Kids or Youth teams should not accept or make 'friend' or 'follow' requests of young people under the age of 18 who are in Real Life Kids or Real Life Youth on social media sites.

It is the responsibility of adult Workers to ensure that the content of their social media sites is appropriate and sets a good example to the young people they lead.

All electronic communication with young people should be kept transparent and open to scrutiny.