

Cornerstone Evangelical Church, Abergavenny

Safeguarding Practice Guidelines

This document contains guidelines of good practice which should be referred to in conjunction with the Cornerstone Evangelical Church Safeguarding Policy (Issue date 1ST March 2023).

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Definitions of terms

Worker – includes people who are employees, or volunteer leaders and helpers.

Leader - an individual who is responsible for planning and supervising the activities of a group of children or teenagers.

Helper - an assistant to the leader, but who is *not responsible* for the planning or supervision of children’s activities.

Ministry Lead – the leader responsible for a section of the church and is responsible for the workers and children in that section. The Ministry Lead is accountable to the elders of CEC.

Leadership – includes the Elders and those appointed by the Elders into leadership roles

‘In the care of the church’ – relates to situations where children are being supervised during church activities by church workers, and their parents/guardians are not present.

The minimum requirement for anyone already working with children/young people at CEC at the time of implementation of the 2022 Policy is:

- To be up to date with annual Safeguarding training
- To have an up-to-date enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check for roles when responsible for and supervising children who are in the care of the church

Prevention

- **Understanding Abuse and Neglect**

Appendix 2 – Definitions, Signs and Indicators of Abuse (March 2023) for more details

Safer Recruitment

Appointment of workers

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator and DBS Lead Recruiter should be informed at the beginning of the recruitment process so that the correct procedure is followed.

Paid employees

The Leadership will ensure all employees whose role involves working with children and young people or adults with care and support needs, will be appointed, trained, supported, and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- The job description will carry references to CEC's Safeguarding Policy
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview,
- The applicant will be informed of the need for Enhanced Disclosure including the possibility of disclosure of confidential information (only disclosed to the Safeguarding Coordinator).
- Written references will be obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check will be completed where necessary. The final appointment will not be made until the Enhanced disclosure has been made.
- Qualifications, where relevant, will be verified.

The successful applicant will

- be provided with a suitable training programme

- be provided with the church's safeguarding policy and safeguarding training and be made aware how to report concerns.
- The applicant may be asked to complete a probationary period

Volunteer Workers

Ministry Leads and Leaders must be members of CEC and have attended regularly for at least 6 months prior to appointment.

Helpers do not need to be church members but should have attended regularly for at least 6 months prior to appointment.

In situations where parents and guardians have responsibility for their children in a church activity, volunteers will have a reference on their suitability but do not need a DBS.

Once the recruitment process has been completed and ratified, the worker is able to volunteer to work with all ages of children, and with Adults and Support needs, subject to their suitability for the role.

Recruitment Process

The applicant should:

- **Discussion/interview:** With the Children and Young Peoples worker or of the Ministry Leads, if they wish to be involved, regarding their reasons and interest in the role, the requirements, and their suitability.
- **Application Form:** Fill in the application form and sign it and scan/email/post/ deliver it in person to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- **DBS and self-declaration:** The SG Co-Ordinator will contact the DBS Lead Recruiter to start the process where needed (enhanced DBS required for roles where children are in the care of the church).
- **Policies:** The Ministry Lead or Children and Young People's worker should signpost the applicant to the volunteer role profiles and expectations, Safeguarding Policy, and other CEC policies, such as GDPR and a Health and Safety summary. Found on the CEC website.
- **Safeguarding Training:** Contact the Safeguarding Coordinator or Deputy to access the Introductory training or attend the annual

training (usually in November) prior to starting the role, dependent on the time of year.

- **Complete** the following forms (found on the CEC website):
Code of Conduct form (with signed declaration)
and return to the church administrator at the CEC centre (admin@abercec.org.uk).
- **References:** The Safeguarding Coordinator will request 2 written references, at least one of which should be external to CEC. References and their appointment should be ratified by an Elder prior to the applicant commencing their role, and the Code of Conduct form signed by Trustee when this is completed.

Obtaining a disclosure (DBS check)

All church workers who supervise children who are in the care of the church need to obtain an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.

- Lead Recruiter: Anne Brown

Church workers requiring a DBS check need to complete the DBS form and see Anne Brown in person. Applicants need to provide proof of identity and must also complete and sign a self-declaration form.

Applicants must show the Lead Recruiter one Category 1 document plus two other documents of any type, or five documents from Category 2. The Lead Recruiter will submit the DBS application on the applicant's behalf; the Identity Checker will confirm the applicant's identity as required as part of the on-line process. Applicants will receive a copy of their disclosure, which is confidential. Thirtyone:eight and the CEC Lead Recruiter will receive a copy of the disclosure.

Category 1: Passport, UK Driving Licence (photo card or paper), original UK Birth Certificate, valid Photo Identity Card.

Category 2: Non-original Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate, P45 or P60 (less than 12 months old), Bank statement, Utility bill from current address, TV licence, Document from Benefits Agency, Employment Service or Inland Revenue, Vehicle registration document

Handling of disclosure information

1. Disclosure information on the suitability of persons to work with children is stored separately in a secure lockable cabinet with access limited to the Lead Recruiter, Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator.
2. Disclosure information is only revealed to those who need to know and is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested.
3. Once a recruitment decision has been made, disclosure information should not be kept for more than 6 months.
4. A record will be kept of the date of issue of the disclosure, name of worker, type of disclosure (enhanced), position for which disclosure is requested, unique reference number and details of the recruitment decision taken.
5. The procedure will comply with the GDPR 2018.

Safeguarding Training, Supervision and Support

Safeguarding Training

Training in CEC's Safeguarding policy and procedures will be provided by CEC on an annual basis. Content will include a review of the policy including what abuse is, how to recognise, respond and report it, and how to work safely. Changes in CEC's policy that have occurred since the previous years training will be outlined.

All workers involved with children and adults with care and support needs, church elders, deacons and trustees are required to undertake full safeguarding training on an annual basis (usually November), in order to continue in their role. Those who do not attend may be asked by the Trustees to step down from their role until training can be arranged and undertaken.

Workers who commence their role after the annual November training has been completed, need to undertake the CEC 'Induction to Safeguarding Training' course prior to commencing their role. This is via a power point presentation and should be led by a member of the Safeguarding team, Ministry Lead or Trustee, with the expectation that full

training will be accessed the next November. Contact the Safeguarding Coordinator to arrange.

Trustees are expected to attend the thirtyone:eight specific course soon after their appointment.

Supervision of workers

New workers may commence an introductory/supervisory period after they have submitted their DBS check but should not be left unattended in activities during this time. This can include up to four visits to a single group, e.g., a one-month observation period.

Applicants who have completed an enhanced DBS check dated within the previous 12 months, relating to working with children and young people in other situations, and who can provide the original document (not a photocopy), are able to work at CEC whilst awaiting a CEC requested enhanced DBS.

It is advisable that 'new' leaders work alongside established leaders in any one session.

In exceptional circumstances, where an appropriate leader is not available, a DBS checked helper can lead an activity, but this must be agreed with the corresponding elder, or in the case of youth work, with the Children and Young Persons Worker, and must be recorded by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

Supervision of children and young people

Ministry Leads must ensure there is adequate supervision by their fellow workers otherwise the activity should not take place. **There should always be at least 2 workers with each group.**

Recommended adult to child ratios are:

Age Group	Indoor activities	Outdoor activities
0 - 2 years	1:3	1:3
2 - 3 years	1:4	1:4
4 - 8 years	1:8	1:6
8 - 13 years	2:20 (M & F)	2:15 (M & F)
14 – 17 years	2: 20 (M & F)	2: 20 (M & F)

General guidance when working with children and young people:

- Consider the gender balance of workers in relation to the group of children and young people.
- Generally, the group should not be left alone at any time.
- Children aged 0-11 should always be supervised by a minimum of two workers - in practice this may mean that 3 workers are available for the activity.
- Children aged 12-17 should always be supervised by at least two workers. In an emergency situation, it is acceptable for only one worker to be present, but the door of the room should be left open.
- Young persons of less than 18 years should not be left in charge of children of any age.
- Teenagers aged 16+ may be involved in small groups which are led and run by peers. In these circumstances two adult leaders must be present in the church building.
- The only people present at a children’s activity, when the children are in the care of the church, should be the children’s workers assigned to that group, or a parent/carer who needs to be present for their child. No other adults or children should be present.
- Parents /carers should collect their children from the activity venue.
- A simple password system should be used where children are collected from the care of the church by an adult other than a

recognised parent/guardian. This should be set up prior to the activity.

- Children will be required to go to the toilet themselves, although may be accompanied to the toilet door by a worker. If unable to manage independently, their parent/carer will be asked to supervise them.
- Parents will be asked to change their own children's nappies. Separate arrangements may be made for or a child with special needs.
- Parents or other adults and older children helping on an occasional basis must be supervised by the Leader in charge of the activity, until they have completed the appropriate recruitment process.
- Adults with care and support needs should not be alone on church premises or in a church activity with only one other adult present.
- At no time should one adult be alone on church premises with children or young people below 18 years, unless the children are their own.
- Children and young people of less than 18 years should not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present.

Working one to one:

- Parental consent should always be obtained before each meeting
- A member of the Safeguarding team should be made aware of the meetings
- Children's workers should avoid being alone with a child or children when their activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open. Where confidentiality is important (e.g., counselling) ensure that others know that the meeting is taking place and that another adult is present in the building.
- If meeting with young people away from a CEC building, such as at a café, it is good practice to obtain verbal approval from the parent/guardian.

Discipline:

- Physical force of any kind must not be used to discipline.

- Great care must be exercised if physical restraint is required to prevent a young person harming him / herself or others, and only the minimum force necessary should be used. A minimum of two workers should be involved in any restraint.
- Bullying and discriminatory behaviour by the children / young people and vulnerable adults will not be tolerated but dealt with appropriately by church workers (See Appendix 5).

Meeting in homes:

- Where adults and children are meeting in someone's home for a church activity (e.g. a family-based community group), in situations where children are not supervised by their parents/guardians directly but by other adults, there must be at least two supervising adults. One of these should have an up-to-date DBS and safeguarding training.
- A child or young person should not be invited on their own to a worker's home for a CEC activity.
- It is acceptable to invite a group, with parental consent, providing that another adult, DBS-checked via CEC, is in the room with you. No other adults should be present unless they come under the category of a 'church visitor' or are CEC workers

First Aid:

- The Ministry Lead or activity Leader must know the whereabouts of the First Aid Kit.

Narnians' opportunity to serve

- Young people in the CY youth group (aged 11+) are able to serve in the church by helping on some of the existing rotas. These include, on a Sunday morning, the 'Welcome Desk', singing group, music group, tech set up group and set up/take down. The young people are able to choose whether or not they would like to help in this way and to choose which area they would like to help out in.
- It is a requirement that any young person helping out in this way on the church premises or during a CEC organised activity, remains the responsibility of their parent/guardian and **is supervised by their parent/guardian at all times**. Should the parent/guardian not be able

to attend and supervise, then the young person should not participate in the rota.

Church Visitors

A visitor to CEC who has been invited to participate in activities involving children/young people/adults with care and support needs, e.g., as a guest speaker, does not need a DBS check for a one-off visit. However, they should be in addition to the minimum required ratio of workers supervising the group and should be supervised at all times by either an Trustee, Deacon, Leader or the Children and Young Persons Worker.

It is good practice for visitors to be informed of CEC's Safeguarding policy and to undertake the CEC Induction to Safeguarding Training prior to their involvement, where practicable.

General practice guidelines

Documentation

- **Training compliance**

A record will be made all worker's DBS status, Safeguarding training compliance, signposting to relevant policies (on CEC website) and receipt of the signed Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct forms. All record keeping should comply with GDPR 2018.

- **Attendance record**

An attendance register should be kept for those attending CEC activities at church premises, where children are in the care of the church, and for online based activities. This should include names of children and children's workers present and names of any other adult present during the activity. This should be kept electronically, and the information kept centrally. Need to finalise how we do this **

- **Consent forms for children's activities**

General consent forms should be signed by parents or guardians of children and young people involved in church activities on church premises. This should be updated annually, in September.

The general consent form should include permissions for online communication, and the taking of and use of photographs and video **Outings and day trips** require a specific consent form outlining details of the trip. This includes occasions where children leave a CEC premise for part of an activity.

Residential trips require a specific consent form.

If a consent form has not been signed, the child's parent or guardian must be contacted to either complete the relevant form or come and collect their child. The child should not be left unattended meantime; they should also not be allowed to go home alone unless this is specifically agreed with the parent concerned.

Consent forms should include general health information for residential/higher risk activities or where relevant.

- **Acceptable use** form (in Appendix 6 Online Safety Policy)

- **Accident and incident report forms**

These should be available on church premises and on the CEC website. Any incident or accident should be documented within 48 hours and highlighted to the Trustees for discussion.

- **Recruitment forms** need to be signed and stored securely at the CEC centre. These include the:

Application form

References

Code of conduct form & signed declaration

Transport

Conveying children to and from regular CEC activities is generally a parental responsibility, e.g., to children's or youth group evenings or additional specific events.

If parents wish to make private transport arrangements between themselves for official CEC events, they should make it clear that this is a private arrangement. Where parents make their own private arrangements, the Church has no responsibility.

Any arrangement made to transport children during a regular meeting should be made with the knowledge of the appropriate elder, deacon, or Children and Young People's Worker or Ministry Lead and have parental approval.

Whenever children who are in the care of the church, or adults with care and support needs, are transported, whether by minibus or car, the following conditions should be met:

- Drivers should be over 21 (25 for a minibus) and should have had a full driving licence for a minimum of 2 years.
- Drivers must have undergone Safeguarding training.
- Regular drivers (parent or church worker) should have an enhanced DBS check
- Children and adults with care and support needs should travel in the rear of the car where possible.
- Seat belts are worn during all journeys and the driver is responsible for ensuring this happens
- Children should be transported in suitable seating as required by law for their age
- All vehicles and drivers should be properly insured, have a current MOT and road tax.
- All minibuses used should have a small bus permit.
- Seatbelts must be worn where provided in minibuses and coaches
- Parents/guardians should be aware of the mode of transport being used.
- Should a rare occasion occur when a worker is required to transport one child or adult with care and support needs alone, the worker should record the start and end times and mileage of the journey - and inform either the Children and Young People's Worker employee, Ministry Lead or Safeguarding coordinator as soon as possible.

Residential trips

Written consent of parents/guardians must be obtained prior to residential activities taking place. A specific consent form for the residential activity should be used. Any medical problems the child / young person may have should be asked and responses recorded.

General guidance

- The Safeguarding Coordinator and/ or Deputy should be made aware of the residential trip and provide a contact telephone number to the Leader-in-charge.
- The insurance cover of a proposed venue for overnight accommodation must be checked
- The safety of the building and surrounding area in relation to the age groups involved in any trips should be checked in advance.
- Everybody should be made aware of fire exits and a fire drill undertaken soon after arrival.
- Risk Assessments must be carried out for all proposed residential trips. If this has already been undertaken by those in charge of the residential venue, these should be checked in advance by the senior leader in charge, and copies retained.
- Workers should know the whereabouts of every child or young person on a residential visit at all times.
- Where adventurous activities are involved, leaders should have the appropriate qualification, or if the activity is provided by an outside organisation, providers should be licensed by the appropriate Licensing Authority.
- At least one worker on a residential trip should be qualified in first aid. A first aid kit should be available.
- Any accidents or injuries should be documented on an incident form.
- Those with responsibility for food should possess a food safety certificate.

Sleeping arrangements

- Should be clarified in advance of any trip.
- Males and females must sleep separately.

- There should be an appropriate mix of male and female workers present.
- Workers should not share the same room as children.
- Young people aged 18 years and over must be accommodated separately as legally they are adults.

Shopping for others

Where volunteers are shopping for other people on behalf of the church, such as those who may be unwell/self-isolating/shielding/an adult with care and support needs, the following guidelines should be applied:

- A request for help with shopping is usually made to a key contact within the church, who then contacts named volunteers
- The volunteer must **never** use the person's bank card or be made aware of their PIN number
- Reimbursement, if initially goods are paid for by the volunteer, should be made by cheque, mobile card payer, or bank transfer. Cash should be used as a last resort.
- Cash may be given to the volunteer upfront- if so, the volunteer should note on the receipt the sum provided, and amount of change given.
- The shopping receipt for the goods should be given to the person assisted.

Responding to allegations of abuse

- **Where the person involved is NOT in immediate danger**

The concern/disclosure should be reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator /Deputy. If both are away, then report to the Trustee with Responsibility. A course of action will then be agreed. The worker must record any conversation with the child / young person or vulnerable adult on the Safeguarding Report Form (on paper, not electronically) and include the reasons for their suspicion. This record should be signed and dated and completed within 48 hours of the concern/disclosure. The report form can be found on the church website. Returned report forms will be kept in a safe, locked place. **The concern should not be shared with anyone else and not with the parents, guardians, or carers at this point.**

The Worker concerned may be asked to keep a confidential log regarding that child or adult with care and support needs, and to report any future concern.

The absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator or Deputy should not delay making a referral to Social Services or the police, or to taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

Where allegations are made regarding a church worker, the worker will be required to suspend their activity whilst an investigation is carried out and until the matter is resolved.

Whilst there may be a pressing need for pastoral support, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator must be informed first to decide whether any formal action should precede pastoral care. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will decide this in discussion with the Trustee(s).

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.

Safeguarding and child protection is everyone's responsibility, and all workers must respond to concerns they may have about a child's or vulnerable adult's wellbeing. **However, strict confidentiality must be maintained.**

Concerns need to be shared with a limited number of people and workers must not attempt to deal with a problem on their own

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE WORKER

A worker should:

- Remain calm, listen well and show acceptance
- Be readier to hear than to speak
- Allow time for the child or vulnerable adult to speak
- Be non-judgmental
- Be neutral and non-committal in responses

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Reassure the young person or vulnerable adult they are right to share their concern

Tell the child or vulnerable adult that the information will be shared with a limited number of other people who will be asked to help

A worker should not:

React with outrage or unbelief

Ask any questions, with the possible exception of "have you told anyone else about this?"

Ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat the account

Promise to keep a secret

Speak to anyone other than the those nominated in the previous section, when appropriate

The worker should then:

Record in writing their account of the conversation, using the child/vulnerable adult's own words as much as possible and sign it with the date and time. He/she may include their observation of the child's or vulnerable adult's behaviour if appropriate.

Speak as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Coordinator who should then countersign the record and date and time their signature.

Confidentiality is paramount throughout.

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

- If consulted by a worker regarding suspicion or allegation of a safeguarding issue or child abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:
- elicit from the worker the reasons for concern and discuss the details in confidence
- ensure a detailed statement is written by the Worker on the report form
- add to the statement if necessary
- take advice as necessary from the thirtyone:eight Helpline, without identifying the young person

- decide, in discussion with the Trustee, a response and a course of action if necessary
- advise the Worker of any plans

- **Where there is a serious allegation/emergency situation**

In the event of a serious allegation, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will immediately discuss with the Trustee and then seek advice from Social Services/ thirtyone:eight as necessary.

If there is reason to suspect an adult or child is at risk, this MUST be reported to the Local Authority Children's or Adults' Social Services. There is a LEGAL DUTY to report every disclosure of a safeguarding nature as required by the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2016). This action should be taken verbally immediately and recorded in writing within 48 hours on the Report Form.

The Safeguarding Officer /deputy should then be informed of the action taken.

If there is an immediate risk, the relevant emergency services (Police/Ambulance) should be contacted by dialling 999.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may then make an appointment with the appropriate officer in Children's Services for a face-to-face discussion. If it is advised that a formal referral should be made, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will come back to the Trustee before identities are disclosed. No approach will be made to the family unless Social Services (Children's Services) agree (in accordance with thirtyone:eight guidelines, "Working Together to Safeguard Children (1998), and The All Wales Child Protection Procedures).

The Trustees will be informed of the nature of the incident and action taken, but names and specific details will not be shared, unless it is necessary to do so for legal reasons.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will keep a record of all discussions including those with Social Services.