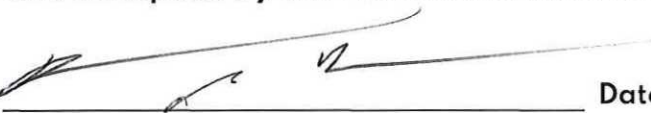
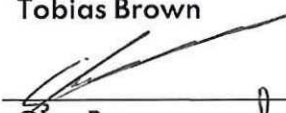
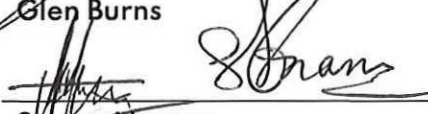





## Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for the Wellbeing of Children, Young People and Adults with Care and Support Needs

October 2022

### Agreed and accepted by the Elders and Trustees

Signed: 	Dated: <u>30/10/22</u>
Name: Tobias Brown	[Minister and Elder]
Signed: 	Dated: <u>30/10/22</u>
Name: Glen Burns	[Minister and Elder]
Signed: 	Dated: <u>30/10/22</u>
Name: Simon Abrams	[Elder and Trustee]
Signed: 	Dated: <u>30-10-22</u>
Name: Robert Honeysett	[Elder and Trustee]
Signed: 	Dated: <u>30/10/22</u>
Name: Ravi Srinivasan	[Elder and Trustee]
Signed: 	Dated: <u>30-10-22</u>
Name: Kobby Sarpong	[Trustee]

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### **A. Contact information**

- Lead Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Nic Srinivasan, telephone 020 8691 3667
- Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Simon Abrams (Church Elder), telephone 020 3441 2938
- Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Lin Allen, telephone 020 8690 4407
- Thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0303 003 1111. [Christian safeguarding charity providing free advice.]
- Lewisham Council MASH: 020 8314 6660, or 020 8314 6000 (out of hours). [Child safeguarding department]
- Lewisham Council MASH Designated Officer: 020 8314 3114. [Responsible for managing cases where an accusation is made against someone working with children].
- Lewisham Adult Social Care: 020 8314 7777 (or 020 8314 6000 out of hours).
- Police non-emergency number: 101. Emergency number: 999.
- Childline: 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- [Samaritans](http://www.samaritans.org): 116 123 or [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- A teacher at school [for children wanting to talk to someone else]

## **B. Details of the place of worship / organisation**

Name of Organisation:	Grace Church Brockley
Sunday Service Venue:	Currently meeting at Crofton Park Baptist Church, Brockley Grove, London, SE4 1EB
Contact for safeguarding administration purposes:	Dr Nicole Srinivasan, 62 Adelaide Ave., Brockley, London, SE4 1YR, Tel. No. 020 8691 3667, <a href="mailto:nick.and.ravi@gmail.com">nick.and.ravi@gmail.com</a>
Church Website:	<a href="http://www.gracechurchbrockley.org">www.gracechurchbrockley.org</a>
Denomination:	Independent conservative evangelical church
Charity Number:	1154174
Charity Registered Address:	63 Mayow Road, Forest Hill, London, SE23 2XH
Company Number:	8696063
Regulators details (if any):	Charity Commission
Insurance Company:	Church Fellowship Policy with Kingdom Bank providing cover for property damage, personal accident, employer's liability and public liability

The objective of the Church is the advancement of the Christian Faith. We welcome everyone to our Sunday services, irrespective of denomination or background, unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve. The following is a brief description of the type of activities we undertake with children and adults:

- Weekly Sunday afternoon services.
- Crèche (0 - 4 years) and Children's Church (4 - 11 years) during Sunday services.
- Youth Groups (11 - 17 years) at homes in the local area, at the Sunday service venue, in other local community venues and/or online.
- Small group Bible studies ('Fellowship Groups') at homes in the local area or online.
- Prayer meetings at homes in the local area, in the Sunday service venue or online.
- Adult members of the Church and those adults interested in Christian things are encouraged to meet regularly on a one to one basis with members of the Church to share Christian encouragement, instruction, pastoral counselling and / or to read the Bible and pray together where appropriate and desired. With parental consent, 11-17 year olds also take part in this activity.
- A mid-week parent / carer and baby / toddler group.
- Home visits to members of the Church (e.g. visiting those who are ill).
- Street evangelism and door-to-door contact inviting local residents to services or events.
- Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre, providing debt help, friendship and care-packages (e.g. gifts of food) to clients. Debt Councillors make 3 visits to each client's home, accompanied by a befriender.

From time to time we may run the following:

- Youth Group outings and weekends away.
- Holiday clubs, after-school clubs or events for school aged children.
- Occasional courses, e.g. Christianity Explored, mid-week Bible Studies, preaching practice. These may take place in homes in the local area, at the Sunday service venues, in other local community venues or online. They may include the provision of a crèche facility in the location in which the course is held.
- Guest events with a short Christian talk and a time for question and answers, a meal and / or entertainment such as music or a quiz.

### **C. Our Commitment**

The Trustees, the Minister and the other Elders of GCB recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We believe that everyone is entitled to attend our main Sunday afternoon services without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, sexuality, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. We further believe that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. We believe that 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. The Trustees, Minister and other Elders have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. The Church Council of GCB has also approved this safeguarding policy together with the procedures set out herein. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy is based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight. It takes account of the Care Act 2014 and the government guidelines 'Working together to safeguard children' (Mar 2015) and 'Keeping Children Safe during Community Activities, After-School Clubs and Tuition' (Oct 2020).

#### ***The Trustees, the Minister and the other Elders undertake to:***

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers (whether paid or voluntary) and regularly review this policy.
- Liaise with owners of the venues where Sunday services are held, to ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 as amended and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults.
- Provide a copy of this policy to individuals/organisations on request.
- Not to allow the document to be copied by other unrelated organisations.

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

### **1. Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Abuse would include all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Abuse is therefore not just sexual in nature but would also include cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments or punishments.

Children and adults may be abused whilst in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or other persons. They may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with them and sadly can also be the parent, legal guardian or carer themselves.

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in the Appendices.

### **2. Safeguarding awareness**

All workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in line with government guidance on safe recruitment.

The Trustees, Minister and other Elders are committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

The Trustees, Minister and other Elders will also ensure that workers are able to provide the children / adults with care and support needs with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

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

Under NO circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The procedures below should be followed. Contact details for individuals and organisations are found in section A.

- Report allegations or suspicions of abuse as soon as possible to one of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators. These individuals have been nominated by the Minister and other Elders 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. You can report your concerns to the Minister or other Elders instead or as well if desired.
- If the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, Minister or other Elders are not available, or if the suspicions involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, Minister or other Elders, then report your concerns to Thirtyone:eight. Alternatively contact one of the government safeguarding agencies: Lewisham Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Lewisham Adult Social Care or the police.
- If you have gone to the Minister or other Elders instead of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the Minister and other Elders will discuss the concerns with one or more of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators unless they are implicated in the allegation or suspicion.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will collate, clarify and document the precise details of the allegation or suspicion.
  - The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will not request information from the individual who may be experiencing abuse (unless this is the person making the allegation).
  - Unless such individuals are implicated in the allegation or suspicion, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will ensure that the Minister and Church Elders have been informed and may consult with the other Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s).
  - The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will then usually consult with Thirtyone:eight in order to determine whether the concern does indeed qualify under the definition of potential abuse.
- Concerns that meet the definition of potential abuse will be reported by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator to the appropriate local government safeguarding department and/or the police. The statutory agencies have a legal duty to investigate.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- A written record of the concerns should be made and kept in a secure place.
- If the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, Minister or other Elders are not available, do not delay reporting to the safeguarding agencies and / or the police, or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- The Trustees, Minister and other Elders will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinators in their role. They accept that any information will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- The Trustees, Minister and other Elders encourage members of the Church to follow the reporting lines described above. However, all citizens have the right to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight. This may be appropriate if an individual feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately.
- Please note that, if an allegation is made against you, you may be asked to step down from duties directly related to children or adults with care and support needs until the investigation is complete. This is to protect everyone involved.

#### **4. Guidance on sharing information**

- Be open and honest with people about why, what, how and with whom information will or could be shared. Ask for their agreement, unless this is inappropriate.
- Ensure the information is necessary, includes only an appropriate amount of detail and is shared only with those individuals who need to have it. Ensure it is accurate, shared in a timely fashion, and shared securely.
- Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions. If needed, seek advice from safeguarding coordinators or Thirtyone:eight, without disclosing the identity of individuals. Only share information without an individual's consent if you believe there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
- Keep a record of any decisions you make on sharing information. Record what you shared, with whom and why.

## **E. Pastoral care**

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

The Trustees, Minister and other Elders are fully committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those attending the Church who have been affected by abuse. The Church will work with statutory agencies as appropriate.

We will also ensure that appropriate pastoral care is offered to any member of our Church community against whom an allegation is made.

Pastoral care in either situation will be offered after careful discussion with the authorities concerned. This is to avoid prejudicing any ongoing formal investigation or criminal prosecution.

### **2. Working with offenders**

When someone attending the Church is known to have abused children or adults with support needs, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to such children or adults, the Trustees, Minister and other Elders will take advice from Thirtyone:eight. They will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care but will set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and determined through consultation with appropriate parties.

## **F. Practice guidelines (general)**

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and (potentially) 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 accusation.

We have specific good practice guidelines for activities we are involved in. The guidelines in this section apply to all workers. Guidelines specific to particular ministry areas are set out in the Appendices and workers must follow the ones relevant to their role(s).

### **1. Position of Trust / Abuse of Trust**

- All adults working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs are in positions of trust. Workers must ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They will maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted.
- Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child is never acceptable.
- Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, counselling should only be done by those qualified to give it.
- Any gifts to support positive behaviour or recognise achievements will be given openly and not be based on favouritism.

## **2. Touch**

- Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the needs of the child or the adult with care and support needs, not the worker.
- Debt Centre volunteers will follow the guidance on touch in CAP's Prayer Policy when praying with clients.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and will usually be initiated by the child or adult with care and support needs, rather than the worker. However, a Crèche age child may not be able to communicate their needs and therefore can be picked up if this would comfort them.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating.
- Children and adults with care and support needs have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances such as when they may need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying suncream etc.) encourage the person to do what they can themselves, giving appropriate help where necessary.

## **3. Electronic Communication**

- The following guidance should be followed when communicating with children and youth by e-mail, mobile telephone ('mobile'), private messaging on social networking sites and similar communication channels.
- For adults with care and support needs, consider vulnerability and apply this guidance as appropriate. Advice can be obtained from the Safeguarding Co-ordinators.
- Obtain parental / carer agreement before contacting a child or young person using their mobile, their email address or via social networking. For children below secondary school age, communication should be via parents / carers.
- Ensure that all electronic communication is appropriate and professional.
- Do not send a message which you would not be happy to copy to another leader.
- Use clear, unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation. Never use terms such as "luv", "lol" or an "x" as a kiss to finish a message.
- Do not be 'friends' with children / youth group members / Debt Centre clients on social networking sites.
- Keep copies of all email messages sent or received in accordance with the church's Data Protection Policy.
- Where possible use group rather than individual texts / emails / posts. It is wise to copy in another leader or a parent / carer on messages to individuals.
- Ensure that children / young people know that messages may be viewed by others such as other group leaders or even the authorities.
- Confidential information that may put an individual at risk must only be shared on a need-to-know basis. If you have any concerns from a safeguarding perspective, the messages should be shown to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and retained indefinitely.



- Texts to mobiles should not be sent to a child or young person after 10pm or before 7am.

#### **4. Filming and taking photographs**

- Written permission must be obtained from an individual before a photograph / film is taken and used by GCB or the CAP Debt Centre. For children, permission must be obtained from their parent / carer and, where appropriate, the child.
- Clear information will be given on what the photographs / film may be used for.
- When using photographs of children and young people, group pictures will preferably be used and individuals will not be identified by name or other personal details.

#### **5. Participation in Church activities by individuals with care and support needs or disabilities**

- Act with sensitivity when an individual has specific needs. Be aware that the individual may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility.
- Ask the individual (and parents /carers if appropriate), how their needs can be met. Assess risks involved and agree how to minimise these. Ensure all workers involved are aware of the individual's expectations.
- Where appropriate, permission will be obtained from the individual and/or their carer to take part in activities. E.g. meeting for Bible study and prayer; Church outings without a carer present.
- Be careful not to put yourself in a situation which could be easily misread by the individual or others. E.g. where allegations could be made against you that are difficult to disprove.
- Depending upon the vulnerability, it may be important for activities to be done in plain view of others and in the knowledge of those who are responsible for their care. Consider meeting in groups of 3 (or more) and/or meeting in public areas.
- Pastoral care should generally be provided by those of the same gender. However, the Minister, other Elders and other designated individuals may visit the sick or elderly, even if not the same gender.
- Home visits for pastoral care, made to adults with care and support needs, will be arranged in advance. Do not call unannounced. Preferably keep a log of visits, including names, dates and times. For accountability, logs should be reviewed periodically by appropriate individuals (e.g. an elder or Safeguarding Co-ordinator).
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) joining the Church's organised children's or youth activities will be assessed, and support provided according to their needs, in discussion with the child's parent / guardian. Workers will be provided with basic training according to the child's needs to facilitate the child's inclusion. Workers in the relevant group(s) will be expected to read and implement the guidelines in the SEN brief which is provided with the teaching materials ([www.mustard-seeds.net](http://www.mustard-seeds.net)) each week.
- Ideally ensure that a worker of the same gender assists if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer.

## **6. Mental Health**

- Individuals with mental health problems (e.g. depression or anxiety), or conditions like dementia can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Mental health problems may affect an individual's ability to engage with and/or access church activities.
- If concerned about an individual, encourage them (or their parent/carer) to get support from their GP or other organisations such as the Samaritans (call 116 123). Ask if you and/or GCB can help. Provide support if appropriate.

## **7. Unusual Situations**

- Any unusual events or conversations which could be linked to allegations or suspicions of abuse should be written down and kept with the register indefinitely.
  - Individuals have a right to view any information recorded about them (but information about the prevention and detection of crime is exempt).
  - Information must be kept in a way that does not breach the confidentiality of an individual.
  - Information of a sensitive nature (e.g. a child disclosing abuse) will need to be kept separately in a secure place.
- If an adult and child under 14 need to be alone together for counselling or teaching, another adult should be made fully aware of the meeting and be available until it ends. If a child under 14 is to be visited at home, a parent / carer should be there. A brief written record should be made of each meeting / visit, including times and who was present. This should be stored with the registers.

## **8. Whistle-Blowing**

- We expect that anyone at GCB will report improper actions and omissions if they become aware of any. Whilst all malpractice and acts of discrimination will be investigated, it is especially important that suspicions of abuse are immediately reported to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

## **9. Risk assessments**

- Risk assessments will be carried out for Church activities. The following steps will be completed. This will involve: 1. Hazard identification; 2. Determination of who might be harmed and how; 3. Decisions on additional actions required to eliminate or reduce the risks; and 4. Completion of any actions required. Risk assessments need to be 'suitable and sufficient'. A Risk Assessment Template is available from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. It is good practice to document the assessment (but not a legal requirement).

## **10. Health and safety**

- An annual review of premises will be undertaken by the Co-ordinator / Deputies to consider all aspects of safety for children, young people and adults with care and support needs.
- Leaders at church-organised events will be aware of the fire drill.

- First aid at Sunday services:
  - A properly equipped first aid kit and an accident book is held at each venue. The contents of the first aid kits must be checked regularly.
  - An appropriately qualified first aider or medically trained health professional is to be available. A list of the people to call upon is kept with the first aid kit, and with each children's register.
  - In the event of an injury, the person affected (or their parent / carer) will be asked to fill in the accident book.
- First aid support at other church activities will be based on risk assessment.
- When providing food and drink at church-organised events, workers should follow GCB's Food Hygiene Guidelines. Children's snack / meal-times should be appropriately supervised.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Guidelines for the CAP Debt Centre**

- All workers involved with Debt Centre activities must read and comply with the current version the CAP guidance 'Safeguarding Procedures – Debt Centre'. The CAP guidance aligns with GCB's safeguarding policy.
- Workers should carry CAP's 'Client in Emotional Distress' card for easy reference.
- When visiting clients in their homes, all workers must follow CAP guidance on client visits, including a documented risk assessment. This includes pre-visit safety checks (who will be present / pets / mobile phone charged / panic alarm / notify someone where you are going and what to do if you don't return on schedule) and further risk assessment on arrival (any safety issues / exit route / phone signal). If in doubt, cancel the visit and rearrange at a different location.

### **Appendix 2: Guidelines for all children and youth activities**

- A register of attendance will be taken and kept indefinitely for each group and for any outings. This will include every child and adult (including parents / carers), even if only present for part of the session. Do not use erasable pencil.
- A general registration and consent form will be completed for each child. This will give contact details of parents / carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements. This form should be updated as required.
- If a child arrives who does not have a registration and consent form in place and their parent / carer is unavailable, they are welcome to stay. Leaders will request written permission for future activities. Requests and outcomes will be documented in the register. Ongoing lack or parental permission should be discussed with a safeguarding co-ordinator

- Unexpected changes to arrangements for collecting children must be confirmed verbally or in writing (e.g. text) by a parent / carer *before* the child leaves the venue and a note must be made in the register.
- Parents / carers will not help with groups unless they have been through the Church's recruitment and training process. They may look after their own child within a group but they and their child will not be included in the ratios.
- Where groups are within visible or audible distance of one another, child:adult ratios (given in the sections below) can be flexible, provided the overall the ratio across all groups meets the requirements. A group may have only 1 adult. However, it is wise for leaders always to be within sight of another leader.
- Dealing with disruptive children:
  - Leaders should not smack, hit or shout at a child. To gain attention change voice tone.
  - Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property, no bullying. Make sure the children understand what action will be taken if the rules are not kept.
  - If someone is being disruptive: 1. Ask them to stop. 2. Speak to them to establish the cause(s) of the upset. 3. They can be warned that you may speak to their parents / carers about their behaviour and / or that they may be sent outside the room (under supervision) or back to their parents / carers if the behaviour continues. 4. Warn them if they continue to be disruptive, this might result in longer-term exclusion from the group.
  - If an individual is harming themselves, another person or property then others in the group should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request them to STOP. 'Holding' may be used if there is an immediate danger of personal injury to the child or other person. Make a written note as soon as possible after the incident, documenting what happened, what was said and who was present. A copy should be kept with the registers.
  - Discipline out of love, never in anger. Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry that you may deal with the situation unwisely.
- Guidelines for outings:
  - Parents / carers will be informed of the itinerary, including departure and return times.
  - Registration / consent forms must be completed and taken on the outing.
  - Depending on risk, consider taking details of the nearest GP or A&E department.
  - Named children will be allocated to named adults and child:adult ratios followed. At least one adult in each group will have undergone the Church's recruitment procedure including DBS checks.
  - Drivers must have held a full and preferably clean driving licence for over two years. Drivers must not have any unspent convictions for serious road traffic offences.
  - Vehicles and activity centres must have appropriate insurance cover.

### **Appendix 3. Crèche guidelines**

- Crèche-aged children will be taken to and collected from Crèche by their parent / carer unless alternative arrangements have been made by the parent / carer.
- When using the toilets, children will be accompanied by a leader. Encourage the child to do as much as possible by themselves. Leave doors open and stay in audible distance of other leaders.
- The following adult / children ratios will be followed: Under 2 years 1:3; 2 years 1:4. Youth helpers (14-17 years) will not be included in the ratios and must not be left in sole charge of a group.

### **Appendix 4: Children's Church and Children's Event guidelines (4-11 years)**

- Children can be taken to and collected from Children's Church by either their parent / carer or by Children's Church leaders.
- Children joining events (e.g. Holiday Club) will be collected by their parent / carer at the end of the meeting unless alternative arrangements have been made by the parent / carer.
- The following adult / children ratios will be followed: 3 to 8 years 1:8; 8 to 18 years 1:10. Youth helpers (14-17 years) will not be included in the ratios and must not be left in sole charge of a group.
- Children in school year 5 and above may go to the toilet in pairs, unaccompanied by an adult, and will be reminded to check there is no one in the toilet area first. In all other cases a leader will first check there is no one in the toilet area and will stay within sight. Encourage the child to do as much as possible by themselves and only assist when and where needed.

### **Appendix 5: Youth Group guidelines (11 – 17 yrs)**

- Children may make their own way to the youth group.
- Verbal permission for parents / carers will be obtained if children wish to travel to youth group with their youth group leader/s. Leaders will ensure they are not alone with individual children.
- Children may make their own way home after youth group unless their parents / carers have notified leaders of alternative arrangements. However, it is wise for leaders to discuss travel arrangements with *all* parents / carers (e.g. lift-sharing)
- Online platforms may be used for virtual meetings.
  - Permission from parents / carers will be obtained in advance (in writing) before children join virtual youth group meetings.
  - Parents / carers will be informed of each meeting in advance.
  - Meeting invitations should be sent via group texts or emails rather than messages to individuals.
  - Where invitations are via children's mobile telephones or emails, the contact details will be requested from parents / carers and not directly from children.

- Meetings will have at least two leaders present.
- Leaders will join the meeting before or at the same time as children.
- Age restrictions on Apps will be adhered to
- Older children (11-17 year olds) are encouraged to meet regularly on a one to one basis with youth group leaders to read the Bible and pray together.
  - Parent / carer consent will be obtained before arranging 1:1 meetings.
  - Before each meeting, the parent / carer will be informed in writing (e.g. text) of the planned time and venue.
  - Leaders will maintain a written record the time and venue of all meetings.
  - 1:1 meetings with 11-13 year olds will take place in the child's own home with a parent / carer in visible or audible distance. For 14-17 year olds (and for younger children meeting in groups of more than two) it is wise to meet where other adults are in visible or audible distance.
  - Online 1:1 meetings should only take place where there are other adults in visible or audible distance. This ensures that support is available if wanted and also gives youth workers protection against allegations

## **Appendix 6: Responding**

### **How to respond to a child or to an adult with care and support needs wishing to disclose abuse**

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the individual 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 make promises you can't keep regarding 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.
- Avoid asking questions as you might put something into their mind that was not there.
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour). Dates, times, what was said, who was present. Record when the notes were taken. Keep handwritten notes, even if you type them up later. Keep the notes securely for an indefinite time.

### ***Helpful Responses***

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

### **Don't Say**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

*If they would rather talk to someone else, offer information on where to get advice.*

## **Appendix 7: Definitions**

### **1. Definitions relating to Children**

#### **Child**

The legal definition of a child is someone under the age of 18.

#### **Abuse\***

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

#### **Physical Abuse\***

A form of abuse which 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.

#### **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.

#### **Emotional Abuse\***

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Neglect\***

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; 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.

### ***Extremism***

This goes beyond terrorism and includes seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

\*Working together to safeguard children (2015)

## **2. Definitions relating to Adults**

### ***Adult***

An adult is a person who is 18 years old or older.

### ***Adult with Care and Support Needs***

The Care Act 2014 refers to 'adults with needs for care and support' and the responsibility that the local authority has to provide this care and support and to promote wellbeing. The Act provides examples of how care and support needs may be met, including health services, accommodation in a care home, care and support at home or in the community, counselling, information, advice and advocacy.

For adults with care and support needs, their ability to protect themselves from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation can be significantly impaired through physical or mental disability, illness, old age, emotional fragility, distress, or otherwise.

### ***Abuse***

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, psychological or financial. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a person with care and support needs 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***

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

### ***Sexual Abuse***

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 adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

### ***Financial or Material Abuse***

The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

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

The repeated deprivation of assistance that the adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult or to others. An adult with care and support needs may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired.

### ***Self-Neglect***

The failure to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, including behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more.



### ***Discriminatory Abuse***

The inappropriate treatment of an 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***

The mistreatment or abuse of an 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.

### ***Modern Slavery***

This involves holding a person in slavery or servitude or requiring a person to perform forced or compulsory labour.

### ***Forced Marriage***

The use of violence, threats or any other form of coercion for the purpose of causing another person to enter into a marriage without their free and full consent. For victims who lack capacity to consent to marriage, forced marriage is any conduct carried out for the purpose of causing the victim to enter into a marriage.

### ***Domestic Abuse***

Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.

## **Appendix 8: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

The following signs COULD be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered IN CONTEXT of the person's whole life.

### **1. Signs of Possible Abuse in Children**

#### ***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
- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM). Signs it might happen include a long holiday overseas being arranged; relatives have undergone FGM; talk of a special occasion or ceremony to be 'prepared for marriage'. Signs it might have taken place include acting differently after an absence from school; difficulty standing, walking or sitting.

#### ***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

#### ***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.

## **2. Signs of Possible Abuse in Adults with Care and Support Needs**

### ***Physical***

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and / or medical problems unattended
- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given
- Bruising of different ages and/or in places not normally exposed to falls or rough games
- Flinching at physical contact
- Appearing frightened in the presence of a particular person

### ***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 or self-harming
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse

### ***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
- Implausible stories and attention-seeking behaviour
- Low self-esteem, helplessness, passivity

### ***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
- Missing personal belongings

### ***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

### ***Self-Neglect***

- Hoarding
- Poor personal hygiene
- Malnutrition, weight-loss, persistent hunger, stealing or gorging on food
- Dressed inappropriately for weather

- Dirt, urine, faecal smells in person's environment
- Home environment doesn't meet basic needs (e.g. insufficient heating or lighting)

### ***Discriminatory***

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care
- Individual puts themselves down in terms of their gender or sexuality

### ***Institutional***

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc.
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

### ***Modern Slavery***

- Unkempt, inappropriate clothing, malnourished
- Movement monitored, rarely alone, travel early or late at night to facilitate working hours
- Few personal possessions or ID documents
- Fear of seeking help or trusting people

### ***Domestic Abuse***

- Signs listed under physical, sexual, psychological and/or financial abuse
- Controlling or threatening relationship
- Female genital mutilation (see signs and symptoms in children)

## **Appendix 9: Trustees, Minister and other Elders Safeguarding Statement**

The following statement was agreed by the Trustees, the Minister and the other Elders.

- The Church is committed to the safeguarding of children, and of adults with care and support needs, and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children (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.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, discriminatory and other types of abuse and neglect of adults with care and support needs and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of 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 the place of worship / organisation 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 adults with care and support needs.

### **We are committed to:**

- Following UK legislation and guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and ensuring that all workers work within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that the Church and in particular everyone working with children / adults with care and support needs agrees to abide by the Safeguarding Policy and associated guidance documents.
- Supporting all in the place of worship affected by abuse.

### **We recognise:**

- Lewisham Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are serious concerns about a child. Lewisham Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are serious concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation of abuse 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 for an adult with care and support needs, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Co-ordinators for GCB:

- Nic Srinivasan, Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- Simon Abrams, Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- Lin Allen, Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from Nic Srinivasan.

## **Appendix 10: Recruitment and training of workers**

### **1. Safe recruitment**

The Trustees, Minister, other Elders and Church Council have read this Safeguarding Policy and confirm that they will work within it and direct the Church to work within it. A disclosure and barring service (DBS) check will be obtained by a Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the Minister, other Elders and Church Council members.

Recruitment of adults (paid/voluntary) to work with children and young people:

- A short interview will take place with the Minister, an Elder, a Safeguarding Co-ordinator or one of the children's / youth leaders. Suitable questions including those relating to safeguarding will be asked.
- The individual will complete an application form. This includes a declaration of any convictions and details of two referees. Where an applicant is new to the Church, then at least one referee must be obtained from every previous church attended regularly over the last three years. In the exceptional case of a volunteer not previously attending church, a Safeguarding Co-ordinator will determine appropriate referees.
- A Safeguarding Co-ordinator will take up and check references.
- A DBS check will be obtained by a Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the applicant.
- Induction training will be completed, including a safeguarding discussion. This will cover familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if there are concerns about someone's safety or welfare.
- Before starting work, the individual will either read this policy or attend safeguarding training run by GCB, and must agree to follow the policy / training.
- A 6 month probation period will be required.

Recruitment of adults to help at events where parents are present and responsible for their own children:

- Helpers may help entertain children and/or help to host the event. E.g. Chatterbox kitchen helpers.
- Helpers will complete a self-declaration form and receive basic safeguarding training.

Recruitment of 14-17 year olds (voluntary) to act as helpers in Children's Church / Crèche:

- A short interview will take place with the Minister, an Elder, a Safeguarding Co-ordinator or one of the children's / youth leaders.

- The individual will complete a junior helper application form (available on thirtyone:eight website) and receive basic safeguarding training.

Recruitment of individuals (paid / voluntary) to potentially work with adults with care and support needs:

- CAP Debt Centre Managers and Debt Councillors will follow the recruitment procedure for those working with children / young people as set out above.
- CAP Debt Centre Befrienders will follow the recruitment procedure for those working with children / young people except that safeguarding training will be adapted to their role.
- Leaders of Fellowship Group leaders and other course leaders are appointed by the Minister and other Elders and must be well known to them, having played an active role in serving within the Church community for some time. Before starting work, the leaders will either read this policy or attend safeguarding training run by GCB, and must agree to follow the policy / training.

Involvement of external speakers for children's events:

- For speakers visiting once and who will not be left alone with children, no DBS check is required.
- For speakers visiting multiple times, a DBS check is required and training will be as appropriate.

## **2. Data protection relating to recruitment**

- Personal data relating to recruitment of workers (e.g. application form, references, DBS check information) will be held in accordance with GCB's Data Protection Policy and associated Personal Data Log.

## **3. Management and ongoing training of workers**

- DBS checks will be renewed every 3 years (or as advised by the government).
- Refresher training / policy reading is required annually, or more frequently if significant changes to the policy occur.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinators will ensure that the Trustees, Minister, other Elders and workers are kept up to date with changes to this Safeguarding Policy.
- The Trustees, Minister and other Elders undertake to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office. 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.

## **Appendix 11: Detailed procedures to be followed by Safeguarding Co-ordinators**

### **1. Allegations / suspicions of abuse relating to physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse or emotional abuse of a child**

- 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 Lewisham Council MASH.
- Contact Lewisham Council MASH (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.
- In cases involving potential sexual abuse, contact either Lewisham Council MASH or the Police Child Protection Team.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- DO NOT tell the parents / carers or anyone else (other than those nominated above) unless advised to do so having contacted Lewisham Council MASH.

For lesser concerns (e.g. poor parenting) encourage parent / carer to seek help (e.g. help from the Minister or other Elders or professional experts in the respective area), 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 Lewisham Council MASH direct for advice.

## **2. Allegations / suspicions of abuse of an adult in need of protection**

- As far as possible, discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life. Ask whether they would like to do anything about the abuse. Suggestions might include pastoral support, counselling and / or reporting the abuse with your help.
- If the individual is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- If the abuser is in either a position of trust or a family situation where children may be at risk contact Lewisham Council MASH.
- If a crime has been committed this must be reported. See section 5 below.
- In cases of historic abuse where the abuser is dead, no longer poses a risk or their whereabouts is unknown, the individual who experienced abuse can choose not to report the abuse.
- For advice contact Lewisham Adult Social Care, who have a responsibility under the Care Act (2014), to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

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

- Follow the relevant procedure(s) above as they relate to any victims of the alleged abuse.
- Liaise with Lewisham Council MASH, the Trustees, Minister and other Elders in regards to *immediate* suspension of the worker. Justify in writing any decisions made. Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- Make a referral to the designated officer at Lewisham Council.
- With advice from the designated officer, make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of the worker being placed on the barred list.

## **4. Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adult(s) with care and support needs**

- Follow the relevant procedure(s) above as they relate to any victims of the alleged abuse.
- Liaise with Lewisham Adult Social Care, the Trustees, Minister and other Elders in regards to *immediate* suspension of the worker. Justify in writing any decisions made. Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- With advice from Adult Social Care, make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of the worker being placed on the barred list.

## **5. All allegations / suspicions of criminal offences(s) in the area of abuse**

- Report any allegations involving criminal offence(s) in this area of abuse to the police as soon as possible.
- Inform a Trustee, the Minister and / or a Church Elder (unless implicated).
- Inform the insurance company (if required by the current policy).
- Report serious incidents to the Charity Commission.

## **Appendix 12: Revision history from previous version – main changes**

Senior Minister updated to Tobias Brown

Appendix 4 guidelines for children's church and holiday club have been expanded to include other children's event.

Appendix 10 guidelines on recruitment of workers have been expanded to include helpers at events where parents are present (e.g. Chatterbox) and to include external speakers for children's events.