



# **Chipping Norton Baptist Church**

## **Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy, Procedures and Guidelines**



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## **A. Introduction**

Safeguarding is the protection of adults and children from harm, abuse or neglect. If we believe that all people are precious in the eyes of God, their creator; if we believe that as Christians we should follow the example of Jesus in his compassion and care for others; if we believe that the church should be a sanctuary of safety and peace; and if we believe that we as Christians should speak out against injustice, then safeguarding should be an automatic part of our church – as we strive to protect all people from harm, abuse or neglect and to love, care and support all who have been affected by such damaging behaviour.

The document is made up of a policy statement, procedures and guidance, which covers:

- Why we think safeguarding adults is important;
- What to do if you know of or suspect abuse;
- How to make our church a safe and welcoming environment for all.

### **Who are adults at risk?**

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following simple definition taken from CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service): Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are some times in life where risks may increase. Some of these circumstances may include:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty (if it creates a dependency on, or needing help from, others)
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past abuse or trauma
- English is not their first language

Somebody may abuse or neglect an adult at risk by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Adults at risk may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community

setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. There are four types of abuse as officially defined in government guidance: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. It is also recognised that 'spiritual abuse' can occur when an abuse of power takes place within a faith community.

### **Booklet explanation**

The policy, procedures and guidance contained in this booklet should be made available to all members of the Leadership Team, the Safeguarding Team, and the Care Team Leaders.

The parts highlighted in green will be issued as procedures and guidelines for all members of the Care Team and any others working with adults at risk.

## **B. Policy statement**

### **Policy Statement on Safeguarding Adults at Risk in Chipping Norton Baptist Church**

This statement was adopted at a church meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

The vision statement of the church is *“growing a community of people who love God and love others by cultivating deep roots and wide branches, and bearing much fruit”*.

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all adults at risk associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this, as members of CNBC, we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation. We commit to:

#### **1. Prevention and reporting of abuse**

- Recognise it is the responsibility of each church member to help to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional, financial or spiritual abuse of adults at risk, and the duty of **all** to respond to concerns about the well-being of adults at risk and to report any such abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected.

#### **2. Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

- Exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with adults at risk, whether paid or volunteer.
- Provide appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of adults at risk.

#### **3. Respecting adults at risk**

- Adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with adults at risk so as to ensure adults at risk are treated with respect and dignity.
- Provide a safe environment for activities with adults at risk and adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

#### **4. A safe community**

- To seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

## **CNBC Safeguarding Team**

When possible, the Safeguarding Team will work together if and when issues arise. The church has appointed:

### **Joyce Rice, Minister & Designated Person for Safeguarding**

07565 578689; minister@chippingnortonbaptists.org

She is the person to contact when abuse of children or adults at risk is disclosed, discovered or suspected. She will liaise with the CNBC Safeguarding Team, the Association Safeguarding Contact and external agencies where necessary.

### **Ro Armstrong, Children's Safeguarding Officer**

07813 073169; ro.armstrong@btinternet.com

She will take responsibility to promote safeguarding amongst children and to help children and parents know how and when to raise issues.

### **Vaughn Armstrong, Safeguarding Trustee**

07789 928245; office@chippingnortonbaptists.org

He will oversee and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees.

## **Policy and Procedures**

A copy of this policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the Church Lobby area.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of, or other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually. The policy statement will be read annually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.



## **C. Procedures and Guidelines**

### **1. Prevention and reporting of abuse**

*It is the responsibility of each church member to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional, financial, or spiritual abuse of adults at risk, and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of adults at risk and to report any such abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected.*

#### **1.1 Recognising abuse**

Abuse may be suspected because:

- there is a general concern about someone's wellbeing.
- something is seen or heard which could be abusive.
- someone tells something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive.

All who work with adults at risk will receive training which will include discussion about recognising different forms of abuse. This training will be renewed every three years.

#### **1.2 Responding to suspected, disclosed or discovered abuse**

If abuse is suspected, disclosed or discovered the concerns should be passed on to the Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours (however, if the adult at risk says they don't want the information shared please refer to section 1.3). If the Designated Person is not available or is implicated in the concern, another member of the Safeguarding Team (if applicable) should be contacted, or the Local Association Safeguarding Contact. If an adult is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay.

Never go and talk to the alleged abuser or try to investigate the allegations yourself.

CNBC adopts a three-stage process for responding to concerns:

### STAGE 1

A worker has a concern about the welfare of an adult at risk or the behaviour of somebody working with an adult at risk

The person who has the concern has a duty to **RECORD AND REPORT**

A written record must be made of the concern using an **incident report form** (see Appendix D1 – forms are available from the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee or the Minister) and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours (however, if the adult at risk says they don't want the information shared please refer to section 1.3).

If the Designated Person is not available then contact the Safeguarding Trustee or the Minister. If a child is in imminent danger of harm the worker should make a referral to the police (999) or Adult Social Services without delay.



### STAGE 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

The Designated Person has a duty to **REVIEW AND REFER**

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with the Safeguarding Team) as to what action should follow. It may be applicable to contact the Association Safeguarding Contact and/or the police or Adult Social Care Services. The Designated Person will ensure that the agreed action is taken, and that the Safeguarding Incident Form is completed.



### STAGE 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister may have a duty to **SUPPORT AND REPORT**

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the Association Safeguarding Contact, the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Charity Commission.

## Stage 1 – record and report (all workers)

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of an adult at risk is to RECORD their concerns in writing and to REPORT their concerns to the Designated Person. The report to the Designated Person should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised (however, if the adult at risk says they don't want the information shared please refer to section 1.3).

### The duty to **RECORD**

A written record should be made. The report should:

- › be made as soon as possible after the event
- › be legible and state the facts accurately. **ALL HAND-WRITTEN NOTES SHOULD BE RETAINED EVEN IF TYPED UP LATER.**
- › include the adult's full name, address, date of birth if they are known (or age if 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 and the demeanour of the adult at risk
- › include a record that is as accurate as possible of what the adult at risk has said using the adult at risk's words
- › include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported including any questions asked
- › 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 Designated Person and the Safeguarding Team (as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the adult at risk concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved), and representatives of the professional agencies.

### The duty to **REPORT**

If anyone has a concern about the welfare of an adult at risk, that concern should be reported to the Designated Person without delay (within 24 hours) (however, if the adult at risk says they don't want the information shared please refer to section 1.3). If the Designated Person is unavailable then contact either the Safeguarding Trustee or the Minister. The report can be made in the first instance either in a face-to-face conversation or by telephone, but should always be followed up by submitting an **incident report form** (see Appendix D1).

If an adult at risk is considered to be in imminent danger of harm the worker should contact the police (999) or Adult Social Services without delay. If such a report is made without reference to the Designated Person (because it was not possible to contact the Designated Person immediately), the Designated Person should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and report their concerns to the Designated Person.

### **Stage 2 – review and refer (for the Designated Person)**

The duty of the Designated Person is to REVIEW the information that has been shared. They should ensure that an **incident report form** has been completed. They may then wish to discuss the issue with the person who has raised the concern, and the Designated Person will decide what action should be taken. They may feel it is appropriate to discuss the issue with the Safeguarding Team, or the Association Safeguarding Contact. Together a decision will be made as to what action should follow.

It may be appropriate to REFER the incident to the police or Adult Social Care Services.

The Designated Person will be responsible to ensure that that the agreed actions are carried out and that all actions are recorded on the **incident report form**. All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person.

Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns or disclosures, should be stored in a safe and secure manner for at least 75 years.

### **Stage 3 – report and support (for the Designated Person, Safeguarding Trustee and Minister)**

Whenever a formal referral is made to Adult Social Care Services or the police the Designated Person should

- › REPORT the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- › REPORT the referral to the Minister
- › REPORT the referral to the local Association Safeguarding Contact.

In certain circumstances the Safeguarding Trustee acting on behalf of the trustees may also need to make further reports.

If a worker in the church has been accused of causing harm to an adult at risk this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission.

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

The Designated Person shall report back to person having raised the incident to let them know that the Safeguarding Team have responded to the incident, but shall do so without disclosing any sensitive information. The DPS will also explain that if the person is dissatisfied with the action, they should contact the Oxfordshire County Council Safeguarding Team and/or the police.

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer SUPPORT to all those who have been affected. Even when formal referrals to the statutory authorities are not made, those who make reports will feel uncertain and vulnerable and support will need to be offered to them.

### **Adult at risk**

For the adult at risk concerned, Social Services and other agencies may provide support and services. However, the church will have a role to play in complementing this support. The Designated Person should seek to work in partnership with other agencies, clarifying with them how best the church may be able to support the person and to ensure that consistent help and support is being offered.

### **Other Family Members**

The church may similarly be in a position to offer pastoral and practical support to family members who may find they are trying to cope with a variety of feelings.

### **Church Worker/Volunteer**

Support should also be offered to those within the church who are involved in the incident. This could be the person who reported the incident and the Designated Person. Consideration should be given within churches to ensure that no one person is responsible for dealing with safeguarding issues without the support of others.

## **Ministers/Leaders**

Ministers and leaders should know to whom they would turn for support, advice and help when facing the pastoral demands of addressing a safeguarding issue. The local Baptist Association should be contacted for help in this regard.

### **1.3 What if the adult doesn't want help?**

The mental capacity of the adult at risk is vital in deciding what should be done. All actions should be based on the assumption that the individual has the capacity and the right to make their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. This includes upholding their right to follow a course of action which others may deem unwise or eccentric, including staying in a situation of abuse.

All concerns about suspected or disclosed domestic abuse should be reported to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, even if the adult at risk doesn't want help. This is for two reasons:

- i. So that the worker receives adequate support
- ii. So that the DPS understands the bigger picture of what is happening (the DPS may be aware of additional information that would inform a decision to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services)

If the adult at risk doesn't want help it may still be necessary to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services, who can put a safeguarding plan in place so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
- When there is a risk of harm to others or themselves
- In order to prevent a crime

If at all unsure of whether or not to pass on information about abuse without permission, the Designated Person for Safeguarding should contact the Association Safeguarding Contact for advice.

It is also important that the individual knows where to get appropriate help and support if they should change their mind – a list can be found in Baptist Union's booklet *Safe to Belong*.

## 2. Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

*The Church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with adults at risk, whether paid or volunteer. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of adults at risk.*

### 2.1 Appointing workers for the Care Team

Only people who have been worshipping with the church regularly for over 12 months shall be considered for appointment any position in the Care Team which requires a DBS check, with the exception of a paid employee.

The appointment procedure is as follows:

- Step 1: Informal chat with the Care Team Leader(s).
- Step 2: If the Care Team Leader and candidate wish to proceed, the candidate is issued with:
- a job description
  - a Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures booklet
  - an application form (which includes acknowledging they have read and will abide by the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures)
- Step 3: The application form should be submitted to the Safeguarding Trustee who is responsible for arranging:
- for two references (non-family) to be taken up (n.b three references will be taken for a paid post) (where appropriate)
  - a DBS check (where appropriate; for some posts this is only for adults at risk, for other posts this also needs to be for children)
  - for issuing a Safe Driving Policy (where appropriate)
  - for issuing food hygiene guidelines (where appropriate)
- Step 4: On receipt of the references (where appropriate), a satisfactory DBS check (where appropriate), a signed Safe Driving Policy (where appropriate) the Safeguarding Trustee will interview the candidate.
- Step 5: Make the appointment decision. The Safeguarding Trustee will inform the candidate and the Care Team Leader.

Step 6: The Care Team leader will arrange training for the roles the candidate is willing to undertake (where appropriate)

Step 7: Once the volunteer has been trained, the person may begin their work.

The Safeguarding Trustee shall ensure that all paperwork shall be filed securely and confidentially.

No DBS check or references are required for those opting to provide meal preparation and/or delivery of cards/flowers. (For those providing meals the Food Hygiene Guidelines booklet to be provided).

For those visiting/sitting with or running errands a DBS check for adults at risk and references will be obtained and training provided. The Pastoral Visiting – Guidelines Regarding Covid Risks shall also be issued.

Giving lifts/transport will require a DBS check for adults at risk and references, the safe driving policy needs to be signed as well as training provided.

For those providing emergency child care a DBS check for adults at risk and children and references will be obtained and training provided.

## **2.2 Appointing workers for other ministries involving adults at risk**

The appointment procedure is as follows:

Step 1: Informal chat with ministry Leader

Step 2: If the ministry Leader and candidate wish to proceed, the candidate is issued with:

- a Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures booklet
- an application form (which includes acknowledging they have read and will abide by the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures)

Step 3: The application form should be submitted to the Safeguarding Trustee who is responsible for arranging:



- for two references (non-family) to be taken up (n.b. three references will be taken for a paid post)
- a DBS check for adults at risk

Step 4: On receipt of the references and a satisfactory DBS check the Safeguarding Trustee shall make the appointment decision. The Safeguarding Trustee will inform the candidate and the ministry Leader.

Step 5: The candidate will be required to attend safeguarding training as soon as possible. Once the volunteer has been trained, the person may begin their work.

The Safeguarding Trustee shall ensure that all paperwork shall be filed securely and confidentially.

### **2.3 Ongoing DBS checks, training and supervision**

All who work with adults at risk will receive training which will include discussion about recognising different forms of abuse. This training will be renewed every three years.

All who require a DBS check for their roles will renew their checks every three years.

Care Team Leaders are responsible for offering ongoing support to all members of the Care Team.

### **3. Respecting adults at risk**

*The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with adults at risk so as to ensure adults at risk are treated with respect and dignity.*

*The church will provide a safe environment for activities with adults at risk and adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.*

#### **3.1 Financial integrity**

All those who work with adults at risk shall abide by the church's Financial Integrity Policy. These clear processes will help to protect those working with adults at risk and any adults at risk. Of particular relevance to those who work with adults at risk are the following points:

Procedures relating to church workers (paid or voluntary):

- Church workers (paid or voluntary) should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest
- Church workers (paid or voluntary) should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances or expenses
- All monetary gifts and any other gift over £10 in value should be reported to Designated Person for Safeguarding, who shall keep a record of all gifts. If s/he has concerns about whether a gift should be accepted s/he will raise the issue with the leadership team
- Church workers (paid or voluntary) should not be influenced by offers of money

Procedures relating to those working with adults at risk on behalf of the church:

- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the leadership team. It is strongly recommended that church workers (including ministers) should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests
- Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, receipts or other evidence should be obtained of what has been done. The person handling the money should leave a signed note of how much they have collected/spent. The note should be countersigned by the adult at risk (if able).

Any work involved in the handling of someone's personal finances should be reported to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, who shall keep a record of this. If s/he has concerns, they will be brought to the leadership team

### **3.2 Photographs/Images**

With mobile phones and tablets with cameras, it is very easy to take pictures and immediately upload them to the internet. Make sure that you have the person's permission to take a picture, and if you intend to upload it, make sure that they're happy for people to see it online. When taking group pictures remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

Bear in mind that there may be many reasons why someone doesn't want their picture on public display, from simply not liking their photo being taken, to not wanting an abusive ex-partner to be able to identify their current location.

### **3.3 Confidentiality**

With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission. This is not always possible when considering passing relevant information about abuse or concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the statutory authorities or the local association (see section 1.3). However, it is possible to keep the information confidential to the relevant parties. This means not telling or hinting to others what someone has disclosed, not even for prayer ministry.

### **3.4 Pastoral Relationships**

Where a relationship has a pastoral dimension, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Workers should be aware of the power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust
- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship, should be avoided.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency within a pastoral relationship.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.

- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers should recognise the limits of their own abilities and competencies, and they should not hesitate to get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.

### **3.5 Lone Visiting**

Those going on visits alone will give due consideration to their safety by letting someone know where they are and when they are expected back and by taking a charged mobile phone. It is generally advisable to avoid visiting people in their own homes or isolated places, unaccompanied, if this is an initial or early contact. If any Care Team member feels uncertain or uncomfortable about any such visit or contact they are entitled to cancel and should seek support from one of the Care Team Leaders.

### **3.6 Pastoral Visiting – Guidelines Regarding Covid Risks**

Anyone entering a home for a pastoral visit or to sit with somebody needs to follow the guidance in 'Pastoral Visiting – Guidelines Regarding Covid Risks'.

## **4. A safe community**

*The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately.*

### **4.1 Working with a known offender (or someone accused of a serious allegation)**

If it becomes known that within the congregation there is an offender or someone against whom a serious allegation has been made, the Association Safeguarding Contact should be contacted without delay.

The Association Safeguarding Contact will offer support and advice to help the church safeguarding team to put in place suitable safeguarding measures which may include:

- Liaising with the statutory authorities
- Carrying out a risk assessment to determine the level of risk that the alleged or known offender poses.
- Writing a formal agreement to be agreed by the alleged or known offender. This would lay out the conditions under which they can attend church services and various other activities organised by the church.
- Reviewing the formal agreement at regular intervals (not less than annually and when circumstances change) by all parties.
- Preparing a press statement in advance.

It is important that no information about the alleged or known offender or the formal agreement is shared with anyone outside of the safeguarding team without the individual's knowledge, and that confidentiality is maintained.

### **4.2 Alleged or known offenders who are themselves at risk**

A formal agreement may be quite a daunting process for someone with learning difficulties or a young person, yet having something in place is still necessary. An alternative may be to arrange a meeting with the individual in question. The minister (or someone else) could take the individual through the main elements of a formal agreement (for example, "Someone will sit with you when you are in church, to make sure that everything's okay") in a non-threatening and easy to understand way. It is important that someone present is taking notes throughout the meeting, preferably not the minister or whoever is leading the meeting.

The individual would need to verbally agree to the requirements laid out in the meeting. Rather than signing a formal 'agreement', the individual would instead sign to say that they

agree with the minutes or meeting notes, and that they will stick to what has been agreed during the meeting. This will result in the same outcome as a contract, but is a more informal and appropriate approach. The agreed requirements will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure the individual is complying, exactly as a formal agreement would be.

### **4.3 Pastoral support for alleged or known offenders**

Outside of the statutory authorities, the majority of offenders will have little or no support from their family or friends, and there will be little public sympathy for them because of the nature of what they have done. By offering much needed pastoral care and support, the church can play a significant role in the rehabilitation of the offender.

An important aspect of this care and support is the imposition of boundaries or a formal agreement (or equivalent). If the offender truly wants to participate in the life of the church, has an understanding of the extent and damage of their crimes, and is committed to a new life, then they will understand the necessity of the restrictions placed upon them.

Alleged offenders should also be able to access pastoral care and support and a formal agreement (or equivalent) needs to be put in place and reviewed once the outcome of the situation is known.

### **4.4 Pastoral support for families of alleged or known offenders**

It is worth noting that the families of alleged or known offenders will also be affected by what has happened, and in particular how they are now perceived and treated by the wider community. The church has the opportunity to play a vital role in the care and support of families of alleged or known offenders. Liaise with the Association Safeguarding Contact for help and support with this.

## **D. List of Supporting Documents for the Policy**

*All these documents can be obtained from a member of the Safeguarding Team.*

Documents for all appointed to work with Adults at Risk:

- CNBC Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures
- Incident Report Form
- Financial Integrity Policy

Other supporting documents:

- Safe Driving Policy
- Basic Food Hygiene Guidelines

Documents for appointing Care Team Members:

- Care Team – Helps List Application Form
- Care Team – Letters to Referees
- Care Team – Reference Form
- Care Team – Helps Lists Job Description

## **E. Policy Review Dates**

Policy implemented: November 2023