

# Droylsden Independent Church

## Safeguarding and Complaints Policy

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# 1. Purpose and Scope.

The introduction of this policy demonstrates that Droylsden Independent Church (hereafter referred to as 'the church') is determined to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect all those who participate in the activities and meetings of the church from harm and abuse. Where harm or abuse is identified, or complaints raised relating to the behaviour, activities, and decisions taken by the church's leadership, trustees, or volunteers, this document provides the basis for the church to respond effectively and appropriately.

This document establishes the church's position, role, and responsibilities and clarifies what is expected from everybody involved within the church. It very clearly highlights the importance placed by the church on the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and how seriously the church takes complaints. Everyone who participates in the activities of the church should be able to do so in an enjoyable, healthy, nurturing and protective environment and be protected from harm or abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in the church; the pastor, the trustees, the deacons, and the church members as well as anyone who acts in any capacity on behalf of the church.

We recognise that abuse of any kind is a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved but not to allow them to interfere with our judgement about any action to be taken. The church recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all participants, protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. It is determined to meet its obligation to ensure that the church provides opportunities for everyone to do so, with the highest possible standard of care.

## 2. Our Values and Beliefs.

The approach and practice of the church in the area of safeguarding is shaped by its values and beliefs as well as UK law as it applies, and the appropriate guidance of external organisations (see section 5: Basis and legal framework). Those values and beliefs are the consequence of the church's theology which is summarised in its statement of faith.

The following tenets inform our practice:

- We are to honour those whom God has set in authority over us, and to obey the law of the land.
- Every human life, including the unborn, is valuable to God and each person bears the image of God.
- Our world is in a fallen and sinful state and there are many risks and dangers from which we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This is because The Bible tells us that God cares for 'the widow, the orphan, and the stranger' and calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation. Jesus Christ himself offers us the greatest example of this care; valuing each one who came to him.
- We recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all who have contact with the church. Children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. They have the 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 is responsible for their care.

# 3. Key People and Structures.

## 3.1 Management of Pastoral care

Formally, pastoral care in the church is the responsibility of the Pastor as appointed by the church meeting. In practice, as a community which seeks to reflect the love of God for the world, every member of the church has a responsibility to care for every other member (John 13:34-35, Romans 12:10, 13:8, 1 Corinthians 12:23-27, 1 John 3:16-19). Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

There is an overlap between pastoral care, safeguarding and complaints, but final responsibility for compliance falls upon the trustees and the appointed church officers.

Certain members or officers may be appointed from time to time to assist the pastor and trustees in this particular role when it comes to safeguarding, complaints, and the legal responsibilities of the church itself in these areas of compliance. These are noted in the following sections.

## 3.2 Appointed Officers

3.2.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mary Gilbertson Date: 17 July 2024

3.2.2. Designated Safeguarding Deputy: Ruth Robinson Date: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024

3.2.3. Designated Recipient of Complaints: Rob Childs Date: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024

3.2.4. Designated Safeguarding Trustee: Rob Childs Date: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025

# 4. Our Responsibilities and Commitments

## 4.1 Key Principles and Responsibilities

- To ensure that the protection of children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse and the promotion of their welfare is of paramount importance in the church.
- To treat each person as equal in the sight of God; equally sinful, equally loved, and equally offered the gift of salvation and reconciliation to God in Jesus Christ.
- To seek to minister to and encourage growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency and sensitivity, in accordance with our statement of faith and our governing documents.
- To pay attention to the protection and nurturing of those in our midst who are particularly vulnerable to abuse or neglect.
- To work in partnership with children, young people, their parents / carers adults at risk of abuse and local and national partner agencies and organisations to promote the welfare of and to protect each member of our community, and particularly the vulnerable.
- To take appropriate action to reconcile complaints and disputes in a God-honouring way according to Biblical principles (see Matthew 18:15-17)

## 4.2 Fulfilling our Responsibilities

- We will actively seek to create and maintain a community and culture consistent with our Biblical principles and best practice regarding safeguarding and complaints.
- We will actively seek to visibly demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the church. Senior leaders will support the development of best practice and provide accountability to everyone who works (paid and voluntary) on our behalf. Complaints and allegations will be investigated fairly and in a timely fashion following the policies and processes laid out in this document.
- We will appoint a Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) and at least one deputy who will take responsibility for leading safeguarding children, young people and adults throughout the church.
- We will appoint a person to be responsible for receiving complaints who will take responsibility for recording, and bringing the complaint to the attention of the church leadership.
- We will adopt safe recruitment best practice in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- We will ensure that key staff and volunteers are supported and trained to deliver best practice in safeguarding, and that everyone knows who to pass a complaint to if one is received.
- We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry.
- We will actively monitor the conduct of staff (paid and voluntary) and have policies and procedures for managing allegations against staff, supported by a culture of listening to allegations and complaints and responding with rigour, fairness, and transparency.

- We will provide a fair complaints' procedure which is clear, transparent, and easy for anyone wishing to make a complaint, and publicise its existence so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- We will seek to clearly identify concerns about the safety or well-being of those who are part of our community and to respond appropriately and proportionately.
- We will record and store information accurately and keeping it securely; sharing information appropriately in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as consent forms, attendance data, accident and incident reporting, and confidential recording of safeguarding concerns and complaints.
- We will involve children, young people, their parents, or carers and adults at risk of abuse in our safeguarding processes wherever possible.
- We will involve local and national partner agencies and organisations reporting concerns, suspicions and allegations as appropriate.
- Each year at the Church Annual General Meeting we will review and, where necessary, update our policies, procedures, and systems for effectiveness and compliance with best practice principles.
- We will ensure that relevant policies and procedures are publicly available.

# 5. Safeguarding Processes and Procedures

## 5.1 Receiving and Handling Safeguarding Concerns, Allegations and Complaints.

There is significant crossover between safeguarding (concerns regarding abuse or neglect) and general complaints (expressions of dissatisfaction with aspects of church life). This integrated policy aims to help guide the church in the appropriate handling of both, while taking into account the significant differences in nature and the approach taken in response to each.

### 5.1.1 Safeguarding concerns and allegations

A safeguarding concern will be identified where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of or is experiencing abuse or neglect. Such a concern may arise from normal pastoral care and conversation, or from a direct allegation.

#### 5.1.1.1 *Managing the immediate risk*

1. Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual.
2. The worker may seek advice from the team leader or from the DSL, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.
3. In such urgent situations and if the DSL cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or Social Care to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### 5.1.1.2 *Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)*

1. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL using the Safeguarding Reporting Form.
2. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding.

#### 5.1.1.3 *Managing the risks: the role of the DSL*

1. In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required.
2. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk.
3. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis.
4. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a "need to know" basis.

5. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:
  - To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or abuse.
  - To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse.
6. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (see Appendix III), and the DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.
7. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the record of action and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
8. Confidential files will be stored in a secure folder, only accessible to the DSL, the Deputy DSL and the Safeguarding Trustee on a password protected cloud-based drive.
9. The DSL / Deputy DSL / Safeguarding Trustee will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding.

Throughout the process and alongside any resulting actions the church will continue to offer support and pastoral care to all parties where it is required, appropriate and possible.

### **5.1.2 Allegations against or concerns about staff and volunteers**

The church will always take allegations against our staff or volunteers seriously; ensuring that they are investigated proportionately, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner; recognising both our responsibility to keep vulnerable people safe, and our responsibility to support the person accused throughout the process.

- Allegations against staff or volunteers within the church should be reported to the safeguarding trustee. or by e-mailing [safeguarding@droylsdenindchurch.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@droylsdenindchurch.co.uk)
- If the allegation is against the safeguarding trustee, it should be reported to one of the other church leaders or the DSL.
- Full details of the allegation will be recorded.
- The trustees will nominate an investigating officer (on a case-by-case basis) from amongst their number, who will assess whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable. If so, care will be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
- If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation will not be divulged.
- Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims.
- At the earliest opportunity, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should be consulted.
- If the LADO cannot be contacted due to working hours, initial advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS)

- If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the church's investigating officer will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed.
- If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the investigating officer will consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency.
- Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
- These records will be held confidentially in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.
- The investigating officer will seek and follow specialist advice throughout the process as required.

### 5.1.3 Complaints

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of church life. This can be about a person, or persons, an activity, or a group or about a service provided by the church. The Biblical principle of Matthew 18:15-17 is the basis for the resolution of conflict within Christ's church and for the application of church discipline.

*Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two or more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17 NKJV)*

While this is a useful principle in dealing with conflict resolution it is not specifically given for dealing with complaints, and so this complaints' policy outlines a three-stage complaints procedure based on the Biblical principle.

- **Stage One: Informal Discussions** is part of the formal complaints' procedure but resolution of the complaint or issues is achieved by informal conversations rather than a formal investigation. This may be undertaken by the complainant themselves or facilitated by the church with a church officer attending to mediate. This stage is optional and if the complainant wishes to commence at Stage Two, they have every right to do so. The church recognises that the nature of some complaints may mean it would be inappropriate to begin at Stage One, however, the complainant must be able to demonstrate why Stage Two is necessary. Failure to provide the evidence would mean that the complaint would not escalate but would commence at stage one.
- **Stage Two: Formal Investigation.** This is the stage where formal processes should be used which includes a fair and transparent investigation into the complaint by those appointed by the church to do so in conjunction with external agencies as required. A report will then be made to the church meeting where any action will be decided and reported to the complainant.
- **Stage Three: Appeal** Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the decisions and/or actions of the church meeting, they may appeal against the same whereupon a suitable third-party (another local pastor, church leader, or church body such as EFCC) will be invited to review the complaint and any actions undertaken.

Complaints should be reported to the Designated Recipient of Complaints, but may be received from several sources. The church will establish whether the complainant wishes to commence at Stage One (Informal Resolution) or Stage Two (Formal Investigation).

## **5.2 Recruitment and Management of Staff and Volunteers**

The recruitment / appointment and support of staff and volunteers is of critical importance to the church, and to our work and ministry. To fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

### **5.2.1 Recruitment processes**

- At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of staff or appointment of volunteers will be trained in Safe Recruitment.
- Staff and volunteers will be provided with written Job / role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position / role.
- Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions.
- A “Single Central Record” of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained by the DSL and / or their deputy.
- Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form, which includes a self-declaration of fitness and suitability for the role. Where necessary and appropriate (e.g., lack of literacy skills, English as a second language etc) support can be provided for completion of the forms.

#### **5.2.1.1 Paid Staff Positions:**

- Prior to appointment all paid staff will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation.
- Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought including, where possible, a reference from the current or previous employer.
- Upon commencement of their position, all staff will be required to complete a formal induction process as outlined in their role description and including any matters identified during the recruitment process.
- The Single Central Record, training Log and Personnel file will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

#### **5.2.1.2 Volunteer Positions**

- The church leadership is responsible for recommending to the church meeting the appointment of volunteers for practical, teaching or ministry positions. The leadership may delegate the lead responsibility for any given appointment to one of more of their number.
- Prior to appointment, all volunteers will be required to attend a formal discussion to ensure their suitability and clarity of understanding of the role and its requirements.
- Prior to appointment, references will be sought. Where an appropriate reference was obtained at the time of application for formal church membership, this may be used, and internal references are acceptable.
- Following appointment, volunteers will be required to complete a formal induction process as defined in the role description.
- The Single Central Record, training Log and Personal File will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

## 5.2.2 DBS Checks

- Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, staff and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check.
- Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the result of the DBS check has been received.
- Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to commence prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a formal risk assessment will be completed by the DSL or their deputy and signed off by the Safeguarding Trustee. The person will not be permitted to have unsupervised access to children and must be supervised by someone who is DBS checked.
- A formal agreement that outlines the duties that are permitted, and all measures implemented to prevent the individual having unsupervised access to vulnerable people will be drawn up and signed by the appointee and the DSL or the Safeguarding Trustee.
- Once formal notification of a clear DBS check has been received, the Single Central Record will be updated with the relevant information.

## 5.2.3 Blemished DBS Checks

- The applicant will be asked to present the DBS certificate to the Lead Recruiter (the DSL).
- The applicant may, if they wish to, withdraw their application.
- If the application is withdrawn, consideration will be given to whether this required the triggering of the procedure for the '*Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others*' (see section 5.3).
- If the applicant self-declared the blemish and it has been discussed previously, the recruiter will check to ensure that the detail provided in the self-disclosure is consistent with the information on the DBS certificate.
- If the applicant did not self-disclose, an open conversation about the circumstances of the blemish will be discussed with the applicant.
- Whether the discussion arises from self-disclosure or examination of the certificate, a formal assessment will be conducted to ascertain the applicant's suitability for the role by the DSL and / or the Safeguarding Trustee, and the outcome will be recorded in the personnel file.
- Advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services if required.
- The applicant will be given every opportunity to provide input to the assessment and the outcome will be explained to them.
- A blemished DBS check does not necessarily prevent the individual from engaging in regulated activity. The risk assessment may conclude:
  - That the individual is unsuitable for the role.
  - That further investigation is required.
  - That the person is suitable for the role with restrictions.
  - That the blemish does not indicate unsuitability.
- If the risk assessment concludes that the individual is unsuitable for the role, consideration will be given to:
  - Whether there are other roles for which the individual would be suitable.

- Whether the “Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people” (see section D13 of this policy) process needs to be triggered.
- Once the details of the certificate have been recorded in the Single Central Record, the certificate will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained.

#### **5.2.4 Support and management of staff and volunteers**

- All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management.
- Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years.
- All staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular safeguarding training.
- Volunteers and staff involved in working with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years.
- A training log will be maintained by the DSL / Deputy DSL.

### **5.3 Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others**

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

- a) Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the church leaders will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.
- b) With the consent of the individual (if required), the church will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate.
- c) The leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated.
- d) A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the individual and the church leaders. The agreement will include:
  - i. The church’s commitments to the individual who poses the risk.
  - ii. The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community.
  - iii. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual’s involvement in the life of the church.
  - iv. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement.
  - v. When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed.
- e) All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.
- f) The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the leaders either:

- i. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk.
  - ii. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared.
- g) If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on.
- h) All records of risk assessments and formal agreements will be stored in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.

## **5.4 Policy Reviews**

The church understands that it is vital to have a robust and regular review of policies, procedures and practice in order to fulfil our legal duties which are subject to change, and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture. In order to do this we commit to annually reviewing and reporting upon the following points

- Check the local safeguarding contacts recorded in the policy appendix are up to date and valid.
- Keep up to date with changes in legislation or best practices.
- The DSL and Safeguarding trustee will annually review the incident log and accident book as well as any safeguarding concerns and incidents raised and make a report to the trustees, church leaders and church meeting.
- The annual safeguarding report will be used to measure the effectiveness of existing policies, procedures and practice, and to propose improvements where necessary.

# 6. Codes of Conduct

## 6.1 Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with children or young people

**Those working with children and young people will:**

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented.
- Attend safeguarding training that is relevant to your role and to keep you updated.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from parents.
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of the children in their care.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or authority as adults and leaders within the group.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory language or behaviour with them.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
- Only take responsibility for children if they are physically and mentally fit and able to do so.
- Treat them as individuals with respect and dignity.
- Respect their views and wishes.
- Act with fairness and treat children equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Treat them in an age-appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability.
- Ensure the area is safe and appropriate for use with children and young people.
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice.
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- Ensure that age-appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented.
- Ensure that any age-appropriate physical contact is child and young person led.
- Refrain from physical play (e.g. Rough and tumble games that involve physical contact.)
- Refrain from any physical chastisement.
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual child, young person or the group.
- Refrain from making any social media connections with them.

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## **6.2 Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with Adults**

**Those working with vulnerable adults including adults at risk of abuse will:**

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented.
- Attend safeguarding training that is relevant to your role and to keep you updated.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders.
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of those with whom they are working.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory language or behaviour with them.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
- Support the participation of the vulnerable person (and their carers where appropriate) in the planning of support or other decisions that affect them.
- Treat them as individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that support is adult led and that their views, wishes, and choices are respected.
- Ensure that any physical contact is adult led.
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit.
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented.
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group.

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## 6.3 Code of conduct for staff and volunteers providing pastoral care

(Please note: this code of conduct is not intended to cover disciplinary issues, although the broad principles would still apply)

### **Those involved in providing pastoral care will:**

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented.
- Attend safeguarding training that is relevant to your role and to keep you updated.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leadership or identified person/s. This will be on a confidential basis as goes with the role.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory language or behaviour with them.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
- When delivering challenge or difficult messages, will do so in a respectful, compassionate, and gentle way that is in line with their best interests (including their emotional and spiritual wellbeing).
- Will seek to ensure that the individual's right to question or ignore any advice or suggestions is fully understood.
- Treat them as individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support.
- Ensure that any physical contact is adult led.
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit.
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group.

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# **7. Basis and Legal Framework**

Governing documents and resources which have informed this policy

## **7.1 Our Resources**

- The Bible
- The Church Statement of Faith and Constitution
- Previous Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies
- Our GDPR Policy and Guidance
- Churches Safeguarding Services (CSS) template documents

## **7.2 Government Documents and Acts.**

- Children's Acts (1989 and 2004)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Working together to safeguard children Statutory Guidance (2015, updated December 2023)
- Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition – non-statutory guidance for providers running out-of-school settings (2020)

## **7.3 Local Authority Resources**

- Tameside Adults Safeguarding Board
- Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership

## **7.4 Other Resources**

- CSS Safeguarding Policy Framework
- CSS Safeguarding Procedure Framework
- FIEC Church Complaints Policy and Procedures

# 8. Document Control

Policy Version: 1.2.1

Policy originally adopted at a church meeting held on: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Policy last reviewed on: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Next scheduled review date: April 2026

## 8.1 History:

| Document Version | Adopted on                      | Reviewed                 | Comments                          |
|------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.0              | 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2022    | 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 |                                   |
| 1.1              | 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2024      | April 2025               |                                   |
| 1.2              | 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2025        |                          |                                   |
| 1.2.1            | 24 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 |                          | Added Section 7: Codes of Conduct |

# 9. Appendices

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# Appendix I: Safeguarding Report Form

This form will be used to record safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse in line with Droylsden Independent Church's Safeguarding and Complaints Policy.

| Your Details   |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Name: <input type="text"/>   | Position: <input type="text"/> |
| Phone Number: <input type="text"/>   | <input type="text"/>           |
| The Person at Risk   |                                |
| Name: <input type="text"/>   | DOB: <input type="text"/>      |
| Address/Phone Number:  | <input type="text"/>           |
| Parent/Guardian Details:<br>(if applicable)  | <input type="text"/>           |
| Other relevant details:  | <input type="text"/>           |
| Details of the Concern   |                                |
| <b>Are you recording</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A disclosure raised by the individual?<br><input type="checkbox"/> A disclosure or suspicion from a third party?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Your own suspicions or concerns? (Check as appropriate) |                                |
| <b>Details:</b><br>Include the date, time, and location of any disclosures or incidents. Continue on additional sheets if necessary.   |                                |
| <input type="text"/>   |                                |
| <b>Action taken:</b><br>Continue on additional sheets if necessary.  |                                |
| <input type="text"/>   |                                |
| Signed: <input type="text"/>   | Date: <input type="text"/>     |

# Appendix II: Complaint Report Form

This form should be made available for anyone who wishes to make a formal complaint about the church in line with Droylsden Independent Church's Safeguarding and Complaints Policy.

| Your Details   |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Name: <input type="text"/>   | Position: <input type="text"/> |
| Phone Number: <input type="text"/>   | Email: <input type="text"/>    |
| Address<br><input type="text"/>  |                                |
| Details of your complaint  |                                |
| Date of Incident: <input type="text"/>   |                                |
| Description<br>Please include the time, location, and the persons involved. Continue on additional sheets if necessary.<br><input type="text"/>    |                                |
| Please provide any supporting information such as witness details, relevant correspondence and the impact of the incident.<br><input type="text"/> |                                |
| Have you tried to resolve this matter informally? If so what happened?<br><input type="text"/>   |                                |
| Desired Outcome:<br>What actions would you like the church to take, and what outcome are you seeking?<br><input type="text"/>                      |                                |
| Signed: <input type="text"/>   | Date: <input type="text"/>     |

# Appendix III: Risk Assessments

## Risk Assessment:

For a person who poses an actual or potential risk to vulnerable people

| About the person being risk assessed                                      |                                       |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name: <input type="text"/>  | D.O.B. <input type="text"/>           |  |
| Address:<br><input type="text"/>  | Email: <input type="text"/>           |  |
|   | Phone: <input type="text"/>           |  |
| Nature of the risk  |                                       |  |
| How did we become aware of the risk?<br><input type="text"/>              |                                       |  |
| Describe the risk or concern under consideration.<br><input type="text"/> |                                       |  |
| What immediate action has been taken (if any)?<br><input type="text"/>    |                                       |  |
| External agencies involved or consulted                                   |                                       |  |
| Are any external agencies involved? Yes/No                                |                                       |  |
| Organisation/Team:<br><input type="text"/>                                | Contact Name:<br><input type="text"/> | Contact Details:<br><input type="text"/> |
| Information provided:   | <input type="text"/>                  |  |
| Organisation/Team:<br><input type="text"/>                                | Contact Name:<br><input type="text"/> | Contact Details:<br><input type="text"/> |
| Information provided:   | <input type="text"/>                  |  |

## Risk Assessment

Restrictions imposed or recommended by external agencies:

Risks identified internally:

How will these risks be managed?

Summary of discussions with the individual

Support agreed

Restrictions agreed

Formal contract required? Yes/No

Contract signed date

## Document Control

Risk assessment completed by:

Risk assessment approved by:

Signed off date:

## Appendix IV: Contacts for Partner Organisations

Listed below are partner organisations which the church works with to enable effective implementation of this policy. This is not intended to be an exhaustive directory and other organisations may be contacted as appropriate.

### Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches (EFCC)

Latimer Congregational Church

BEVERLEY

East Yorkshire

HU17 0JD

Telephone: 01482 860324

Website: [www.efcc.org.uk](http://www.efcc.org.uk)

### Churches Safeguarding Services (CSS)

6 Marshalsea Road

London

SE1 1HL

Telephone: 0116 218 4420

Email: [contact@thecss.co.uk](mailto:contact@thecss.co.uk)

Website: [www.thecss.co.uk](http://www.thecss.co.uk)

### Tameside Social Services:

#### Children's Area Social Work Team

Tameside One,

Market Place,

Ashton-under-Lyne,

OL6 6BH

Telephone: 0161 342 4477

#### Tameside Adult Services

Community Gateway Team

Cricket Lane Clinic, Cricket Lane

Ashton under Lyne, OL6 6NG

Telephone: 0161 922 4888

Out-of-hours: 0161 342 2222

[www.tameside.gov.uk/adults](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/adults)

Opening Times:

Monday to Wednesday 8.30am to 5.00pm

Thursday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Friday 8.30am to 4.00pm

#### Tameside Safeguarding Children Partnership

Tameside One, Market Place

Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6BH

Telephone: 0161 342 4348

Email: [tscp@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:tscp@tameside.gov.uk)

[www.tamesidescp.org.uk](http://www.tamesidescp.org.uk)

#### Greater Manchester Police

Ashton Police Station

Manchester Road

Ashton

OL7 0BQ

Website: [www.gmp-police.uk](http://www.gmp-police.uk)