**LBC**

**Safeguarding Policy**

**Date of Issue:** January 2023

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**Date for Review:** January 2026

**Senior Leader:** Aaron Jarvis

**Our commitment:**

As a Church we understand the need to provide a safe and encouraging environment for children and young people and adults. We understand that anyone can be victims of abuse; physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of children and young people and adults and to keep them safe.

We will ensure all children/young people/adults will have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

We have set out the following procedures and guidance and are committed to safeguard the children and young people and adults within the church.

**LBC will:**

* Ensure all people with positions of responsibility in LBC will be provided with Safeguarding training and any other training deemed appropriate
* Ensure all people with positions of responsibility in LBC will complete a DBS check
* Will review our Safeguarding policy annually
* Support the Safeguarding Officers in any actions they need to take
* Will keep copies of Incident Reports on file in a secure place

**Recruitment:**

LBC will ensure that all workers, paid and voluntary who are given positions of responsibility will be fully trained and supported. Safeguarding will be discussed and the Safeguarding policy will be given to the person. LBC will complete DBS checks for all workers. These checks will be done through the DDC.

All workers will be expected to follow a good practice code of conduct as follows:

* Treat all children and young people and adults equally and with respect
* Will act appropriately and set a good example
* Be aware of any changes in behaviour, personal appearance etc, that could indicate signs of abuse
* Will listen to children and young people and adults
* Will discuss concerns/disclosures to the Safeguarding Officers

**Photography and images:**

As a church we will only take children’s/young people’s photos for display work, presentation and occasionally use on our website or social media. All parents/carers will complete a form for consent of photographs/videos.

We will:

* seek consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in newspapers or publications)
* seek parental consent
* ensure pupils are appropriately dressed
* encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them

**Confidentiality:**

Safeguarding children and young people and adults raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all people put in positions of responsibility.

* We have a responsibility to share information if we are concerned for a child/young person/adult, this could be with the police or social services.
* If a child/young person/adult wants to confide in someone but asks for it to stay between them, the worker must explain (in an appropriate manner) they cannot promise to keep confidentiality and may need to speak to someone else regarding the information.

**Definitions:**

*Taken from the NSPCC Factsheet 2009*

There are five types of child abuse. They are defined in the UK Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) as follows: *(Please note these forms of abuse are taken into account for adults)*

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or failing to protect a child from that harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age- or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including both penetrative or non-penetrative acts such as kissing, touching or fondling the child's genitals or breasts, vaginal or anal intercourse or oral sex .

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing; shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group).

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme,

cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced antibullying strategies.

**Signs of abuse:**

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not

child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk of harm from someone. You do however, have both a responsibility and duty, as set out in your organisation’s child protection procedures, to act in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect a child.

The following information should help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and-tumble of daily life.

Injuries should always be interpreted in light of the child’s medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental bruises are seen over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are often on the front of the body. Some children, however, will have bruising that is more than likely inflicted rather than accidental.

Important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the ‘soft’ parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e g, cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks. A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern, although this can be more complicated with burns, as these are often delayed in presentation due to blistering taking place some time later.

The physical signs of abuse may include:

* unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
* multiple bruises- in clusters, often on the upper arm, outside of the thigh
* cigarette burns
* human bite marks
* broken bones
* scalds, with upward splash marks,
* multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge.
* changes in behaviour that can also indicate physical abuse:
* fear of parents being approached for an explanation
* aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
* flinching when approached or touched
* reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather
* depression
* withdrawn behaviour
* running away from home

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, as there are often no outward physical signs.

There may be a developmental delay due to a failure to thrive and grow, although this will usually only be evident if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, for example when hospitalised or away from their parents’ care. Even so, children who appear well-cared for may nevertheless be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with other children.

Changes in behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:

* neurotic behaviour e.g. sulking, hair twisting, rocking
* being unable to play
* fear of making mistakes
* sudden speech disorders
* self-harm
* fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
* developmental delay in terms of emotional progress

Sexual Abuse

Adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all ages,

including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the child’s behaviour that may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases, children who tell about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

* pain or itching in the genital area
* bruising or bleeding near genital area
* sexually transmitted disease
* vaginal discharge or infection
* stomach pains
* discomfort when walking or sitting down
* pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

* sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
* fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
* having nightmares
* running away from home
* sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level
* sexual drawings or language
* bedwetting
* eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
* self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
* saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
* substance or drug abuse
* suddenly having unexplained sources of money
* not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
* acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Neglect

Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

* constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
* constantly dirty or ‘smelly’
* loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
* inappropriate clothing for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

* complaining of being tired all the time
* not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
* having few friends
* mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to recognise as it can take a number of forms. A child may encounter bullying attacks that are:

* physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats
* verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
* emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating.

Persistent bullying can result in:

* depression
* low self-esteem
* shyness
* poor academic achievement
* isolation
* threatened or attempted suicide

Signs that a child may be being bullied can be:

* coming home with cuts and bruises
* torn clothes
* asking for stolen possessions to be replaced
* losing dinner money
* falling out with previously good friends
* being moody and bad tempered
* wanting to avoid leaving their home
* aggression with younger brothers and sisters
* doing less well at school
* sleep problems
* anxiety
* becoming quiet and withdrawn

These definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive, but only serve as a guide to assist you. It is important too, to remember that many children may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death or the birth of a new baby in the family or relationship problems between parents/carers. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, the authorities will always want to understand them in relation to the child’s development and context.

**What to do when a disclosure is made:**

If you have concerns about a child’s welfare or if a child discloses abuse to you,  **YOU MUST ALWAYS PASS THIS ON.**

If you have concerns about an adult’s welfare or if an adult discloses abuse to you **THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO TELL YOU NOT TO PASS IT ON.**