

Safeguarding at **Parr Street Church**



Safeguarding Policy

April 2026

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Policy Overview

Adoption of the Policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership on 24th March 2026 and will be reviewed annually on 24th March 2027:

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position

Date:

Ownership

This policy has been created using the Thirtyone:eight Model Safeguarding Template. It has been tailor-made for Parr Street Church and must not be copied by any third party. The policy has been written to reflect the 10 Safeguarding standards, which can be found at <https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-ten-standards/>.

Terminology

The following terminology is used in this policy:

Safeguarding: The title given to this policy as our duty of care to protect both children and adults from harm.

Child and Children: Anyone under the age of 18 years.

Young Person and Young People: Children from 11 years and under 18 years of age.

Adult and adults. Anyone 18 years of age and above.

Adults at Risk: Adults over the age of 18 years who either need care and support, are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect, and are unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

Church: Parr Street Evangelical Church.

Leadership: The elders of Parr Street Church.

Staff: A member of staff employed at Parr Street Church with responsibility for Gospel work with people.

Supervisor: A leader who has oversight of a particular aspect of the Church's work with people.

Leader: A person (often a volunteer) appointed to work under the oversight of a Supervisor in a particular aspect of the Church's work with people.

Guides: There are separate 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church' guides for Members, Volunteers and Supervisors that support this Policy. These are available on the Parr Street Church Member's page and can be requested from the Safeguarding Lead.

Details of the Organisation

Name: Parr Street Evangelical Church, Kendal

- Address: Parr Street, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 7DH
- Tel no: 0300 302 0093
- General email address: admin@parrstchurch.org

Senior Leader: Paul Baxendale

- Tel no: 07809290783
- Email: baxendale.paul@yahoo.com

Safeguarding Lead: Gary Stoll

- Tel no: 07777627741
- Email: gary.stoll@parrstchurch.org

Charity Number: 1141454

Insurance Company: Congregational & General Charitable Trust, Policy No. RC01001522

Brief description of our place of organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults with care and support needs:

Parr Street Church welcomes people of all ages and walks of life to its Sunday gatherings. Its membership is made up of Bible-believing adults who trust and follow Jesus.

The Church runs activities throughout the week for under 18's. These include Creche, Toddler Group, Junior Church, Children's Clubs, Youth Meetings and One to Ones. Parental consents are obtained for all under 18's who attend and attendance registers are kept. The Bible is typically taught during these activities but the Church's beliefs are never forced on anyone. The Leadership may agree for a person under 18 years of age to be baptised, but never without parental consent and conviction of genuine faith in Christ.

Adults at Risk may be in attendance at Church gatherings and other activities. Furthermore, Pastoral visits are sometimes made to Adults at Risk.

Parr Street Church is committed to teaching Biblical principles which are to be upheld by all its members and workers involved in the activities mentioned above.

The elder with overall responsibility for Safeguarding is **Paul Baxendale**.

Governance and Leadership


Our Commitment: As a Leadership we 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 accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They 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.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

Governance: The Leadership of Parr Street Church is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility. This includes having a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (IICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).

The Leadership will have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation, including referring to The Charity Commission. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>.



The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures
- with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people
- and there is open communication

Prevention

Understanding Abuse and Neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults with care and support needs may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

Types of Abuse

Children:

- **Physical:** This can take the form of hitting, punching, burning, shaking and other forms of physical harm.
- **Sexual:** Where a child or young person is forced or enticed into sexual activity, whether the child is aware of what's happening or not. This may involve physical contact, looking at sexual content online, having their photo taken or being filmed to produce indecent images, or being groomed for these activities – online or in person.
- **Emotional:** This includes belittling behaviour, insults, name-calling, degrading and humiliating behaviour, and withholding love and affection. A child will be made to feel that they're worthless, inadequate or unloved. Intimidation, coercion and harassment can also be involved.
- **Neglect:** This is the ongoing failure to meet basic physical or psychological needs, which is likely to result in harm to a child or young person's health or development. It includes not providing adequate food, clothing or shelter, or failing to protect a child from harm.

Adults:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Financial

- Organisational
- Domestic
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory
- Neglect
- Self-neglect

Other areas of concern that do not come under the categories of abuse for children:

- Child on child abuse
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Radicalisation
- Domestic abuse
- Bullying

Other areas of concern that do not come under the categories of abuse for adults:

- Extremism and radicalisation
- Cuckooing
- Mate crime
- Hate crime
- Stalking/harassment
- Spiritual abuse
- Romance fraud

Spiritual abuse: The category '*spiritual abuse*' has not currently been recognised in legislation, but in serious cases, it may fall under other categories of abuse identified in legislation.

Definition: *Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterized by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism (Oakley and Humphreys, 2019).*

Signs of Abuse

Children:

- A pattern of unexplained bruises or marks. However, a child who has lots of bruises on their lower legs isn't necessarily being harmed – they could just be out having childhood fun. Accidents happen. Accidental injuries are more likely to happen on areas like knees and elbows, but consistent marks together with unusual behaviour or other physical signs can give you a fuller picture of what could be happening to that child.
- Using sexualised language you wouldn't expect a child of their age to know.
- Poor hygiene or always asking for food.
- Changes in behaviour and personality, especially if these are unexplained – for example becoming uncharacteristically aggressive, quiet or upset.
- Being withdrawn, having few or no friends.
- Being anxious or worried about things.
- Difficult relationship with parents/carers
- You might also see unusual behaviour in an adult caregiver that makes you concerned for the safety of a child.

Adults:

- Physical harm and abuse:
 - Visible injuries and bruising.
 - Unexplained cuts, marks or scars.
 - Loss of hair in clumps.
 - Injuries that don't match the explanation given.
 - Getting injured often.
 - Unexplained falls.
 - Subdued or changed behaviour.
 - Changes in weight, being excessively under or overweight or malnourished.
 - Failing to get medical treatment or changing doctors often.
- Emotional harm and abuse:
 - Low self-esteem
 - Attachment issues

- Depression
- Self-harm
- Eating disorders
- Signs of distress, tearfulness or anger
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person
- Seeming detached from others
- Fear of making mistakes
- Difficulty controlling strong emotions
- Neglect:
 - Lower than expected level of personal hygiene
 - Living in an unsuitable home environment e.g. having no heating
 - Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
 - Being hungry or showing signs of malnutrition
 - Having frequent and untreated medical issues or an accumulation of untaken medication.
 - Body issues such as sores, skin complaints, poor muscle tone or prominent joints.
 - Poor language or social skills
 - Being left alone for a long time
 - Being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
 - Tiredness or finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
 - Self-soothing behaviours such as drug or alcohol misuse and self-harm.
 - Poor school attendance or performance
- Sexual harm and abuse:
 - Physical injuries and bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks, upper arms and neck.
 - Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area or when walking or sitting.
 - Sexually transmitted diseases or infections.
 - Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sex.
 - Uncharacteristic or age-inappropriate use of sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude.
- Self-harming:
 - Poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance.
 - Excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships or being alone with a particular person.

Legislation

To safeguard those in our organisation we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

This policy is in line with the following legislation:

- The Children Act (1989 & 2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The Care Act (2014)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)

People

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and Adults at Risk are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England and Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

Safer Recruitment

Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment, ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those short-listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A self-declaration form and the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has been completed where necessary
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme and induction is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding Training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

Role	Training course	Other requirements
Leaders (for work with Children and/or Adults at Risk)	Thirtyone:eight Gateway to Safeguarding eLearning (30 mins), or similar in-house training. Frequency: Every 3 years	Being aware of the Church's Safeguarding Policy, read 'Safeguarding at Parr Street for Volunteers', and signed the Declaration Form . Frequency: Every 3 years
Supervisors (for work with Children)	Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Children & Young People Webinar (2 hrs 30 mins). Frequency: Every 3 years	Read the Church's Safeguarding Policy and 'Safeguarding at Parr Street for Supervisors', and signed the Declaration Form . Frequency: Every 3 years
Supervisors (for work with Adults at Risk)	Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm Webinar (2 hrs 30 mins). Frequency: Every 3 years	Read the Church's Safeguarding Policy and 'Safeguarding at Parr Street for Supervisors', and signed the Declaration Form . Frequency: Every 3 years
Church elders	Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding for Trustees Webinar (2 hours 30 mins). Frequency: Every 3 years	Read the Church's Safeguarding Policy. Frequency: Every year
Safeguarding Lead and Deputy	Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Leads Webinar (2 hrs 30 mins). Frequency: Every 2 years	Read and review the Church's Safeguarding Policy. Frequency: Every year.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead undertaking advance safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the Eldership which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Workers

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct for supporting children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and outside of their role. They will also receive further training as necessary. The Church's Code of Conduct can be found in the Appendix.

Partnership Working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets our safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults with care and support needs and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

More information on Partnership Agreements can be found in the Appendix.

Allegations and Concerns

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Under no circumstances should a worker or volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:
- The person in receipt of disclosures, allegation or concern of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name (hereafter the "Safeguarding Lead"): **Gary Stoll**

- Tel: 07777627741, Email: gary.stoll@parrstchurch.org

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the disclosure, allegation or concern, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or, if the concerns in any way involve the Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made to:

Name (hereafter the "Deputy Safeguarding Lead"): **Anna Haworth**

- Tel: 07968109252, Email: haworth_anna@yahoo.co.uk

If the concerns implicate both the Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Name (hereafter the "Safeguarding Trustee"): **Paul Baxendale**

- Tel: 07809290783, Email: baxendale.paul@yahoo.com

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required:
Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the cause for concern form and share this with the Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding Deputy

or Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible. Please see a copy of the cause for concern form in ‘Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Supervisors and Staff.’

The Safeguarding Lead may first ring the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. Based on the concern, they may then then contact the relevant statutory services, including:

- Children’s Social Care: Westmorland and Furness Council, Tel: 0300 373 2724
- Adult Social Care: Westmorland and Furness Council, Tel: 0300 373 3301
- Police: 101 or 999 if person at is at risk of harm
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Westmorland and Furness Council Safeguarding Hub, Tel: 0300 303 3897
- Charity Commission for England and Wales: Tel: 0300 066 9197

The Safeguarding Lead may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as:

- Chair of Trustees or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the Charity Commission to report a serious incident / raise a concern.
- Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Concerns must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should not delay referral to the statutory services, the police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual

with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Lead(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures

Where there is concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse: If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.
- Contact Children's Social Care (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.
- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care.
- For lower-level concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of 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 Children's Social Care direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Children's Social Care.

Allegations of sexual abuse: In the event of allegations or concerns of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- Contact the Children's Social Care for children and families and police on 101.
- Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Children's Social Care or police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Where there is a concern about an adult at risk: Concerns or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services on 999, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions required. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Lead will: Identify support services for the Survivor i.e., counselling or other pastoral support

- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people: If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead, will:

- Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Local Authority Designated Officer if they are involved.

- Share information about the concern with the police.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs: The safeguarding Lead will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Care to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the police.

The legislation places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Care to decide not the organisation.

Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult: If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above). If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the Police. If the adult does not wish to report this to the police, then the Safeguarding Lead can pass on the information relating to the alleged Perpetrator, however, must not share details of the Survivor.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Care to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.

- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role within your organisation, contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern

Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse: The Leadership is committed to offering wellbeing support/pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation.

Please see below the details for the individual responsible for wellbeing support/pastoral care:

Name: Paul Baxendale

- Tel: 07809290783
- Email: baxendale.paul@yahoo.com

Working with those who may pose a risk: When someone attending the organisation is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing support/pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

A Behaviour Risk Assessment Template can be found [HERE](#).

Practical Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and 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 potential harm or abuse and false or unfounded accusations.

We have simplified Good Practice Guidelines including leaders-to-children ratios for every activity we are involved in. These can be found in the 'Safeguarding at Parr Street for Supervisors' guide, which includes all related forms (e.g. consent forms, risk assessments etc.) and procedures. This can be found on the Parr Street Church Members Page.

Further policies, such as the Online Safety, Complaints and Whistleblowing can be found in the Appendix.

Roles and Expectations

At Parr Street Church, Supervisors are all paid members of staff and volunteers who oversee work at Parr Street Church where Children or Adults at Risk may be present. Supervisors are expected to:

- 1) Be members at Parr Street Church
- 2) Have obtained DBS clearance through the Church
- 3) Have completed the required Safeguarding Training
- 4) Have read this guide, signed the [Declaration Form](#), and read the Church's Safeguarding Policy

Leaders are adults who volunteer to work directly with Children and/or Adults at Risk at Parr Street Church. They are expected to:

- 1) Be a member at Parr Street Church
- 2) Have obtained DBS clearance through the Church
- 3) Have completed the required Safeguarding Training
- 4) Have read the Church's Safeguarding Policy, 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Volunteers,' and completed the [Declaration Form](#).

Assistant Leaders are adults who volunteer to work indirectly with Children or Adults at Risk (e.g., as part of the catering team, or nominated drivers). They are expected to:

- 1) Have obtained DBS clearance through the Church
- 2) Have read 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Volunteers,' and completed the [Declaration Form](#).

Note: Assistant Leaders should not be considered in leader-to-children ratios and should not be allowed to work unsupervised with children.

Young Leaders are volunteers under the age of 18 years. Those

- a) Under the age of 16 years of age do not require DBS clearance. They need to have a Parent or Guardian complete the [Form for Young Volunteers](#), and work under the supervision of Leaders.
- b) Over the age of 16 but under 18 require DBS clearance. Additionally, they need to have a Parent or Guardian complete the [Form for Young Volunteers](#), and work under the supervision of Leaders.

Note: Young Leaders should not be considered in leader-to-children ratios and should not be allowed to work unsupervised with children.

Guest Helpers are people from outside the Parr Street Church membership who are invited infrequently to help specifically with work with Children or Adults at Risk. These may include work experience students, musical artists, visiting missionaries etc. They are to work under the supervision of Leaders. Guest Helpers are expected to:

- 1) Have read 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Volunteers' and completed the [Declaration Form](#).

Note: Guest helpers should not be considered in leader-to-children ratios and should not be allowed to work unsupervised with children.

Parents and Carers staying to observe for a 'settling in period' do not usually require DBS clearance. If, however, they are wanting to attend on a more regular basis, then they should become Assistant Leaders or Leaders.

The Church's Supervisors include:

- 1) House Groups (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 2) Women's Ministry (Supervisor: Lauren Cunningham)

- 3) Men's Ministry (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 4) Children's and Families Work (Supervisor: Hannah Boadle)
- 5) Youth Work (Supervisor: Gary Stoll)
- 6) Senior Citizens Work (Supervisor: Lauren Cunningham)
- 7) Toddler Group and Creche (Supervisor: Fiona Edmondson)
- 8) Visiting Team (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 9) Work with internationals (Supervisor: Johnny Wilson)
- 10) Missions Committee (Supervisors: Gary Stoll)
- 11) Music Team (Supervisor: Tim Ward)
- 12) Welcome Team (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 13) Refreshments Team (Supervisor: Lauren Cunningham)
- 14) Audio/Visual Team (Supervisor: Andrey Donskyy)
- 15) Treasury Team (Supervisor: Andrey Donskyy)
- 16) Safeguarding Team (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 17) Pastoral Team (Supervisor Paul Baxendale)
- 18) Church Gatherings (Supervisor: Paul Baxendale)
- 19) Fell Church plant in Shap (Supervisor: Sam Hogarth)

Planning and Managing Activities

Below are general guidelines for Supervisors for planning and managing activities specifically with Children or Adults at Risk:

Plan:

- Plan activities in advance
- Where possible, plan regular activities on neutral territory (i.e., the church building and public space).
- Note in the Church Calendar details of activities that will take place in the Church building or site including dates, times, areas of the building being used etc.
- Plan safe activities using the Risk Assessment for Activities with Children form.
- Consider individual Children and Adults at Risk with particular concerns by completing a Behaviour Risk Assessment.

- Obtain all necessary Parental consents for children. The Parental [Consent Form](#) is required for Children aged 0-11, and the [Youth Registration Form](#) is required for 11-18 year olds.
- A simple paper form can be completed by the parent / guardian for any child attending Children’s activities as a one-off, that includes medical / dietary information and emergency contact details. After the session, this form should be given to the Supervisor for logging on ChurchSuite (and the paper copy destroyed). For Youth activities, the Supervisor should complete a [New or Unexpected Youth Attendance Form](#) for a young person who turns up unexpected (for more information see ‘Record Keeping.’)
- Have a process for bringing in extra help (e.g., in a situation where a worker is working alone with a child).
- Consider the level of personal care required appropriate to the needs of the individual (e.g., help with toileting)
- Ensure that there is a First Aider present in the building.
- Ensure adequate Leader-to-Children ratios.
- Have a register to note Children / Adults at Risk and Leaders present.

Manage:

- Abide by food hygiene standards when preparing and serving food and drink.
- Ensure all leaders are acting appropriately and in accordance with the Code of Conduct contained in the Safeguarding Policy.
- Control access into the area of the building where the activity is taking place. You can refuse entry to anyone not assigned to the activity.
- Ensure the building remains secure. See below for more information on Building Security.
- Don’t permit any leader to be alone in a room with a child.
- Don’t leave children unsupervised.
- Don’t allow anyone under 18 years of age to be left in charge of children.

Home Visits

Home visits to Children or Adults at Risk are sometimes required for pastoral care. These may be due to the ill-health or inability for the individual to leave home. They should be done by Supervisors.

Home Visits to Children:

Home visits to Children are to be undertaken in accordance with the 'Youth One to Ones and Small Groups' guidelines below. Supervisors should not enter the home of a Child if the parent or carer is not present (unless the Child would be at risk if they didn't).

Home Visits to Adults at Risk:

Home Visits alone to Adults at Risk should be done in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Be accountable to the Leadership
- Be clear about the limits of your role
- Refer people on to those who can help
- Report any Safeguarding issues that arise
- Be aware of the risk of over-dependency in pastoral relationships (this can apply both ways)
- Avoid any behaviour that may give the impression of favouritism or of a 'special' relationship
- Take someone with you
- Keep a record of the visit, including the purpose of the visit, date and time of arrival and departure, who was present and what was discussed. Pass this information on to the Safeguarding Lead for logging.

Leader-to-Children Ratios

There should be at least two leaders for every activity with Children, ideally male AND female for mixed sex groups.

The following ratios are needed for the different activity groups the Church typically runs.

Creche:

- Age Group: 0-4 year olds
- Date and Time: During the Sunday church services
- Location: Downstairs hall
- Details: Children are brought and collected by their parents or carer.
- Ratio: 1 leader to every 3 children not accompanied by their parents or carers

Toddlers:

- Age Group: 0-4 year olds
- Date and Time: Thursday mornings
- Location: Downstairs hall
- Details: Children are typically under the care of their own parents or carers
- Ratio: 1 leader to every 3 children not accompanied by their parents or carers

Junior Church:

- Age Group: 5-11 year olds
- Date and Time: During the Sunday church services
- Location: Downstairs hall
- Details: Leaders supervise children to and from Junior Church, one from the front and another from the back to ensure no child is left unattended. Parents and carers are welcome to stay and observe, but should not be included in leader-to-children ratios.
- Ratios:
 - 1 leader to every 6 children aged 4-8
 - 1 leader to every 8 children aged 9-11

Friday Night Kids Club:

- Age Group: 5-11 year olds
- Date and Time: Typically once a month on Friday evenings
- Location: Upstairs and Downstairs halls
- Details: Typically two groups run simultaneously: Children aged 4-8 register and meet in the downstairs hall, and children aged 8-11 register and meet in the upstairs hall. Parents and carers are welcome to stay and observe, but should not be included in leader-to-children ratios.

- Ratios:
 - 1 leader to every 6 children aged 4-8
 - 1 leader to every 8 children aged 9-11

Sunday Youth:

- Age Group: 11-18 year olds
- Date and Time: Sunday evenings during school term time
- Location: Downstairs hall
- Details: Young people arrive and depart either alone or with a parent or carer. Parents and carers are not invited into the meeting.
- Ratios:
 - 1 leader to every 8 children aged 11-12
 - 1 leader to every 10 children aged 12-18

Friday Night Youth:

- Age Group: 11-18 year olds
- Date and Time: Typically Friday evenings
- Location: Downstairs hall. Some events take place outdoors locally.
- Details: Young people arrive and depart either alone or with a parent or carer. Parents and carers are not invited into the meeting.
- Ratios:
 - 1 leader to every 8 children aged 11-12
 - 1 leader to every 10 children aged 12-18

Youth One to Ones and Small Groups:

- Age Group: 14-18 year olds
- Date and Time: At various times, typically mid-week afternoons
- Location: Downstairs hall or in a public place
- Details: These are less formal meetings for small groups of young people or individuals.
- Ratios:
 - 1 leader to every 8 children aged 11-12
 - 1 leader to every 10 children aged 12-18
- Only one leader can be present if:
 - The leader has been authorised by the Supervisor, and

- The leader is of same sex as the young person / young people, and
- The meeting takes place either:
 - In a public place where they can be seen by others, or
 - At the young person's home where a parent is present

For all other non-typical activities with Children (such as holiday clubs and one-off Youth events), all the above leader-to-children ratios are to be applied.

One to One Meetings with Young People

Only Young People in school years 10-13, and whose parent(s) are members of Parr Street Church should be considered for One-to-One meetings with Leaders.

A [Small Group and One to Ones Consent Form](#) is to be completed by the Child's parent or guardian before any meeting takes place. This form defines the role of the youth worker and the young person so that both are aware of the boundaries that exist in the relationship.

Role of the Youth Leader:

1. Safeguarding Compliance: Ensure meetings are safe, following organisational policies, usually limiting one-to-one to school year 10 and above with same-sex leaders.
2. Creating Safe Space: Ensure the venue is visible to others, even if confidential conversations are taking place.
3. Active Listening: Actively listen to the young person, focusing on their emotional and practical support needs.
4. Reporting Concerns: Actively identify safeguarding risks and report concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead. Total confidentiality should never be promised to the Young Person.
5. Relationship Building: Foster trust and rapport, providing a mentoring role rather than just a supervisory one.

Role of the Young Person:

1. Active Participation: Actively engage in the conversation, sharing thoughts, feelings, and concerns.

2. Setting Goals: Work with the leader to set personal or developmental goals.
3. Providing Feedback: Give feedback to the leader about the support they are receiving.
4. Safety Awareness: Utilise the meeting to discuss safety, justice, and care concerns.

Sharing personal information appropriately can exist between someone offering pastoral care and the person receiving it, however there is always a purpose to the conversation as the relationship is clearly understood. Mixed feelings are a danger in one to one work of any age, however it is a higher risk for young people to become attached to youth workers who are closer in age to them.

Confidentiality is limited and should never be promised if they share information that shows they or someone else may be at risk of harm. Consideration must be made regarding how the meetings will be managed and what form of communication is going to be used.

If the young person is requesting too much of a youth worker's time it can become unhealthy and create a dependency. The one to one relationship should be reviewed with supervisors to ensure that the continued meeting is necessary.

Transportation

For organised off-site activity:

Organised off-site activities require the Supervisor to plan and manage the transportation of Children as necessary to the activity (e.g., a Youth weekend away where vehicles will be required for sightseeing and activities).

Where transportation is required to an organised off-site activity, the Supervisor is to obtain parental consent using the [Consent Form for Transporting Children](#).

All drivers should have a full driving licence and meet the requirements for the vehicle they are driving (e.g., minimum age restrictions and additional training for larger vehicles such as minibuses). Any vehicles used for transportation must be adequately insured and roadworthy (i.e., valid MOT).

If the transportation arrangement is frequent and regular, drivers will need to be safely recruited and have a DBS check.

The following further considerations are to be made:

- Pick-up and drop-off times to be arranged and communicated to parents and carers.
- Seatbelts and car seats / booster seats should be used.
- Where possible, there should either be two Leaders in a car, or one Leader with another family member. A Leader should only be alone with a Child in a car when it is absolutely necessary.
- In the event of a Leader being alone with a Child in a car, following should be observed:
 - The Child shall sit in the back
 - The Leader shall make contact with the Supervisor or Parent before departing with the Child and shall make contact again once the Child has been dropped-off
 - Journeys are to be as short as possible
- When travelling with a minibus:
 - Adults should be scattered throughout
 - A passenger list is to be completed
 - No children are permitted to sit in the front
 - All luggage is to be stowed away securely
 - Every passenger has access to two emergency exits
 - Drivers must be 25 years of age or above and have had a driving license for at least 2 years

For un-organised activity:

Un-organised off-site activities do not require the Supervisor to plan and manage the transportation of Children as necessary to the activity (e.g., a parent giving a lift to another child to a Kids or Youth club).

However, Parr Street Church Members are given recommendations for such transportation in 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Members.'

Record Keeping

For each activity with Children a record book will be held for 20 years containing:

- Register
- Record of Concerns
- Accident Book

Supervisors are responsible for completing and safely storing the record book in accordance with the Church Data Protection Policy, either by:

- a) Temporarily keeping it locked safe in the church building
- b) Handing it to the Safeguarding Lead to secure it safely
- c) Logging the information on ChurchSuite and destroying the physical record

Register:

- A register of those attending a service or activity should be maintained, together with a register of workers.
- The register should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if someone does not attend the whole session.
- A note should be made of any other people in the rooms used by the children, and any unusual events. Sensitive information should not be detailed.
- The register is to be logged on to ChurchSuite by the Supervisor.

Record of Concerns:

- Any concerns, disclosures, or information of sensitive nature are to be passed onto the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and then a [Record of Concern Form](#) should be completed. These concerns are not to be shared with others.
- Patterns of behaviour or concerns might emerge from log records that might not otherwise be so obvious e.g. bruising noted on a regular basis or a number of young people making similar comments about one worker that raises concerns.

Accident Recording:

- All accidents, however minor, should be recorded by using the [Accident and Incident Form](#).
- In the event of an accident, the parent/carer of a child or young person should be informed and asked to read and sign the form.

Unexpected Attendance:

We do not anticipate any pre-school or primary-school aged child turning up at an activity either without a parent / guardian / responsible adult present, or prior written parental consent. Should this ever happen, the Supervisor should contact the child's parent / guardian immediately and inform the Safeguarding Lead.

If a Young Person (aged 11+) turns up unexpected at a Youth activity, the Supervisor should:

- Welcome them. Make sure they feel welcome and valued.
- Get some basic details by completing a [New or Unexpected Youth Attendance Form](#). This is to establish their name, age, Parent / Guardian details, and any additional needs, (e.g. medication), so that they can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Link the visitor with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity.
- Record their visit in the register.
- Follow this up by contacting the Parent / Guardian after the activity. Should the Young Person wish to attend more regularly, the Supervisor shall ask the Parent / Guardian to complete the appropriate Parental Consent Form.

Building Security

Any activities taking place specifically for Children in the church building require that:

- The Entrance door(s) from the outside is manned during start and finish times
- All external doors are locked during sessions to prevent access from the outside
- All fire doors must remain easily openable from the interior during sessions
- Only leaders may open the entrance door(s) during a session
- There must be at least two leaders already present before any child is allowed into the building
- There must be at least two leaders present until all Children have left at the end

Supervisors are to ensure the above is implemented by leaders.

Residentials

Camps organised by Third Parties

The organisers recognise that where workers from other organisations are joining the camp there is a need for clarity with regard to all child protection matters because they may have their own safeguarding policy and procedures. It is expected that sending organisations agree that:

- All allegations of child abuse will be referred to the Camp Safeguarding Lead or their deputy. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead, then Children's Services or the sending organisation's Safeguarding Lead should be contacted in accordance with the safeguarding policy. Thirtyone:eight could also be contacted for advice on 0303 003 1111.
- The Camp Safeguarding Lead has responsibility to action all allegations or suspicions of abuse. If the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Lead then the matter should be reported to the Deputy Lead.
- The Safeguarding Lead has the authority to contact either Children's Services local to the child's home, Children's Services or the Police local to the Camp and/or Thirtyone:eight for advice.
- Allegations will be dealt with on a 'need to know' basis only.
- If allegations involve a child or worker from a sending organisation then the leader of that church or a nominated person (i.e. their Safeguarding Lead) will be informed. It is expected they will keep confidence and not investigate the matter themselves.
- Should a sending organisation have other reporting mechanisms, this will be discussed and an agreement made with that church/organisation.

Additional Considerations for Residentials

Adventurous Activities:

- No child should participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent/carer.
- The organisers should ensure that workers engaging in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met.
- At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities

Licensing Regulations 1996, the Camp Organisers should ensure that the premises are licensed.

Food Safety:

- Those with responsibility for food should possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste etc.).

Sleeping Arrangements:

- Arrangements for residential holidays and camps should be considered carefully. They should be age-appropriate, provide security for the child, and considered safe for children and workers.
- Parents/Carers should always be made aware of the sleeping arrangements before the event.
- There must be separate sleeping areas for boys and girls and adults.

Insurance:

- There should be adequate insurance cover for all eventualities such as personal accident (e.g. death or disablement), lost or stolen property and personal liability.
- If the trip is at a centre it is also important to establish that there is appropriate Public Liability Insurance.

Parents and children:

- Parents are to be given written information about the plans for the event.
- Parents are to complete the [Residential Consent Form](#), in addition to the standard consent forms for 0-11's and 11-18's.
- Children are to be informed of the ground rules upon arrival.

Emergency contacts:

- All the relevant contact numbers are to be collected prior to the event.
- The organiser must know the contact numbers of the nearest emergency services including the nearest hospital.
- Parents are to be given an emergency contact number (the mobile phone number of the worker in charge).

Appendix

Safeguarding Statement

(To be displayed in a prominent place)

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS POLICY STATEMENT

Parr Street Evangelical Church, Kendal

The following statement was agreed by the elders on: **XXX**

- Parr Street Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
- We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as a place of worship/organisation all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.

- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting all in the place of worship/organisation affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children’s Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation 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 annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding Leads for this place of worship/organisation.

_____ Safeguarding Lead

_____ Deputy Safeguarding Lead

A copy of Parr Street Church’s policy can be seen in the main entrance foyer and on the Church website: <https://parrstchurch.org/parr-street-families/>.

Signed by Senior Leader:

_____ Signed

_____ Date

Code of Conduct

Purpose: This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers).

The code of conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers): When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for Parr Street Church. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Good practice:

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Listen carefully to those you are supporting
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Seek advice from someone with greater experience when necessary
- Avoid being alone with a Child
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the Safeguarding Lead
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action

Unacceptable behaviour:

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way

- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details and any contact that breaches [name of group/organisation] social media policy
- Take or post images or videos on social media of Children without written parental consent
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged

Breaching the Code of Conduct: If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff where the line manager will consult the Safeguarding Lead as appropriate). Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Parr Street Church. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children’s or adult’s social care departments or DBS. If you become aware of a breach of this code, you should escalate your concerns to the Safeguarding Lead or line manager (in the case of a paid staff member).

Anti-Bullying Policy

This Definition of bullying: The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or through cyber space.

Objectives of this policy

- All children, workers, parents and carers should be aware of the anti-bullying policy within the organisation and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All workers should have an understanding of what bullying is, be aware of possible signs if it is happening and follow the policy when it is reported
- Children and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

Prevention

Strategies can be adopted to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of group rules
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Procedures

- Report the bullying incident to children's leaders
- Ensure that details are carefully checked before action is taken
- In all cases of bullying, the incidents should be recorded by the worker
- Consideration should be given to informing the parents/carers of the bully, but this should only be done if workers are satisfied there is no bullying/abuse going on at home that might exacerbate the situation
- If it is thought that an offence has been committed, consideration should be given to contacting the police
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped quickly
- Help should be offered to help the bully address his/her behaviour



Outcomes

- The children's worker involved in dealing with the incident should issue a warning to the child concerned
- An apology should be given by the child who has bullied another
- If possible, those involved will be reconciled
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the situation should be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place
- After the incident(s) have been investigated parents/carers should be informed of the action taken
- All incidents must be recorded in the log book

Complaints Policy

Introduction

1.1. The Leadership of Parr Street Church is committed to ensuring that complaints are addressed in a way that is fair, transparent and timely. The purpose of this policy is to set out clearly how complaints will be dealt with.

1.2. As a church, we want to follow what the Bible says about how we should relate to each other. Where something goes wrong, our aim is work towards restoring the relationship as much as possible, recognising that both justice and mercy are important to that end.

1.3. We also want to learn from our mistakes. Hearing complaints can help us to do that.

1.4. The overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Church trustees.

1.5. The trustees will take into account any conflicts of loyalty that may arise where one, or more, of them is the subject of the complaint, and in relation to any appeal. They will take appropriate and reasonable steps to manage those conflicts of loyalty, insofar as that is practicable in the life of the Church.

1.6. The trustees are aware of The Charity Governance Code. The Charity Commission/OSCR and members of the public may regard the Code as setting the standard for good governance in charities. The Code expects charity trustees to have in place “a transparent, well-publicised, effective and timely process for making and handling a complaint, and that any internal or external complaints are handled constructively, impartially and effectively”. The Church aims to build trust and confidence with those who participate in the life of the Church and engage with its activities. That includes how it deals with complaints.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to all trustees, employees and volunteers who act on behalf of the Church who may receive or handle complaints.

2.2. Where an employee or an office-holder of the Church wants to raise concerns about their employment/engagement, those matters should be addressed in accordance

with the Church's employment/HR policies, such as an internal grievance policy, rather than as a complaint under this policy.

2.3. The Church will not be able to address a complaint unless it includes sufficient information to allow the matter to be properly reviewed and investigated.

2.4. Where the trustees have reasonable grounds, based on the evidence available to them, for assessing that a complaint has not been raised in good faith or is not an appropriate use of this policy, they may disapply it and will provide the complainant with their reasons for making this decision. One example would be that the complaint has been raised in order to harass or cause distress to an individual. Another is where a complaint raises the same or very similar matters to those that have been addressed in a previous complaint.

2.5. Some complaints may relate to other policies that the Church has in place, such as for safeguarding, whistleblowing or discrimination/harassment. If any of these other policies are relevant to the nature of the complaint that is raised, the Church will inform the complainant that the matter is being dealt with in accordance with that other policy, as described below. This may be important in order to ensure that the Church is complying with its legal obligations, particularly in relation to safeguarding.

2.6. The Church is committed to ensuring that complaints are handled sensitively. The Church has specific obligations and commitments in relation to data protection and privacy. The Church cannot guarantee to keep the fact and details of your complaint confidential if it is necessary and proportionate to share your data in order to review and resolve your complaint. On occasion, the trustees may need to involve third parties, such as the local authority, the police and the Charity Commission. The Church may also need to take legal advice and to share information with its professional advisers.

2.7. This policy does not form part of any legal agreement or contract by or on behalf of the Church.

3. Definition of a complaint

3.1. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of church life, where the complainant wishes to receive a response. This can be about the actions or behaviour of a person or persons, or about an activity or group, or about a service provided by the Church.

3.2. By raising a formal complaint with the Church, a complainant is asking the Church to devote time and resources to properly addressing their concerns. This may be legitimate, but a formal complaint should usually only be raised after other methods of resolution have been exhausted. Raising a formal complaint would preferably be the last step taken, not the first.

3.3. A formal complaint is not the same as raising a concern. Concerns can often be dealt with by taking the matter up with the leaders at the Church before there is a need to raise a formal complaint.

4. Receipt of Complaints

4.1. Complaints should be addressed to the Elders of Parr Street Church. Complaints may be made through various channels – in person, by phone, via email or message, or by post. If you wish to lodge a complaint you can do so by sending it to the Church office at admin@parrstchurch.org or addressed to The Elders of Parr Street Church, Parr Street Church, Parr Street, Kendal, LA9 7DH.

4.2. If any other person in the Church receives a complaint, they should ask the complainant to raise the complaint directly with the nominated person.

4.3. Where a complaint is made in writing, including by email or message, it is helpful (and may mean the complaint can be addressed more easily) if the complainant sets out:

4.3.1. Their name and contact details.

4.3.2. The date of the incident or decision that the complaint relates to.

4.3.3. The nature of the complaint and who is involved.

4.3.4. The nature of the complainant's relationship with the Church.

4.3.5. Whether there is any other information that the Church should be aware of.

4.3.6. What steps they have taken so far to resolve the matter, if any.

4.3.7. What actions or outcomes they are looking for from the Church.

4.4. Where a complaint is made verbally, the Elders will respond to the complainant within 3 working days with a written record of the complaint that has been made, asking

the complainant to confirm that the record is accurate and to complete any information that is missing from the list set out above.

.5. All complaints will be logged in the Church's designated complaints register upon receipt, including the date, time, nature of the complaint and any other relevant information. It will not contain or refer to the identity of the complainant, and the register will therefore be an anonymised record of complaints. The complaints register is a matter of record for the trustees of the Church, and they will review it periodically.}

5. Acknowledgement of Complaints

5.1. Upon receipt of a complaint or confirmation of the written record of a complaint, the Church will formally acknowledge it within 5 working days.

5.2. Complainants will be informed of this policy and provided with a copy, if requested.

6. Initial Review

6.1. The Elders will carry out an initial review of the complaint to confirm that it falls within the scope of this policy. They will then provide an initial response to the complainant within two weeks setting out:

6.1.1. Whether or not the complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy. If not, which other policy applies and the next steps. If it does, the further information that follows;

6.1.2. Who has been nominated to investigate the complaint (this may be more than one person);

6.1.3. Who will be responsible for communicating with the complainant, and their contact details – this will usually be one of the investigators;

6.1.4. The likely timeframe for the investigation and a response.

7. Investigation and Resolution

7.1. Assigned Officer: A trustee or trustees of the Church will be nominated to be responsible for investigating the complaint. The nominated investigator will be someone who is independent of any person that is the subject of the complaint, insofar as this is possible to achieve in the life of the Church. The investigator will gather all necessary

information, including contacting the complainant if required, and work towards a satisfactory resolution of the issues raised in the complaint.

7.2. Timescales: The Church aims to resolve complaints as promptly as possible. Complex complaints may require more time for investigation, but the Church will provide regular updates to the complainant regarding the progress and expected timeframe for a response.

7.3. Resolution: Depending on the nature of the complaint, the complainant will usually be notified of:

7.3.1. the steps the Church has taken to investigate the complaint;

7.3.2. the conclusions drawn from the investigation; and

7.3.3. any actions taken as a result of the investigation.

8. Confidentiality

8.1. Complaints may be shared with any or all of the Church's trustees, if appropriate and taking account of any conflicts of loyalty that they may have in relation to the substance of the complaint.

8.2. If the complaint relates to a named individual, the trustees may inform that person as to the nature of the complaint in the course of their investigation and seek a response from them. The identity of the complainant will not be shared with the subject of the complaint. Sensitive information about the complainant will only be shared with the named individual to the extent that it is necessary to do so for the complaint to be properly investigated.

8.3. Where a complaint relates to a member of staff or an individual trustee, the Church may need to carry out its investigation in accordance with its internal employment/HR policies and governance procedures. The nature of these internal processes, data protection considerations and the expectation of confidentiality that staff are entitled to may mean it is not appropriate to provide the complainant with full details about the process being followed or the outcome of that process, where that has not been agreed to by the staff member or trustee. However, we would normally expect to be able to inform the complainant of:

8.3.1. the completion of the initial investigation;

8.3.2. the fact that an internal process is being followed; and

8.3.3. the completion of that internal process.

9. Communication

9.1. Throughout the complaints handling process, clear and transparent communication with the complainant is essential. The Church will use its best endeavours to keep the complainant informed of the progress, any delays, and the final outcome of the investigation.

10. Closure and follow up

10.1. Once the complaint is resolved, the trustees will formally close the matter and record the outcome in the complaints register. They may also conduct follow-up checks to ensure that the resolution remains effective.

11. Appeal

11.1. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint or the way in which the complaint has been handled, they should send a written appeal to the Elders within 3 months of being told of the outcome. If an appeal is raised at a later date, the trustees will decide whether or not it is appropriate to consider it, acting in the best interests of the Church.

11.2. The Elders will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 2 weeks.

11.3. The trustees will identify someone other than the original investigator to lead on the appeal process. This person will review the original evidence, the investigation report and the grounds for the appeal set out by the complainant, but will not reinvestigate or open new lines of enquiry, to assess whether or not the original decision was within the range of reasonable conclusions that the trustees could draw, based on the evidence that was available to them.

11.4. The trustees will collectively consider the findings of the person conducting the appeal process and will notify the complainant of the outcome. They will aim to do so within 2 months of receipt of the appeal notice or will otherwise provide an update to the complainant within that time, setting out the timescales that will apply.

11.5. The outcome of the appeal will also be recorded in the complaint log.

11.6. The appeal decision will be considered final.

12. Further Steps

12.1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may complain directly to the Church's charity regulator, the Charity Commission, whose website sets out the kinds of issues that they can assist with.

13. Continuous improvement

13.1. The trustees are committed to continually reviewing and improving the Church's complaints handling process to ensure they can fulfil the Church's charitable purposes effectively and prevent future complaints. Feedback received through the complaints handling process will be analysed, and any necessary adjustments to policies, procedures, or employee training will be implemented.

Lone, Home and DSE Working Policy

Lone Working

A Lone Worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes those who work at home or those who work away from a fixed base, including Church Workers making visits to people's homes.

Employer responsibilities::

The Elders of Parr Street Church shall:

- Train, supervise and monitor lone workers
- Keep in touch with them and respond to any incident

When a lone worker will be at someone else's workplace, the Elders shall ask that employer about any risks and control measures to make sure they are protected.

Risks that particularly affect lone workers include:

- Violence in the workplace
- Stress and mental health or wellbeing
- A person's medical suitability to work alone
- The workplace itself, for example, it's in a rural or isolated area

There is no legal requirement to conduct a specific, separate risk assessment for lone workers. However, the employee has a duty to include risks to lone workers in the general risk assessment and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.

Employee responsibilities:

Church workers must take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be harmed by their actions at work. They must cooperate with their employers and other workers to help everyone meet their duties under the law.

Should Church workers become concerned about health and safety risks they should talk to their line manager or the Elders.

Home working

Employer responsibilities:

The Elders shall ensure that a risk assessment is in place that considers:

- Stress and poor mental health
- Using equipment like laptops safely
- Their working environment

The Elders shall talk to the workers about their arrangements, as working from home may not be suitable for everyone. For example, some people may not have an appropriate place to work or may prefer to come into the workplace for wellbeing, mental health or other reasons.

Employee responsibilities:

Church workers must take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be harmed by their actions while they are working. Workers must cooperate with their employers and other workers to help everyone meet their duties under the law.

There are some things you can do to help prevent stress and look after your mental health when working from home.

Church workers are encouraged to:

- Stay in regular contact with their manager and colleagues
- Talk to their manager about workloads and be open about how they are feeling
- Using equipment like laptops safely
- Take regular breaks during the day and use annual leave
- Set and stick to a routine – don't revisit their computer outside your regular hours
- Check their employer's 'working from home' policies and how to get help if needed
- Contact their doctor if they think that their work is affecting their mental health

DSE (Display Screen Equipment) Working

Employer responsibilities:

The Elders must protect employees from the health risks of working with display screen equipment (DSE), such as PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations apply to workers who use DSE daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more. The HSE describes these workers

as 'DSE users'. The regulations don't apply to workers who use DSE infrequently or only use it for a short time.

In law, employers must:

- Do a DSE workstation assessment (using the [HSE workstation checklist](#))
- Reduce risks, including making sure workers take breaks from DSE work or do something different
- Provide an eye test if a worker asks for one
- Provide training and information for workers

Incorrect use of DSE or poorly designed workstations or work environments can lead to pain in necks, shoulders, backs, arms, wrists and hands as well as fatigue and eye strain. The causes may not always be obvious.

The law applies if users are, for example:

- At a fixed workstation
- Mobile workers
- Home workers
- Hot-desking (workers should carry out a basic risk assessment if they change desks regularly)

Employee responsibilities:

Church workers should take simple steps to protect their health when working on a computer. The HSE has a [video](#) and practical tips on good posture.

Workers should find a suitable area to work in, avoiding uncomfortable positions and making sure they move around regularly. If their workstation assessment shows they need extra DSE equipment, the employer should provide this.

When working at home, Church workers should:

- Arrange equipment and furniture to avoid trailing leads and cables
- Check that plugs, leads, wires and cables are in good condition
- Keep their work area tidy and free from obstructions that could cause slips or trips
- Check they have adequate lighting in their work area to avoid eyestrain

Church workers are encouraged to help prevent stress and look after their mental health when working from home by:

- Staying in regular contact with their manager and colleagues
- Talking to their manager about workloads and be open about how they are feeling
- Taking regular breaks during the day and using annual leave
- Setting and sticking to a routine – not revisiting their computer outside of regular hours
- Checking their employer’s ‘working from home’ policies and how to get help if needed

Online Safety Policy

Electronic communication: Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information and Communications Technology.

Only Supervisors are permitted to make electronic communication with Children when signed parental consent has been obtained.

When communicating electronically with Children, Supervisors must:

- Maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal.
- Be warm and friendly, but not suggesting or offering a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information needing to be shared; not abbreviating or short-cutting in communications.
- Be cautious to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- Avoid sharing any personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.
- Only make contact with children for reasons related to the work of the Church and maintain records of all electronic contact with individuals or groups, including messaging and texting.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.
- Use the Church logo on any public online post which represents the organisation.
- Use Email to communicate specific information. (e.g. times and dates of events). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Keep and date Email history.
- Communicate electronically with children between the hours of 9am-5pm. Online activities taking place outside of these hours will be planned in advance.

Video conferencing and calling: When using video conferencing platforms, Supervisors should observe the following:

- Consent is sought for children/young people using the [Consent Form for Video Conferencing and Calling](#).
- A minimum of 2 leaders will be present, at least one being a Supervisor
- Appropriate locations will be used for participants.
- Participants will wear suitable attire.
- Avoid 1 to 1 video calls with young people unless agreed in advance with your Supervisor and with the knowledge of the parents.

Social Media Policy: Supervisors are to follow these guidelines:

- Social media groups for young people will be moderated by two leaders or more.
- Text and any other media posted shall be subject to the acceptable use policy.
- All interaction on social media groups shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- Any private messages shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media shall be referred onto the Safeguarding Lead.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit which is usually 13+.
- Workers should ensure their privacy settings are set to the highest levels to restrict children being able to see any more than what is relevant to communication within the group.
- All social media groups should provide links to statutory authorities such as CEOP, to enable children to report online abuse.

Consent for photographic images and videos online:

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will endeavour to prevent children from being easily identified.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Parental consent will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and images will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought for and how the image will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.

- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved permission should be sought in line with the photographic guidelines.

Acceptable Use Policy:

- Where access to the internet is provided on our organisational devices or devices owned by an individual via our WiFi, we will exercise our right to monitor usage which includes access to websites, interception and deletion of inappropriate or criminal material or unlawfully copied text, video, images or sound.
- Social media groups must be used in compliance with Parr Street Church's policy on social media.

Children and Adults should not:

- Search for or download pornographic, racist or hate motivated content.
- Illegally copy or play copyrighted content where permission has not been given.
- Send, request or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Harass, insult or bully others.
- Access the internet using another person's login details.
- Access, download, send or receive any data (including images), which (insert church name) considers offensive in any way, including sexually explicit, discriminatory, defamatory or libellous material.

Sanctions for violating the acceptable use policy in the opinion of Parr Street Church may result in:

- A temporary or permanent ban on internet use.
- Additional disciplinary action in line with existing practice on inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.

Partnership Agreements

Working Nationally and internationally: Any member of Parr Street Church working nationally or abroad with Children or Adults at Risk will be expected to adhere to the Safeguarding Policy of their sending or overseeing organisation. A copy of this Policy will be requested by the Safeguarding Lead. Furthermore, confirmation will be sought that Safe Recruitment checks, Safeguarding Training, Safe Working Arrangements (such as risk assessments etc.) and Reporting Protocols are in place.

Where there is no sending / overseeing organisation or adequate Safeguarding Policy, and the work being undertaken is work connected to Parr Street Church, then adherence to the Parr Street Church Safeguarding Policy will be necessary.


Working in schools: Any member of Parr Street Church undertaking work in schools will be expected to adhere to the Safeguarding Policy of the school. A copy of this Policy will be requested by the Safeguarding Lead, along with any relevant Safe Working Procedures.

Furthermore, if the member is undertaking regular work connected to Parr Street Church, then the individual will be considered a 'Leader' under the Parr Street Church Safeguarding Policy, and is expected to meet the necessary criteria prior to entering a school.

Letting premises: Private professional groups hiring out any part of the Parr Street Church building should:

- Have their own Safeguarding Policy which covers the proposed activity, if not, the Parr Street Church Safeguarding Policy is to be adopted
- Agree to the Acceptable Use Policy (for internet use) should they wish to use the internet
- Adhere to their own Health and Safety Policies (including having a First Aider present, basic Food Hygiene etc)

Individuals hiring out any parts of the building for private functions do not require a Safeguarding Policy, but should agree to the Acceptable Use Policy should they wish to use the internet.



Parr Street Church shall provide essential building information to any private group using any parts of the building including:

- Fire and Escape procedures
- First Aid kit
- Operation instructions (e.g., lift, kitchen)
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Room Hire Contract (inc. Terms and Conditions of Use)
- Insurance
- Data Protection

Host families: Any member of Parr Street Church hosting Children or Adults at Risk through an external organisation will be expected to adhere to their Safeguarding Policy. Where the hosting is considered work connected to Parr Street Church (e.g., visiting mission teams serving at Parr Street Church), then adherence to the Parr Street Church Safeguarding Policy will be necessary. In such a case, the following will be required:

- Signed parental consent letter
- Hosts to be at least two adults (male and female)
- Hosts to have DBS clearance
- Hosts to read and agree to 'Safeguarding at Parr Street Church for Volunteers'
- Children and Adults at Risk are not to be left alone or separated from other members of the group

Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

By actively developing a healthy culture of openness Parr Street Church wants to encourage employees to raise issues which concern them at work. As an organisation we want to observe high standards of business and personal ethics within the conduct of staff duties and responsibilities. A healthy culture is one where we practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and we comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Parr Street Church understanding of a healthy culture is one that is based on our Statement of Faith and our Community Standards. We endeavour to train our all workers and volunteers in Whistleblowing law and the organisation's policies.

Whistleblowing definition

According to ACAS, Whistleblowing constitutes: "By law, there are several issues you can whistle blow about. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'.

Qualifying disclosures include:

- A criminal offence – for example, an employer has been trying to bribe people
- The breach of a legal obligation by an organisation – for example, an employer has neglected their duty of care towards children in a care home
- A miscarriage of justice – for example, a member of staff has been dismissed for something that turned out to be a computer error
- Someone's health and safety being in danger – for example, an employer has forced staff to serve contaminated food
- Damage to the environment – for example, an employer has been regularly polluting local rivers

You can also whistle blow about someone trying to cover up information about any of these issues."

Personal grievances (E.G. bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless it is in the public's interest. These would be addressed through the complaint's procedure.

How does the whistleblowing process work?

- If an employee is concerned about any form of malpractice, they should normally first raise the issue with their line manager. This can be done at any time, either verbally or in writing.
- If they feel they cannot tell their line manager, for whatever reason (e.g. the malpractice issue the employee wishes to raise may involve their line manager or a person who is a friend of the line manager/the matter is so serious it should be brought to the attention of senior leadership) they should raise the issue with their line manager's manager; a prescribed person or their third party manager.
- If the employee feels they cannot raise it with any of the above, they can raise the malpractice issue with the Compliance Officer/nominated person on the senior management team/ President & CEO/named person on Board of Directors.
- The whistleblower does not need to provide evidence to support their concern.
- You can whistle blow anonymously (using the organisation's process); however, Parr Street Church might not be able to take the claim any further, if there isn't enough information to follow.

Our Response

- After an employee has raised a concern, Parr Street Church will decide how to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner. Usually this will involve making internal enquiries first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation at a later stage which may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the concern raised. External investigators may be brought in where necessary. Parr Street Church will endeavour to complete investigations within a reasonable time, which will be communicated at each stage of the investigation.
- Parr Street Church will keep the employee informed of the progress of the investigation carried out and when it is completed. Parr Street Church will not be able to inform them of any matters which would infringe the duty of confidentiality owed to others; however, Parr Street Church will take reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the whistleblower, where requested (unless required by law to break that confidentiality).
- If the whistleblower is anonymous, Parr Street Church cannot guarantee feedback can be given and the action of looking into a concern could be limited.
- Employees will not be opening themselves up to detrimental treatment, retribution or risking their job security by whistleblowing, and all staff have organisational

protection if they raise concerns in the right way. Any person who victimises a bona fide whistleblower will be liable to disciplinary action and liable to an employment tribunal claim (which may include liability for unlimited damages) brought by the whistleblower against them personally. To ensure the protection of all our employees, those who maliciously make an allegation, they do not reasonably believe to be true and/or made in the public interest, may also be liable to disciplinary action.

If you are not happy with how Parr Street Church handle the whistleblowing, you can contact:

- [Protect - Speak up stop harm - Whistleblowing Homepage](#)
- [Work and employment law advice | Acas](#)

Government's guidance on Whistleblowing:

- [Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK](#)
- [What someone can whistleblow about - Whistleblowing at work - Acas](#)
[NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email \[help@nspcc.org.uk\]\(mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk\).](#)