

# **Southgate Church** **Safeguarding Policy**

**14<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

## **CHURCH DETAILS**

**Name:** Southgate Church (hereafter, "The Church")

**Address:** Southgate Church Centre  
Caie Walk  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 2PJ

**Tel No:** 01284 703705      **Email address:** office@southgatechurch.org.uk

**Denomination/Organisation:** L.E.P. (C. of E., Baptist, U.R.C.)

## **OUR COMMITMENT**

The Trustees working through the Church Council and Church Leadership (hereafter "the Trustees") recognise the importance of the Church's ministry to children, young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to the Church's care.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the children's/youth workers/vulnerable adults workers within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the church.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

## **CHURCH POLICY**

The Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It also acknowledges that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Trustees have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter "the

policy”). It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies.

The Trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training for all children, young people and vulnerable adults’ workers and will regularly review the practice guidelines.

The Trustees also undertake to follow the principles found within the Abuse Of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour that might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees as a body will be responsible for:

1. Ensuring that a safeguarding policy is in effect and reviewed annually and amended to comply with any new guidelines or requirements relevant to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. Checking that the policy includes provision for procedures for safeguarding issues to be given appropriate attention in the recruitment of paid staff, secondees, volunteers or any type of helper who will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults or have regular contact with them.
3. Ensuring that the policy contains effective processes for dealing with any allegations against persons above including the Minister or the Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
4. Ensuring that there is a member of the Council, or other person approved by the Trustees, who is designated to take the lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues. (Normally that should be a person other than the Minister).
5. Nominating a trustee to take the lead responsibility for liaising with the appropriate agencies if an allegation concerns the Minister.
6. Ensuring that training of all individuals in 2) takes place and that refresher training takes place at appropriate intervals.
7. Requiring that any weaknesses in the policy or safeguarding arrangements are drawn to the attention of the Trustees promptly and those are remedied promptly.
8. The trustees may delegate tasks in items 2), 3), 6) and 7) to the Church Council but the responsibility will remain with the Trustees.

## **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

Under no circumstances should a church worker (i.e. a church member, volunteer or paid member of staff) carry out his/her own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

1. Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to **Michael Jones** (hereafter the “Safeguarding Officer”) **tel no: 01284 762014** who is nominated by the Trustees to

act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

2. In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer, the report should be made to **Alison Burgess** (hereafter the "Deputy Safeguarding Officer ") **tel no: 07940 247038** or the Chair of the Trustees **Dr Stuart Lowe tel no: 01284 755655**
3. The above person will then refer the report to:

**Customer First: tel no: 0808 800 4005**

or alternatively

**The Police Child Protection Team: tel no: 01473 613500**

or

**in an emergency dial 999**

CCPAS can be contacted for further advice:

**The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)**  
**PO Box 133,**  
**Swanley,**  
**Kent,**  
**BR8 7UQ**

**Tel no: 0845 120 4550**

4. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy and kept in a secure place. Access to these records will be restricted to only the few individuals who need sight of such records for official purposes.
5. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Officer, the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer should not delay referral to Customer First.
6. The Trustees will support the Safeguarding Officer /Deputy Safeguarding Officer 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.
7. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies or seek advice from CCPAS, although the Trustees hope that members of the church will use the procedure of Southgate Church. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Officer /Deputy Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Officer(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We would hope that such an individual would first make his/her dissatisfaction known to the Chair of Trustees. We hope by making this statement that the Trustees demonstrate the commitment of the church to effective safeguarding.

8. The role of the Safeguarding Officer / Deputy Safeguarding Officer is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to Customer First. It is the task of Customer First to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

**Appendix 1:** Flow chart for action (children, young people and vulnerable adults)

**Appendix 2:** Procedures for reporting abuse

### **ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, EMOTIONAL ABUSE, OR NEGLECT**

If a child/young person/vulnerable adult has made a disclosure or abuse is suspected, the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Officer will:

1. Contact Customer First (or CCPAS) for advice in cases of deliberate abuse, if concerned about a child/young person/vulnerable adult's safety or if a child/young person/vulnerable adult is afraid to return home.
2. Advise parents and carers that Customer First has been contacted unless this might put the child/young person/vulnerable adult at risk or cause any delay in referring.
3. Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
4. For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child/young person/vulnerable adult at risk of injury.
5. 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 Customer First direct for advice.
6. Seek and follow advice given by CCPAS (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Customer First.

### **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE/VULNERABLE ADULTS**

If an accusation is made against a Church member, volunteer or paid member of staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, whilst following the procedure outlined above the Safeguarding Officer in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures will need to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer 01284 758816. The Safeguarding Officer will seek advice as above but the decision to suspend a paid member of staff will be the responsibility of the Church Leadership in consultation with the Chair of Trustees and the Local Authority Designated Officer.

### **SAFE RECRUITMENT**

The Trustees will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidelines on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

1. There is a written job description for the post.
2. Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form.
3. Safeguarding has been discussed at interview.

4. Written references have been obtained and followed up where appropriate confirming the applicant's suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
5. A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) form has been completed.
6. A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant.
7. The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.
8. Such information is kept confidential and secure at all times and access is restricted only to those who need sight of such materials for official purposes.

### **MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS**

The Trustees are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Trustees undertake to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour that might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

### **PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

As an organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we shall also maintain specific good practice guidelines for relevant activities that we are involved in.

### **SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

The Trustees are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to those attending who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

### **WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, young people or vulnerable adults, or is known to be a risk to them, the Church Council, in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer, will, if reasonably practicable, supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its commitment to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which the individual will be expected to keep.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

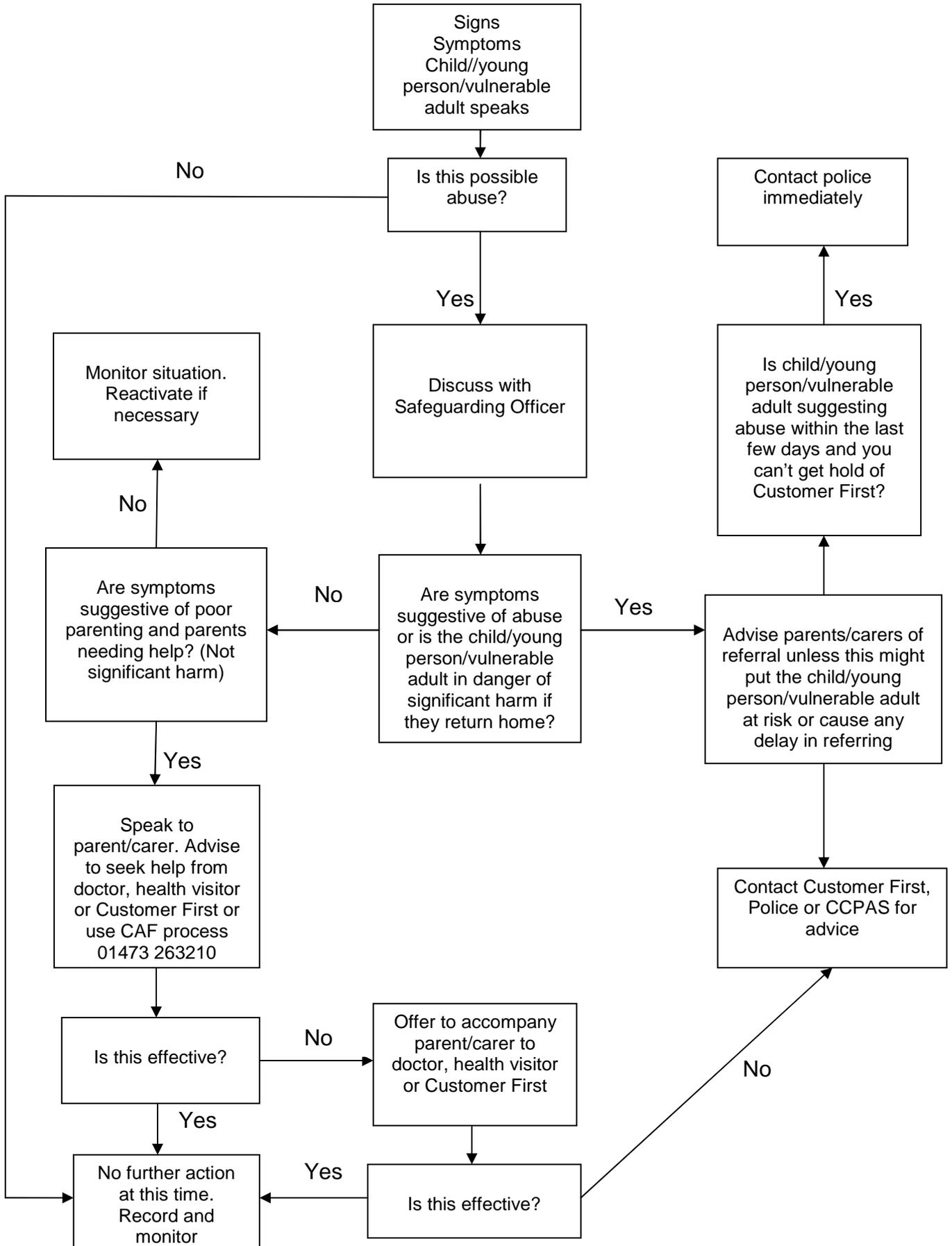
Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Trustees**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**On behalf of the Church Leadership**

**Appendix 1: Flow Chart for Action (children, young people, vulnerable adults)**



## Appendix 2

### Procedure for reporting abuse (actual or suspected)

The following procedures must be followed:

- **Report it – do not delay**  
All suspected abuse must be reported in confidence as soon as is possible, and followed up in writing within 24 hours.
- **Discuss your concerns with your Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Safeguarding Officer or Chair of Trustees**

### DO NOT INVESTIGATE

Refer to Customer First and/or police. You or the Safeguarding Officer should make the referral. Parents and carers should be advised that you are doing this unless this might put the child/young person/vulnerable adult at risk or cause any delay in referring.

- **Making a referral to Customer First and/or the Police**  
Contact Customer First on 0808 800 4005  
Contact the Police on 01473 613500 or for non emergencies 101

If you are worried about the immediate safety of a child/young person/vulnerable adult and cannot contact the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Officer or Chair of Trustees call the Police on 999

- **Record what you have seen, heard and said.**  
Your report must be accurate and where possible use the child/young person/vulnerable adult's exact words as the information was given to you, not your own.
- **Record the time and date, including the year**
- **Don't promise to keep what you are told a secret**
- **Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult what you will do next**
- **Do not make promises you cannot keep**

For further guidance you can get a copy of "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" published by HM Government for Education and Skills. It can be downloaded at [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

### **Remember...**

**Domestic Incidents/Abuse** In January 2005 the legal definition of "significant harm" to children was extended to include harm suffered from seeing or knowing of the abuse of another, particularly in the home. This was reinforced by the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A referral must be made direct to Customer First if it seems reasonable to suspect that:

- a) A child sees, hears experiences or is otherwise aware of domestic abuse – i.e. that domestic abuse is part of their experience of family life. This applies regardless of whether they actually witness any particular event or are physically harmed and
- b) The non-abusing partner will not be able – for whatever reason – to ensure the safety and well being of their child without significant professional assistance and support.

Referrals should be made with the agreement of a parent unless the child's best interests are not served by seeking or obtaining consent. Non consent should not be a barrier to referral if there is on the face of it reasonable cause to suspect that the child may suffer significant harm or otherwise not have significant needs met.

The Government defines domestic abuse as:

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

## **Southgate Church Safeguarding Policy Statement**

The following policy was agreed by the Trustees on \_\_\_\_\_

- We are committed to supporting parents, carers and families.
- As leaders of the church we are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- We recognise that child protection is everybody's responsibility.
- We are committed to following the agreed procedures and following statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines.
- We seek to support all in the Church affected by abuse.
- We review this policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child/young person/vulnerable adult or in relation to any safeguarding matter then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this church.

**Michael Jones 01284 762014**

**Alison Burgess 07940 247038**

**or in their absence the Chair of Trustees – Dr Stuart Lowe 01284 755655**

A copy of the full policy can be seen in the church office.

Signed (Chair of Trustees and Church Leadership)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_