

Safeguarding Policy



Chowdene Church

Chowdene
CHURCH

DEFINITION

For the purpose of this policy Chowdene Church (Registered Charity: 239787) shall refer to the Senior Leadership Team, Trustees, Employees and Volunteers of Chowdene Church currently meeting at the church building at 660 Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9 6JA and online including Zoom, Microsoft Teams and YouTube.

Current activities of the church include regular church services, youth and children activities in addition to outreach projects in the local area, with a view to letting all know the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A. Principles

Chowdene Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Chowdene Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable, whether by disabilities or by reduction in capacities or by their situation. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk of harm. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, adults at risk of harm, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

Chowdene Church is committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are at risk of harm

-
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

B. Responsibilities

Chowdene Church will:

- Fully recognise its responsibilities for safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and adults at risk of harm, and protect them from abuse.
- Train, support and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk of harm from abuse and to minimise risk to themselves.
- Require volunteers and employees to adopt and abide by this Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at risk of harm, and these Procedures.
- Respond to all allegations of misconduct or abuse of children and/or adults at risk of harm in line with this Policy and these Procedures.
- Liaise with statutory and all other appropriate agencies in safeguarding everyone that employees or volunteers of Chowdene Church comes into contact with in carrying out its work.

Chowdene Church will uphold its duty to offer safeguarding and assistance.

This Policy and these Procedures are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children and adults at risk of harm is of paramount concern.
- All children and adults at risk of harm, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safeguarding from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse and the responsibility of the statutory authorities (e.g. Adult Care Trust, Children's Social Services and the Police) to conduct, where appropriate a safeguarding investigation.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

-
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Chowdene Church Data Protection Policy.

C. Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm or any changes within Leadership and/or Trusteeship of Chowdene Church.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the safeguarding of children or adults at risk of harm during the course of the normal work of Chowdene Church.
- In all other circumstances, at least annually by the Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator, Safeguarding Team, Leadership and Trustees.

The Leadership Team and Trustees have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. In terms of safeguarding they will:

- Promote a safer church for all in the church community by ensuring there is a plan in place to raise awareness of safeguarding.
- Promote training to ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously.
- Appoint, manage, resource and support the personnel required to ensure adequate safeguarding is in place.
- Receive quarterly reports from the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator
- Only formally appoint workers (volunteers and employees) after they are satisfied that the recruitment process has been followed.

D. Child and Adult at risk of harm Safeguarding Procedures

1. Recruitment

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and adults at risk of harm.

For all volunteer or paid positions that may result in contact with children or adults at risk of harm the following procedures must be completed. Chowdene Church will

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

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed Job Application and Self-Declaration forms
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (the church will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has successfully completed an agreed probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the safeguarding policy, has signed to confirm they have read this and know how to report concerns.

2. Specific Responsibility for the Safeguarding of Children and Adults at risk of harm

The Leadership of Chowdene Church has appointed a panel consisting of officers and volunteers to act as the Safeguarding Team. Within this team there are designated posts, each responsible for various duties.

The Safeguarding Team consists of:

- Safeguarding Co-Ordinator
- Safeguarding Officer
- Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator
- Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator

The Safeguarding Team will:

- Ensure 'safe recruitment' of employed and volunteer workers working with children and adults at risk of harm within the church community
- Consider how to manage a situation where an applicant is not suitable to work with children and/or adults at risk of harm

-
- Ensure that the church community complies with the Safeguarding Policy and implements good safeguarding practices
 - Consider how best to promote good safeguarding practice and awareness training
 - Ensure that the procedures are followed and records maintained in line with the Safeguarding Policy
 - Ensure safe arrangements are in place for managing those who pose a risk in the church community.

2.1 Role and Responsibilities of the Church Safeguarding Team

Within Chowdene Church it is the role of the Church Safeguarding Team to:

- Implement and promote the Church Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Provide information and advice on the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Provide support and raise awareness of the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data safeguarding, confidentiality and other issues that impact on the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children and adults at risk of harm.
- Organise training for employees and volunteers of Chowdene Church
- Regularly monitor and review the Church Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Attend training on Safeguarding.

2.2 Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator

The Chowdene Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator is: Stuart Hann

The Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator has the main responsibility for managing child and adult at risk of harm safeguarding issues within Chowdene Church and implementing the Church Safeguarding Policy.

The Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator will be regularly updated on Safeguarding Team meetings and receive a copy of the minutes. The role will have specific responsibility for regularly reporting to the Church Leadership Team and Trustees on the status of Safeguarding within Chowdene Church.

2.3 Church Safeguarding Officer

The Chowdene Church Safeguarding Officer is June Allport.

Specifically, within Chowdene Church the Church Safeguarding Officer will:

- Act as the main contact within Chowdene Church for the safeguarding of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Maintain confidential records of reported cases and action taken, liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- Liaise with the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator and the Safeguarding Team to maintain a constant point of contact for safeguarding issues to be reported or advice given.

2.4 Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator

The Chowdene DBS Administrator is: Malcolm Joiner

The primary role of the Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator is to administer the checks for new volunteers and employees to ensure their suitability for the post for which they are applying. (This role could be undertaken as part of the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator's role or could be a separate person). In particular, the DBS Administrator is responsible for:

- Checking and validating the information provided by the applicant on the Job Application, Self Declaration Forms and online DBS Certificate application.
- Establishing the identity of the applicant, through the examination of a range of documents as required by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Ensuring all forms are fully completed and the information they contain is accurate.
- Submitting verified online DBS certificate applications to Thirtyone:eight for DBS processing
- Ensuring the continued suitability of employees and volunteers through the administration of further DBS checks every 3 years. (If not registered with the Update Service).
- Maintaining a bi-annual check of those registered with the DBS Update Service to ensure clear DBS certificates are held

2.5 Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator is: Kath Milne

The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will serve on the Safeguarding Team to offer overall support and guidance, particularly in relation to adults at risk of harm within the church.

NB: If necessary, any member of the Safeguarding Team can be contacted in the absence of the Church Safeguarding Officer.

2.6 General Codes of Conduct – Employees and Volunteers

The following **Codes of Conduct** detail the good practice required by all volunteers or employees of Chowdene Church when in contact with children or adults at risk of harm.

Code of Conduct for Children & Young People

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat everyone with dignity and respect • Develop awareness of individual needs, likes and dislikes • Provide a positive example and Christian witness to young people including on-line behaviour, not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children or adults at risk of harm • Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of a child first • Listen attentively to any ideas and views a child wants to share with you • Speak to the person in charge immediately if you suspect that a child is experiencing bullying or harassment • Ensure that when you are working with individual children you are at least within sight or hearing of another adult • Ensure that at least the following adult to child ratio is observed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children aged 0 to 2 1:3 Children aged 2 to 3 1:4 Children aged 3 to 18 1:8 • Always refer any concerns observed by, or communicated to you to the Church Safeguarding Officer or a member of the Safeguarding Team • Only restrain a child who is at imminent risk of inflicting harm to themselves or others • Those conducting pastoral visits should be aware of and comply with the Chowdene Pastoral Visit and Lone Working Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not exaggerate, trivialise or ignore safeguarding concerns, allegations or suspicion of abuse • Do not discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people except with the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team when you are concerned about the child's well being • Do not be drawn into any derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people • Do not allow children to swear or use sexualized language unchallenged <p>NEVER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in sexually provocative games • Allow others or yourself to engage in touching a child in a sexually provocative manner • Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun • Engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint • Form inappropriate emotional or physical relationship with children
---	---

Code of Conduct for Adults at Risk

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Develop awareness of individual needs, likes and dislikes
- Provide a positive example and Christian witness to all.
- Always put the care, welfare and safety needs of an adult first
- Listen attentively to any ideas and views an adult wants to share with you
- Speak to the person in charge immediately if you suspect that an adult is experiencing bullying or harassment
- Always refer any concerns observed by, or communicated to you to the Church Safeguarding Officer or a member of the Safeguarding Team
- Those conducting pastoral visits should be aware of and comply with the **Chowdene Pastoral Visit and Lone Working Policy**.
- Do not exaggerate, trivialise or ignore safeguarding concerns, allegations or suspicion of abuse
- Do not discuss personal issues about an adult with other people except with the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team when you are concerned about the adult's well being

- Do not be drawn into any derogatory remarks or gestures in front of an adult
- Do not allow an adult to swear or use sexualized language unchallenged

NEVER:

- Engage in sexually provocative games
- Allow others or yourself to engage in touching an adult in a sexually provocative manner
- Make sexually suggestive comments to an adult at risk, even in fun
- Engage in rough or physical contact unless it is permitted within the rules of a game or sports activity or to the guidance on appropriate physical restraint
- Form inappropriate emotional or physical relationship with an adult

2.7 On Line Code of Conduct

Methods of communication are ever changing and provide opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in the world. They come, however, with new values. Whereas the printed word has a certain finality of declaration about it, social media is interactive, conversational and open-ended. Moreover, it often happens in a public, not private, space. Chowdene Church therefore encourages the use of social tools as a means of engaging in an interactive conversation with people in line with the Chowdene Church Social Media Policy. Detailed guidelines can be viewed by referring to this policy. As Christians, our conversation should be 'seasoned with salt' (Colossians 4:6), and these guidelines aim to help us to do so whilst maintaining good safeguarding practices.

In regard to children and adults at risk of harm:

- Maintain good, open communication with adults at risk of harm, children, their parents and/or carers.
- Only use systems supplied by Chowdene Church to make contact with adults at risk of harm, children or their parents when acting on behalf of the church. Where regular contact is necessary a church mobile phone and church e-mail address will be supplied.
- Employees or volunteers should not use personal social media accounts to contact anyone.
- No personal information or contact details should be given out to children or a adult at risk of harm by an employee or volunteer as part of their church role.
- Contact with children or adults at risk of harm should only be made in respect of church activities.
- The tone of all correspondence should be friendly but not over familiar, personal or suggestive of a special relationship.
- Methods of communication that do not retain a record or audit trail of activity should not be used i.e. Snapchat.
- Use of visual communication via the internet is not permitted with the exception of a group meeting.
- Photographs of the children may not be taken or used on social media unless the parents or the carers of the child have given written consent.
- Photographs of adults may not be taken or used on social media unless written consent has been given

-
- No Social Media groups relating to church activity should be set up without first seeking authority from the Church Leadership and/or Head of Digital Communication.
 - Employees or volunteers should provide a positive example and Christian witness to others in respect of personal on-line behaviour.
 - Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from Social Media should be referred to the Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team.

2.8 Code of Conduct for Zoom Meetings with Children

- All children related Zoom meetings i.e Youth or Sunday School will not be advertised externally.
- All children related meetings as mentioned, will be by private invitation only –the parents/guardians/carers will receive an email invite supplying meeting ID or link individually.
- All children related meetings will have a minimum of 2 DBS approved helpers in the meeting.
- The 'host' of the meeting will be ready at any time to 'end meeting for all' in the event that an incident or disclosure occurs
- The 'waiting room' function of Zoom will be enabled for all children related meetings so that we can be certain only those invited to the meeting attend
- Parents/guardians/carers will be required to be in the vicinity of the child attending the meeting.
- Once everyone expected has logged in, the host should lock the meeting.

2.9 First Aid and Treatment of Injuries

If a child or adult at risk of harm requires first aid or any form of medical attention whilst in the care of Chowdene Church, then the following good practice must be followed:

- A written record will be made in the Accident Book of any injury that is presented or occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

-
- Where possible only those with current recognised First Aid training should respond to any injuries.
 - Where possible any course of action should be discussed with the child/adult at risk of harm, in language that they understand and their permission sought before any action is taken.
 - In more serious cases, assistance must be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
 - The child's or adult at risk of harm's parents/guardians or carers must be informed of any injury and any action taken as soon as possible, unless it is in the child's or adult at risk of harm's interests and on professional advice not to do so.

2.10 Reporting

If volunteers or employees have concerns about an incident involving a child or adult at risk of harm that seems untoward or unusual, they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team. Parents should also be informed of the incident as soon as possible unless it is not in the child's or adult at risk of harm's interests to tell them, in which case the Church Safeguarding Officer will act as a point of reference for all referrals to professional agencies.

Employees and Volunteers must report, record and inform if the following occur:

- They accidentally hurt a child or adult at risk of harm; or
- A child or adult at risk of harm seems distressed in an unusual manner; or
- A child or adult at risk of harm misunderstands or misinterprets something said or done.

3 Listening to Disclosures

3.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of a volunteer or employee of Chowdene Church to decide whether or not a child or adult at risk of harm has been abused. **It is however everyone's responsibility to report concerns.** If it is unclear about the nature of the information (and therefore which category the disclosure falls into), advice must be sought in the first instance from the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member

of the Safeguarding Team who will liaise with thirtyone:eight for further advice if needed.

It is important that volunteers or employees of Chowdene Church never allow allegations made by a child or adult at risk of harm to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

3.2 How to Listen to a Disclosure

It is important to listen carefully to the information a child or adult at risk of harm discloses. Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or adult at risk of harm to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

When listening to a disclosure the following good practice is required:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child/adult at risk of harm even if you feel different on the inside. Allow space and time for the person to talk
- Listen to the child/adult at risk of harm without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Do not show disbelief.
- Tell the child/adult at risk of harm that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell.
- Take what the child/adult at risk of harm says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child/adult at risk of harm says, especially if they have a speech disability and/or differences in language. Use language that is age appropriate and ensure that there is someone available who understands sign language etc. if necessary.
- Do not pre-suppose that the experience was bad or painful - it may have been neutral or even pleasurable. Always avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child or adult at risk of harm.
- If you need more clarification or if a statement is ambiguous, keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said and use open-ended, non-leading questions.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children or adults at risk of harm.
- Reassure the child or adult at risk of harm.

When receiving a disclosure:

- Do not panic, showing shock or distaste.
- Do not probe for more information than is offered.
- Do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Do not make negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- Do not approach the individual against whom the allegation has been made.
- Do not make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Do not give a guarantee of confidentiality.

Make helpful responses such as:

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

4 Responding to Disclosures

It is vital that Chowdene Church volunteers and employees respond well to a suspicion or allegation of abuse, inappropriate behaviour or misconduct from a child or adult at risk of harm. Chowdene Church understands what is meant by the term 'abuse'. The different types of abuse are listed below, but it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list:

- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Negative Discrimination (including racism)
- Bullying (includes bullying by gangs; bullying by family volunteers; physical bullying; verbal bullying; cyber bullying; teasing; and harassment)
- Modern slavery
- Institutional/Organisational Abuse
- Cuckooing
- County Lines
- Radicalisation
- Domestic Abuse
- Self Neglect

NB: These are all explored in more detail in section 6

4.1 Basic procedures

In the course of their role as an employee or volunteer of Chowdene Church a child or adult at risk of harm may disclose information about a person that leads to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct. It is important that:

- They listen to the child/adult at risk of harm as detailed in 3.2.
- They acknowledge the information received.
- They inform the Church Safeguarding Officer.
- They make a full written record of disclosure as soon as practical.
- They sign and date the record then pass it to the Church Safeguarding Officer.

4.2 Extended procedures

All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously. Although false allegations of abuse do occur, they are less than usual. If a child or adult at risk of harm says or indicates that he/she is being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child or adult at risk of harm is being abused, it is important to react as soon as possible that day in line with the following procedures.

Where there is uncertainty about whether the concern relates to abuse or misconduct, the Church Safeguarding Officer must firstly be consulted for advice on the appropriate course of action. If the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team is unavailable, external agencies such as thirtyone:eight or the Police and local Care Trust and Children's Services Directorate must be consulted for advice. This is important because they have an overview of child safeguarding issues and they may well have other information that together causes concern.

A full written record should be made of what has been seen, heard and/ or told as soon as possible in the child/adult at risk of harm's own words. Any action taken must be written down and all hand written notes must be kept even if subsequently typed up. The information recorded must, where known, include:

- Detail of person making report.
- Name & date of birth of child/adult at risk of harm.
- Home address and telephone number of the child/adult at risk of harm.
- The nature of the allegation in the child/adult at risk of harm's own words.
- Details of action taken

-
- Any times, dates, location or other relevant information.
 - Whether the person making the report is expressing their own concern or the concerns of another person.
 - The child/adult at risk of harm's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred.
 - A description of any visible (when normally dressed) injuries or bruising, behavioural signs, indirect signs (do not examine the child/adult at risk of harm).
 - Details of any witnesses to the incident.
 - Whether the child/adult at risk of harm's parents/guardians/carers have been contacted.
 - Details of anyone else who has been consulted and the information obtained from him or her if applicable.
 - If it is not the child/adult at risk of harm making the report, whether the child/adult at risk of harm has been spoken to, if so, what was said.
 - Details of action taken
 - Record, sign and date on the day what you have seen, heard or been told.
 - Pass the record to the Church Safeguarding Officer who will decide what further action needs to be taken and if necessary, notify the Social Work Department or the Police.

4.3 Disclosures about an Employee or Volunteer

If a disclosure is received against a volunteer or employee of Chowdene Church that leads to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct against an employee or church volunteer, the following action must be taken:

- Listen to the child or adult at risk of harm as detailed above.
- Acknowledge the information received.
- Inform the Church Safeguarding Officer.
- Make a full written record of the disclosure as soon as is practical

Sign and date the record then pass to the Church Safeguarding Officer.

The Church Safeguarding Officer must clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that misconduct has occurred. If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of misconduct by an employee or volunteer, the matter will be dealt with as below.

4.4 Making a Referral in Cases of Suspected and/or Alleged Abuse

- The Church Safeguarding Officer on the instruction of the Church Leadership and Trustees will refer the suspicion and/or allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer (“LADO”) and the Police as soon as possible.
- Appropriate steps may be required to ensure the safety of the child(ren) or adult(s) who may be at risk.
- A record should be made of the name and designation of the Local Authority Designated Officer (“LADO”) and the Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.
- **Important Note:** Reporting of the matter to the Police or local Care Trust or Children's Services Directorate must not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

4.5 Managing the Employee or Volunteer against Whom the Allegation has been made

The LADO will in most cases call a strategy meeting to which the Police would be invited if the concerns were of a serious nature. The meeting will plan the investigation. It is not up to anyone within Chowdene Church to tell the employee or volunteer that an allegation of abuse has been made against them.

4.6 Suspension from working as an employee or volunteer

It should be made clear that suspension from work or working as a volunteer should not be seen as a form of disciplinary action. The employee or volunteer may be suspended from working whilst an investigation is carried out. If this occurs there does not need to be a timescale communicated except to say that '*until the outcome of the current investigation is complete*'.

4.7 Managing False or Malicious Allegations

Where after investigation, the allegation is found to be false or malicious the employee or volunteer will receive an account of the circumstances and/or investigation. The employee or volunteer involved may wish to seek legal advice.

Records should not be destroyed. Information detailing the outcome of the investigation should be carefully noted making it clear if applicable that the allegation was unfounded or malicious. This is so that any further allegations made in the future and found to be true can be cross referenced with the previous information.

4.8 Confidentiality

Employees or volunteers receiving information about possible abuse should always treat that information as confidential in the sense that it must not be disclosed to anybody except those having a legal duty to receive it, for example the Police, a social work reporter, the Church Safeguarding Officer, a member of Safeguarding Team or a line manager in the governing body. Communicating information obtained from a Disclosure Certificate under the Police Act 1997 is a criminal offence.

Remember: Listen; Respond; Report and Record!

5 Definitions Sections

5.1 Statutory Authorities or Statutory Local Agencies

This is a term to describe those agencies with legal responsibility to investigate suspicions or allegations of abuse. This includes the Police, who would investigate to see if a crime has been committed, and Children or Adult Social Services. These may be organised differently throughout the country and known by different names. Children's Social Services may be known as Children's Social Care and be organised within a Children's Services Directorate or similar. Adult Social Services similarly may be known as Adult Social Care and be organised within a Care Trust

5.2 Child

The legal definition of a child is someone under the age of 18. Some legislation in the UK allows young people from age 16 to make certain decisions for themselves (e.g. getting married), but safeguarding legislation applies to anyone under the age of 18 because this is the legal definition of a child. The Children Act 1989 and 2004 in England and Wales, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 in Scotland and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 in Northern Ireland similarly define a child as someone under 18.

5.3 Adult at risk of harm or adult in need of safeguarding

An adult is someone over 18 (unless specific legislation states otherwise). Some adults because of circumstance or particular vulnerability or risk may be in need of safeguarding. Vulnerable adults are also known as 'adults at risk of harm'.

Adults at risk of harm may be in need of health or social support services and may be unable to take care of himself/herself and to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

The following information relates to the Safeguarding of Adults as defined in the Care Act 2014, Chapter 14 'Safeguarding'. This replaces the previous guidelines produced in 'No Secrets' (Department of Health 2000)

The legislation is relevant across England and Wales but on occasions applies only to local authorities in England.

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Organisations should always promote the adult's well-being in their safeguarding arrangement and others.

6 Types of Abuse

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate online abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

It is generally accepted that there are four main categories of abuse for children – physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance '*Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*'. There are similar definitions for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

6.1 Physical Abuse

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

6.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as over safeguarding and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

6.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

6.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Adults at risk of harm)

6.7 Physical Abuse

This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

6.8 Sexual Abuse

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

6.9 Psychological or Emotional Abuse

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

6.10 Financial or Material Abuse

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

6.11 Neglect or Act of Omission

This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the

withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

6.12 Discriminatory Abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk of harm because of their age, gender, race, individual's religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

6.13 Institutional/Organisational Abuse

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an Institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

6.14 Modern Slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

6.15 Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoos who take over the nests of other birds.

There are different types of cuckooing:

- Using the property to deal, store or take drugs
- Using the property to sex work
- Taking over the property as a place for them to live
- Taking over the property to financially abuse the tenant

6.16 County Lines

The 2018 Home Office Serious Crime Strategy states the NPCC definition of a County Line is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and adults at risk of harm to move [and store] the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

6.17 Radicalisation

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police. This may relate to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments made to a member of the team which cause concern, or actions that lead team members to be worried for the safety of a child in their care. The government has defined extremism as: “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.” This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces.

6.18 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse, or domestic violence, is controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. It could be (but is not limited to) physical, sexual, psychological or financial abuse.

6.19 Self Neglect

Self neglect is extreme lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety; neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings; inability to avoid self-harm; failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs; and inability or unwillingness to manage one’s personal affairs

7 Signs and Symptoms

Recognising child abuse is not easy and it is not a person's responsibility to decide whether or not a child or adult at risk of harm has been abused. It is a person's responsibility to pass on any concerns to the statutory agencies for them to investigate.

The signs of abuse listed are not definitive or exhaustive. The list is designed to help Employees and volunteers working within Chowdene Church to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Children and adults at risk of harm may display some of the indicators at some time; the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. Any of these signs or behaviours must be seen in the context of the child/adult at risk of harm's whole situation and in combination with other information related to the child/adult at risk of harm and his/her circumstances. There can also be overlap between different forms of abuse.

7.1 Physical Abuse

Children and young people	Adults at risk of harm
<p>Most children will sustain cuts and bruises throughout childhood. These are likely to occur in bony parts of the body like elbows, shins and knees. In most cases injuries or bruising will be genuinely accidental. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or the injury appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g. on the cheeks or thighs. The age of the child must also be considered.</p> <p>Signs of possible physical abuse include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent, improbable excuses given to explain injuries. 2. Refusal to discuss injuries. 3. Fear of parents being approached for an explanation. 4. Untreated injuries or delays in reporting them. 5. Excessive physical punishment to themselves. 6. Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather. 7. Avoidance of swimming, physical education etc. 8. Fear of returning home. 9. Aggression towards others. 10. Running away. <p>When considering the possibility of non-accidental injury, it is important to take in to consideration that injuries may have occurred for other reasons e.g. skin disorders such as impetigo, rare bone diseases.</p>	<p>Signs of possible physical abuse include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries 2. Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended 3. Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them 4. Bruising and discolouration – particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls 5. Recurring injuries without plausible explanation 6. Loss of hair, loss of weight and change of appetite 7. Person flinches at physical contact and/or keeps covered up in hot weather 8. Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or people

7.2 Sexual Abuse

Children and young people	Adults at risk of harm
<p>A child or adult at risk of harm who is distressed may display some of the following physical, behavioural or medical signs that should alert you to a problem. It is the combination and frequency of these that may indicate sexual abuse. Always seek advice.</p> <p>Signs of possible sexual abuse:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults 2. Fear of a particular adult 3. Social isolation - withdrawn or introverted 4. Sleep disturbance (nightmares, bed-wetting, fear of sleeping alone, needing a night light) 5. Running away from home 6. Girls taking over the mothering role 7. Unexplained educational problems e.g. falling standards, truancy 8. Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes for games 9. Low self-esteem 10. Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse 11. Display of sexual knowledge beyond child's age e.g. French kissing 12. Unusual interest in the genitals of adults, children or animals 13. Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors 14. Abnormal sexual drawings 15. Fear of medical examinations 16. Developmental regression 17. Over sexualised behaviour 18. Compulsive masturbation 19. Stealing 20. Irrational fears 21. Psychosomatic factors e.g. recurrent abdominal or headache pain 22. Sexual promiscuity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse 2. Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour 3. Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting 4. Infections or sexually transmitted diseases 5. Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse 6. Self-harming 7. Emotional distress 8. Mood changes 9. Disturbed sleep patterns

<p>23. Bruises, scratches, bite marks to the thighs or genital areas</p> <p>24. Anxiety, depression</p> <p>25. Eating disorder e.g. anorexia nervosa or bulimia</p> <p>26. Pregnancy -particularly when reluctant to name the father</p> <p>27. Itchiness, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding, pain on passing urine, recurring urinary tract problem, vaginal infections or genital damage</p> <p>28. Sexually transmitted infections</p> <p>29. Soiling or wetting in children who have been trained</p> <p>30. Self-mutilation,</p> <p>31. Suicide attempts</p>	
--	--

7.3 Emotional Abuse

Children and young people	Adults at risk of harm
<p>Signs of possible emotional abuse:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low self esteem 2. Continual self-deprecation 3. Sudden speech disorder 4. Significant decline in concentration 5. Immaturity 6. Neurotic' behaviour e.g. rocking 7. Self-mutilation 8. Compulsive stealing 9. Extremes of passivity or aggression 10. Running away 11. Indiscriminate friendliness 	<p>Signs of possible emotional abuse:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psychological 2. Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful 3. Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer 4. Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes 5. Unexplained paranoia 6. Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour, excessive fear or anxiety 7. Loss of appetite 8. Helplessness or passivity 9. Confusion or disorientation 10. Implausible stories and attention seeking behaviour 11. Low Self-esteem

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Financial or Material 13. Disparity between assets and living conditions 14. Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents 15. Sudden inability to pay bills 16. Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf 17. Recent changes of deeds or title to property 18. Missing personal belongings 19. Inappropriate granting and /use of Power of Attorney
--	--

7.4 Neglect

Children and young people	Adults at risk of harm
<p>Signs of possible neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constant hunger 2. Poor personal hygiene 3. Constant tiredness 4. Poor state of clothing 5. Frequent lateness or unexplained non-attendance at school 6. Untreated medical problems 7. Low self esteem 8. Poor peer relationships 9. Stealing 	<p>Signs of possible neglect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger 2. Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores 3. Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition 4. Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care 5. No callers or visitors

8 Local Safeguarding Check-Sheet

Chowdene Church

Detailed Safeguarding Procedures

1. Under no circumstances should an employee or volunteer of Chowdene Church carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow the procedures as set out below:
2. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to their line manager or the person who is leading the session who in turn should report these concerns to **June Allport**, who is the Church Safeguarding Officer, or another member of the Safeguarding Team. There is a designated reporting telephone to be used to contact the Church Safeguarding Officer. The telephone number is **07810 550 881**. The Church Safeguarding Team and specifically the Church Safeguarding Officer have been nominated by Chowdene Church 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.
3. In the absence of the Church Safeguarding Officer or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Church Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to another member of the Safeguarding Team using the alternative telephone number.

The role of the Church Safeguarding Officer (or another member of the Safeguarding Team if the officer is unavailable) 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.

-
4. If the suspicions implicate the Church Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator who will inform the Church Trustees and the Church Leadership Team.
 5. Contact can also be made with thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone **0303 003 1111** or via **info@thirtyoneeight.org**. Thirtyone:eight will be well positioned to offer guidance as to whether to proceed to contact Social Services or the Police.
 6. Where the concern is about a child the Church Safeguarding Officer should contact Children's Social Services. Where the concerns relate to an adult in need of safeguarding contact Adult Social Services.
 7. The local Children's Social Services office **telephone number (office hours)** is **0191 433 2653**. The **out of hours emergency number** is **0191 477 0844**.
 8. The local Adult Social Services office **telephone number** is **0191 433 7033**. This is available 24 hours a day.
 9. The **Police Child Safeguarding Team** for **Northumbria Police** can be contacted by dialing **101** and asking to speak to the Protecting Vulnerable People Team.
 10. Suspicions 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.
 11. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Church Safeguarding Officer, or another member of the Safeguarding Team, the absence

of these persons should not delay taking advice from thirtyone:eight and if necessary, referral to Social Services and the Police.

12. Chowdene Church will support the Church Safeguarding Officer and the Safeguarding Team in their roles, 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.

13. When someone attending events held by Chowdene Church is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; Chowdene Church will supervise the individual concerned and offer 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 an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. A mentor will be appointed to offer pastoral care and support and to hold the person accountable to the boundaries set. The Safeguarding Team will liaise with the Church Leader in charge of pastoral support in order to appoint a suitable mentor.

14. 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. However, it is hoped that all those involved with Chowdene Church will use the procedure mentioned above. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Church Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately or where they have a disagreement with the Church Safeguarding Officer as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact the Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinator, another member of the Safeguarding Team or an outside agency direct. It is hoped that by making this statement Chowdene Church demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the safeguarding of all those who are vulnerable.

9 Chowdene Church Disclosure Report

This report must be completed where volunteers or employees are concerned about an incident involving a child or adult at risk of harm. This form must be completed as soon as possible after the incident that causes concern, in conjunction with the Church Safeguarding Officer.

Note: Confidentiality must be maintained at all times. Information must only be shared on a need to know basis i.e. only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know. This form can be found on the Chowdene Church Website and also via the Church Safeguarding Officer or another member of the Safeguarding Team.

Details of person making report:

Name:
Position:
Contact telephone number:

Details of Child/Adult at risk of harm

Name:
Date of Birth:
Address:
Contact telephone number:
Names and address of parents/guardian/carers:

Note: If you are reporting concerns on behalf of someone else, please provide details of that person.

Name:
Position:
Address:
Contact telephone number:
Date this person advised you of their concerns/incident:

Details of the incident/concerns

Date of incident/concern arose:
Time
Place
Names and addresses of other people who may have information about the concerns/incident

Describe in detail what happened:

Describe in detail visible injuries/bruises and concerning behaviour of the child/adult at risk of harm, if any (use diagrams if this helps you to describe):

Was the child/adult at risk of harm asked about the incident: YES/NO

If yes, record exactly what the child said in their own words and any questions asked if the situation needed clarification:

Details of action taken

Detail what action, if any, has been taken following receipt of this information:

Other Information

Record any other information you have about this matter (it is important that all information is passed on even that which you think is not important or helpful).

--

Signature:
Name:
Position:
Date:

ADDENDUM

No. 1

Additional information is available on the 31:8 website (thirtyoneeight.org, Help & Resources, Help Guides) which will give you access to the right help and advice to respond to various situations.