

Alvechurch Baptist Church Safeguarding Policy 2016



Alvechurch Baptist Church

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy & Procedures

2016

A set of agreed policies and procedures for ensuring a safe environment for children and young people within the care of Alvechurch Baptist Church, in response to the Children's Act 1989.

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE TERM 'CHILDREN'
REFERS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS**

This Safeguarding Policy is for Alvechurch Baptist Church, which currently has approximately 50 members and 20 children.

Contents

Page 4	Alvechurch Baptist Church Child Protection Policy Statement
Page 5	Alvechurch Baptist Church Safeguarding Team
Page 6	Policy and Procedures
Page 7	Definitions of Abuse
Page 8	Responding to Concerns: Primary Stage
Page 10	Procedures for Responding to Concerns Helpful Contact Numbers
Page 11	Stage 1 – Record and Report
Page 12	Stage 2 – Review and Refer
Page 13	Stage 3 – Report and Support Particular Concerns
Page 14	Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of Volunteers Guidelines for appointment of children’s leaders & helpers
Page 15	Roles of Leaders and Helpers
Page 17	Respecting Children and Young People: Good Practice Guidelines
Page 19	Good Practice Guidelines for a Safe Community
Page 20	Declaration Form for Voluntary Work with Children and Young People at ABC – Church Copy
Page 21	Declaration Form for Voluntary Work with Children and Young People at ABC – Volunteer Copy

Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children in the Church

Alvechurch Baptist Church

The vision statement of Alvechurch Baptist Church is: 'Open to God, Open to the Community'

In fulfilling this vision we welcome children into the life of our community;

We have a programme of events for children through our Sunday Club and other activities;

We make our premises available to organisations working with children;

And we recognise the responsibilities for the safeguarding of all young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, *Safe from Harm* (HM Government 1994) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2010).

As members of Alvechurch Baptist Church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all children associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation:

Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member and attendee to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children, and the duty of each person to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. Alvechurch Baptist Church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

Alvechurch Baptist Church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or volunteering. All volunteers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children.

Respecting children

Alvechurch Baptist Church adopts a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children so that all children are shown the respect that is due to them.

Safe working practices

Alvechurch Baptist Church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and adopts ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

A safe community

Alvechurch Baptist Church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children; it seeks to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church are managed appropriately.

Alvechurch Baptist Church (ABC) Safeguarding Team

ABC has appointed:

Mrs Barbara Parker, Safeguarding Champion

Tel: (0121) 4452506

Email: andy.barbara.parker@btinternet.com



Mrs Debbie Jowett, Safeguarding Champion and DBS Verifier

Tel: (0121) 4478029

Email: debbielakeman@aol.com



They will advise ABC on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected. They will also oversee Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) applications and paperwork, and provide and explain a Safeguarding Pack to new volunteers.

Mr Peter Griffiths, Safeguarding Monitor

Tel: 07788 313801

Email: phgriffiths74@hotmail.co.uk



He will oversee and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of ABC's trustees, and prepare Safeguarding packs for the volunteers. He will also keep the public notices up-to-date, and read out the Child Protection Policy Statement annually. He is also the designated deacon with responsibility for Safeguarding.

Revd Fiona Lee, Minister of Alvechurch Baptist Church

Tel: (0121) 4452087

Email: revfiona@alvechurchbaptist.org.uk



She will be notified by the Safeguarding Champions upon any disclosure/issues arising, and will work with the Safeguarding Team to put procedures into action. She is also responsible, with the Pastoral Care Team, for the pastoral care of every person at ABC.

When possible, the Safeguarding Team will always work together if/when issues arise.

Policy and Procedures

Copies of the Child Protection Policy Statement will be displayed permanently on the notice-boards in the large hall and small hall at Alvechurch Baptist Church.

Each prospective volunteer willing to work with children will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures, and will be asked to sign a Declaration Form (see page 18-9) showing they are willing to follow them.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of, or other person associated with ABC.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually in April.

The Child Protection Policy Statement will be read annually at the church AGM and published in the Church Newsletter in June, together with a report on the outcome of the Annual Review.

All organisations hiring ABC premises are required to have compatible Safeguarding policies.

Individuals hiring the premises for events where children will attend should be aware of Good Practice Guidelines and take FULL responsibility for the safety of their children.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes no-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- harmful behaviour is disclosed by a child
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring

Responding to Concerns – Primary Stage

What do we do if abuse is suspected?

Everyone has his/her part to play in ensuring the safeguarding of children within ABC.

If the behaviour of a child gives any cause for concern –

If an allegation is made in any context about a child being harmed –

If the behaviour of any adult (*including colleagues and members of the public*) towards children causes you concern –

- **Do not** dismiss your concerns
- **Do not** normally confront the adult about whose behaviour you have concerns
- **Do not** take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is actually taking place
- **Do not** investigate allegations
- **Do not** act alone
- **Do not** take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have
- **DO FOLLOW THE CHURCH'S PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**
(See page 10)

What do we do if a child discloses abuse?

General Points

- Accept what the child says
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest (“I do not know”)
- Let them know you will tell the Safeguarding Champions and Minister
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Be aware that the child may not understand
- Never push for information
- Let the child know they are in no way to blame (even if they broke the rules)

Helpful things to say

- This seems very important...
- I believe you...
- I'm glad you told me...
- It's not your fault...
- I will help you...
- Can you tell me about...
- What happened then...
- Not all adults are like that...
- You were right to tell me...
- What I'm going to do now is...

Avoid Saying

- I don't believe it...
- Why didn't you tell anyone before...
- Are you sure...
- But she/he is such a nice person...

Avoid

- Making false promises
- Agreeing to keep a secret

Procedures for Responding to Concerns

STAGE 1

A volunteer/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child or the behaviour of an adult

The person who has the concern has a duty to

RECORD AND REPORT

A written record must be made of the concern using a standard Incident Report Form and the concern should be reported to the Safeguarding Champions within 24 hours.

Standard Incident Forms, along with a Safeguarding Policy which should be used for reference, are kept in the Communion cupboard in ABC's kitchen.

STAGE 2

The Safeguarding Champions receive the report of concern

then have a duty to

REVIEW AND REFER

The report will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Champions with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (if serious, in liaison with the HEBA Safeguarding Officer) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.

STAGE 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Safeguarding Champions, the Safeguarding Monitor, and the Minister, may have a duty to

SUPPORT AND REPORT

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns, and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the Local Association, the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Charity Commission.

If the Safeguarding Champions are not available,
any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report by the Safeguarding Team should be made immediately to the police or Social Services

Helpful Contact Numbers:

HEBA Safeguarding Officer: Rev Adrian Argile (0121) 472 4986 (HEBA Office)

Social Services: (01905) 763763 (County Hall); (01905) 768020 (Emergency Duty Team out-of-hours)

Police: 999 (if Emergency) or 101 (if not emergency)

Regional Minister: Revd Alison Mackay (0121) 472 4986

STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to **RECORD** their concerns in writing and to **REPORT** their concerns to the Safeguarding Champions. If they are not contactable reports should be made to the Safeguarding Monitor.

The report to the Safeguarding Champions should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised.

The duty to **RECORD & REPORT**:

As soon as possible after a concern is raised, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

The record should:

be hand-written as soon as possible after the event,

be legible and state the facts accurately (*when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained*),

include the child's name, address, date of birth (*or age if the date of birth is not known*),

include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure,

include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed,

include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words,

include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported,

include any action taken as a result of the concerns,

be signed and dated,

be kept secure and confidential, and made available only to the Safeguarding Team and representatives of the professional agencies, as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved.

If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to anyone in the Safeguarding Team, one of the Team should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's group, the volunteer who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group leader. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Safeguarding Champions.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the volunteer to record and report their concerns to the Safeguarding Champions.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the volunteers the leader should remind the volunteer of their duty to record and report, and will also themselves have a duty to report the concern to the Safeguarding Champions.

<p>If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report by the Safeguarding Team should be made immediately to the Police or Social Services (please see page 10 for relevant numbers)</p>

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

The duty of the Safeguarding Champions on receiving a report are to **REVIEW** the concern that has been reported and to **REFER** the concern on to the appropriate people if necessary.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Safeguarding Team:

- should take account of their own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children
- must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- may speak with others in the church who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be made
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised.
- such conversations should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action.

The duty to REFER

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred on to. They may:

- refer back to the volunteer who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed. asking for appropriate continued observation
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children in question asking for continued observation
- refer to the adult about whom the concern has been raised if appropriate - this may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children's volunteers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Safeguarding Champions should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the Police or Social Services. To address the adult may place the child at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child may be intimidated.
- make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department in consultation with the HEBA Safeguarding Officer.

All original reports should be retained safely and securely in the lockable filing cabinet kept in the Church Office by the Safeguarding Champions, and a written record should be made of the actions taken. Keys for the cabinet are held by The Minister and the Church Administrator ONLY.

STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

Responsibilities in stage 3 of the process are shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

The duty to REPORT and SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, ABC continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected.

The Child, Other Family Members, Church Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Leadership Team

Particular Concerns

When concerns are expressed about the Minister

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister should always be reported immediately to the Regional Minister of the Heart of England Baptist Association (Contact number p10) in addition to following the church's normal procedures.

When concerns are expressed about the Safeguarding Champion(s)

Any safeguarding concerns involving either/both of the Safeguarding Champions should be raised with other members of the Safeguarding Team.

Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of Volunteers

Alvechurch Baptist church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them.

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or voluntary. The church does not wish to prevent all people with past criminal convictions from working with children and young people in the church. Only relevant convictions will be taken into account – that is, convictions that suggest that a person might be a risk to children's or young people's safety. All volunteers will be provided with appropriate support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children.

Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers

The Church should ensure that:

- All will receive and discuss the ABC Safeguarding Pack
- All will sign to say they will comply with it
- DBS will be applied for

Administration of this process will be overseen by the Safeguarding Champions, but may be carried out by others. Until this procedure is completed volunteers must be supervised.

Guidelines for Young Leaders Under 18 Years of Age

In law young leaders under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team.

Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that the young leader is helped to develop and hone skills, attitudes and experience.

A young leader must be closely supervised by an adult leader at all times, and never given sole responsibility for a group of children.

When considering ratios of staff to children the young leader needs to be counted as a child, not a leader.

The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to a young leader just as it does to any other person.

The permission of parents or carers needs to be sought for the young leader just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age

Young Leaders should not be given leadership responsibility for a group immediately below their own age, to leave a gap of at least two years.

Roles of Leaders and Helpers

A LEADER OR TEACHER MUST

- Be committed to the Christian Faith
- Be appointed annually by the Church Meeting
- Be responsible to the Diaconate and Minister, who, in turn, are responsible to the Church Meeting
- Consult the Safeguarding Champions, Deacons and Minister as appropriate, on any issue of confidentiality, concern or uncertainty.
- Undergo Safeguarding training and safety checks.

ADDITIONALLY A LEADER MUST

- Be responsible to the Area Leader of Finance for any expenditure

A LEADER OR TEACHER SHOULD

- Take overall responsibility for the work of their children's group and ensure its smooth running
- Endeavour to convey the Christian faith to the children with an appropriate programme of studies/activities, and with appropriate attitude, whilst respecting the children's freedom of beliefs and ideas
- Recognise the individuality and specialness of each child and show them care, concern and appreciation
- Ensure helpers abide by the Safeguarding Policy

ADDITIONALLY A LEADER SHOULD

- Be responsible for recruiting sufficient helpers to fulfil the programme, seeking help to do this, if necessary, from the Minister and Deacons
- Liaise with any other Church children's groups, and foster whole-church integration
- Keep a register of all children, with details of full name, date of birth, address, contact phone numbers, and have completed Consent Forms for emergency medical treatment. Inform ABC's Data Protection Monitor that such lists are held.
- Refer parents/carers to the Child Protection Policy Notice displayed and the Helpful Contact Numbers (*see page 4+5*) should any issue arise.
- Encourage and appreciate helpers and find them access to appropriate training

A HELPER MUST

- Be committed or sympathetic to the Christian Faith
- Be responsible to the leaders and consult them on any matters of practical concern or uncertainty
- Consult the Safeguarding Champions over any concerns relating to the children, helpers or leaders
- Undergo Safeguarding training and safety checks

A HELPER SHOULD

- Be willing to share their talents and expertise with the children in a positive and sensitive manner
- Regard the well-being and safety of each child as paramount

Respecting Children and Young People: Good Practice Guidelines

- DO** treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age
- DO** listen well and observe tone of voice and body-language to know what a child or young person is thinking or feeling
- DO** provide an example you wish others to follow
- DO** plan activities which involve more than one volunteer being present, or at least within sight or hearing
- DO** observe recommended minimum adult:child ratios:-

<u>0-2 years</u>	1:3	<u>4-7 years</u>	1:8, or 1:6 outdoors
<u>3 years</u>	1:4	<u>8+ years</u>	1:10, or 1:7 outdoors
- DO** , in a counselling situation with a child or young person where privacy and confidentiality are important, let another adult in the building be aware of the meeting and inform the child of this.
- DO** , if a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed, make sure another adult, preferably the parent or carer, is present
- DO** respect a child's or young person's right to personal privacy
- DO** inform the children and young people that they can share any concerns they may have with the Safeguarding Champions
- DO** remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- DO** ensure access to the building is safe and well-lit, and that furniture and equipment are in a safe condition and suited to the age of the child
- DO** ensure you know where first-aid and fire-equipment are kept
- DO** refer to the full BUGB "Safe to Grow" booklet, pgs 16-18 if transporting children/young people for day or overnight trips. The ABC Administrator, the Minister and Safeguarding Monitor have copies.
- DO** consult the Safeguarding Champions, Monitor and/or Minister if clarification is needed on any point
- DO** record any incidents in the Church Incident Book, kept in the communion cupboard in the kitchen at Alvechurch Baptist Church.

DISCIPLINE

- discipline children when necessary without using physical punishment.
- criticise the behaviour and not the person.
- Remove the child to a calm space away from other children and stay with them until they have cooled down

- DO NOT** permit abusive peer activities
- DO NOT** play physical-contact or sexually-provocative games with children and young people
- DO NOT** have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- DO NOT** allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- DO NOT** make suggestive remarks, even in fun
- DO NOT** engage in any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting of a child or young person
- DO NOT** show favouritism to any individual
- DO NOT** jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- DO NOT** invite a child into your home alone, but invite a group and ensure that another responsible adult is in the house
- DO NOT** give lifts to children on their own, unless circumstances make this imperative. If possible, when giving a lift, the child should sit in a rear seat, parental permission should be sought and the correct passenger insurance should be in place.
- DO NOT** use electronic communication as a substitute for face to face contact with young people. Such contact should be with parents/carers, not children or young people, where possible.

Good Practice Guidelines for a Safe Community

Safe Premises

The church takes seriously its responsibility to ensure that the premises are safe for all who use them. The following checklist identifies guidelines to ensure the safety of all, especially children and young people:

- All doorways and passages to be kept clear at all times
- Emergency Exits to be clearly shown at all times
- The kitchen is out of bounds to children, and young people should be supervised.
- A First Aid Kit will be kept in the kitchen with a Report Book for all usage.
- Special care with safety will be taken when the baptistery is open
- Any hazards noticed should be notified to the trustees for action to be taken
- Premises should be checked for intruders before allowing children into halls

When a known offender is present

The church should be a community that is welcoming and open to all. It is a place for people who have failed and for people in need. Those who have abused children in the past are to be included in this welcome. However, the gospel imperative to welcome the sinner needs to be set alongside the gospel imperative that the protection of children must be paramount.

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused. This might also state that the abuser or alleged abuser (until such time as the allegation has been cleared or proven) must decline offers of hospitality from church members where there are children present in the home.

Where necessary this will include working with other agencies such as Baptist Association, Baptist Union, Probation Service and so on.

The Safeguarding Team will take further advice and guidance from the BU, and other agencies, if and when necessary.

Declaration Form for Voluntary Work
With Children and Young People at Alvechurch Baptist Church

Church Copy

Alvechurch Baptist Church asks all prospective volunteer workers with children and young people (0-18) to complete this form. This information will be kept confidential by Alvechurch Baptist Church, unless requested by an appropriate statutory authority.

I understand the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by its rules and principles. I will retain the Safeguarding Pack for future reference.

Personal Details

Full Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone Numbers _____ (*daytime*) _____ (*evening*)

_____ (*mobile*)

Email address _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Alvechurch Baptist Church: 'Open to God, Open to the Community'

Declaration Form for Voluntary Work
With Children and Young People at Alvechurch Baptist Church

Volunteer Copy

Alvechurch Baptist Church asks all prospective volunteer workers with children and young people (0-18) to complete this form. This information will be kept confidential by Alvechurch Baptist Church, unless requested by an appropriate statutory authority.

I understand the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by its rules and principles. I will retain the Safeguarding Pack for future reference.

Personal Details

Full Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone Numbers _____ (*daytime*) _____ (*evening*)

_____ (*mobile*)

Email address _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Alvechurch Baptist Church: 'Open to God, Open to the Community'