



H O P E  
CITY CHURCH  
WOLVERHAMPTON

## Hope City Church (Wolverhampton, UK)

### Children & Young People Safeguarding Policy

#### **Policy**

#### Why have a safeguarding policy?

Hope City Church is a family friendly church attracting people of all ages. Hope City Church has vibrant children's and youth work which has various volunteers who supervise, educate and train the children; all of whom will have one-to-one contact with the children/young people. The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults at Hope City Church is paramount and Hope City Church is committed to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

A child is defined as "a human being below the age of 18 years" (United Nations Convention Rights of a Child)

#### Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Child Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children and young people who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm. Everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people – and in particular protecting them from significant harm – depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

For these children and young people who are suffering, or are risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them. All agencies and professionals should:

- Be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;

- Be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- Share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- Take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- Work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety<sup>8</sup>  
(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, DfE)

### **Definitions of abuse and neglect:**

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by adults or another child or children.

#### **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, deliberately induced illness in a child.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may 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 overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (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.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involved 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.

## **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 treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, DfE)

## **New Staff and those working with children and young people**

All new staff and children's voluntary workers will be made aware of Hope City Church's Safeguarding Policy in their induction period. Those working with children and young people in 'Regulated Activities' will be required to have a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check made.

## **Training**

The Safeguarding Leads will undertake in house training on 'Safeguarding Awareness' which will specifically home in on Child Protection procedures. All children's and youth workers will be required to complete this training every two years. Staff training is not only crucial in protecting children and young people, but also makes staff aware of how they protect themselves against allegations.

## **Reviewing the Policy and Procedure**

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local policy or national policy.

## **What to do if you have concerns about a child or young person**

You may have concerns about a child or young person because of something you have seen or heard, or a child/young person may choose to disclose something to you. If a child/young person discloses information to you, you should:

- Not promise confidentiality. You may have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Services
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what is said
- Reassure the child/young person, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. *'Everything will be alright now'*, *'You'll never have to see that person again.'*
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child/young person refers to it. For example *'You're not to blame.'*
- Do not interrogate the child/young person; it is not your responsibility to interrogate.
- Do not ask leading questions (e.g. *Did he touch your private parts*), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- Do not ask the child/young person to repeat the information to another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase)
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of the concerns, discuss these and fill in a disclosure form (ask Safeguarding Lead to provide this) as soon as possible with your Designated Safeguarding Officer who is Lynne Phillips who will take advice from ThirtyOne:Eight (PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550 or 0845 120 4551). If the concern is regarding the Safeguarding Lead then contact Mike Needs

(Chairman at Hope City Church). If the concern is regarding the Chairman then please call ThirtyOne:Eight directly or report a concern about a child/young person to Children's Social care - ring 01902 555392 or the Out of Hours Team on 01902 552999.

Or complete a MARF (multi-agency referral form) online <https://marf.wolverhampton.gov.uk/>. A MARF must be completed within one hour of reporting concern via phone.

In case of an emergency always ring 999.

#### What information will you need when making a referral?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible, such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents.

You should not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 1 hour. This should be done on the Hope City Church disclosure form (Appendix 1)

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY.

Policy reviewed by: Lynne Phillips 18/10/2023

Signed on behalf of The Trustees: *MJ Needs*

Date: 20th October 2023