



BEACON CHURCH

Expanding God's Kingdom by loving and serving Jesus, each other and our community

Safeguarding Children, Young People, and Adults at the Beacon Church

This policy has been developed from the Model Safeguarding Policy
provided by Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS)
<<https://thecss.co.uk/>>

August 2026

This policy is due for review in August 2027

Table of Contents

Section A: Safeguarding Statement	3
Section B: Church Context	5
Section C: Definition of Terms Used in This Policy	8
Section D: Safeguarding Policy	10
Section E: Safeguarding Procedures	14
Section F: Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care	26
Appendix 1: Recognising Signs of Abuse	27
Appendix 2: Leadership Safeguarding Statement	37
Appendix 3: Guidance on Physical Contact	39
Appendix 4: Guidance on Transporting Children and Adults with Care and Support Needs	40
Appendix 5: Code of Conduct	41
Appendix 6: Practice Guidelines	43
Appendix 7: Safeguarding Responsibilities	48
Appendix 8: Taking, Storing, and Using Images	49
Appendix 9: Forms	51

Section A:

Safeguarding Statement

The Beacon Church Pastors, Elders, and Deacons (PED) are committed to creating a safe, healthy, nurturing, and inclusive environment for everyone involved in church life, particularly children, young people, adults at risk, and other vulnerable people. The church seeks to ensure that every individual feels safe, valued, respected, and cared for.

This commitment is grounded in the Christian belief that every person—including unborn children, people with disabilities, and older people—is made in the image of God and therefore possesses inherent dignity and worth. The church affirms the sanctity of life and recognises the fundamental rights and freedoms of all people. It supports the principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Human Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the rights of children to develop fully and to be protected from physical, emotional, sexual, and psychological abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence.

The church recognises that people live in a sinful and imperfect world and that anyone can be vulnerable to sin or capable of causing harm. Children, young people, and adults may experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect. The church therefore acknowledges the potential for individuals or groups within a church community to misuse power, exploit others, harass, abuse, or otherwise cause harm.

At the same time, the church's safeguarding approach is rooted in the Christian message of forgiveness, salvation, and new life through Jesus Christ. Church life is understood as a community in which God's love is demonstrated and people are encouraged to support, challenge, teach, correct, and care for one another. While recognising that Christians are imperfect and will sometimes need to seek or offer forgiveness, the church makes clear that forgiveness must not be used to excuse abuse or protect those who misuse power.

Safeguarding is therefore viewed as a shared responsibility, with particular concern for those who are weaker or more vulnerable. The church firmly opposes abuse, harassment, exploitation, misuse of authority, and all other forms of harm. To support this commitment, it has established policies, procedures, codes of conduct, training, and safeguarding systems designed to promote a positive culture and ensure that safeguarding leaders are competent and arrangements are effective.

The Beacon Church also encourages an open culture in which concerns can be raised without fear. Concerns about how people have been treated or about church practices should be taken seriously, examined carefully and impartially, and addressed with a commitment to discovering the truth and upholding justice. The church aims to learn from concerns and acknowledge areas where it has failed to meet its own standards. Concerns can be reported to the church's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) or Safeguarding Trustee, whose details are available on the church website and safeguarding noticeboards. The safeguarding policy and procedures are also publicly available.

The PED commit to following national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, as well as relevant international conventions. They will provide ongoing safeguarding training for workers, regularly review the Code of Conduct, and ensure that church premises comply with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation while remaining welcoming and inclusive. They will also support the DSLs in taking necessary action to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

Ultimately, Beacon Church aims to go beyond minimum legal requirements and pursue best practice in safeguarding. It understands protecting vulnerable people not merely as a legal obligation but as a biblical responsibility. Its safeguarding commitment seeks to combine legal compliance with Christian faithfulness, reflecting the biblical call to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

Section B: Church Context

Name of place of worship:

The Beacon Church

Address:

c/o Daniel Carson
2 Coraline Way
Bryn
Wigan
Greater Manchester
WN4 0ET

Telephone: 07592 944627

Email: contact-us@beacon-church.org.uk

Senior Pastor Name:

Antony Billington Tel: 07892 950946

Email: antony@beacon-church.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Emma Billington Tel: 07792 091896

Email: emma@beacon-church.org.uk

Julian Pollard Tel: 07880 891956

Email: pollard1404@gmail.com

Charity Number: 1150685

Insurance Company:

Ansvar Insurance
Ansvar House
St Leonard's Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 3UR

Policy Ref: CHF6068417

Theological Tradition

The Beacon Church is an independent evangelical church of about 120 people of all ages that is committed to the clear proclamation of the Christian gospel of salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. We aim to maintain a community in which Christians can grow in their faith and serve God to his glory, which is summed up in our mission statement of 'Expanding God's kingdom by loving and serving Jesus, each other, and our community'.

Our beliefs are specified fully in our Statement of Faith, which can be found on our website <<https://beacon-church.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Beacon-Church-Statement-of-Faith.pdf>>, and is available on request.

Clubs run for young people and adults with care and support needs are as follows:

Club/Activity	Time	Responsible Adult(s)
Kids Church @ Stubshaw Cross IM	Sunday 9.45 – 11.00am	Emma Billington Nikki Partridge
Beacon Beebies (Parent & Toddler Group) @ Stubshaw Cross IM	Monday 10.00 – 11.30am	Dawn Galloway Nikki Partridge
Beacon Teens (Year 9 to 13)	Tuesday 7.15 – 9.00pm Friday 7.15 – 9.00pm	Jonny & Jacqui Thomas Ste & Jennie Martin
Lighthouse Club (4–10yrs) @ Stubshaw Cross IM	Wednesday 5.30 – 6.45pm	James Lycett
Youth Club (10–14yrs) @ Stubshaw Cross IM	Wednesday 7.30 – 9.00pm	Phil Standish
Connect Young People with Additional Needs @ Stubshaw Cross IM	Saturday 6.00 – 8.00pm Once a month	Doreen Woods Emma Woods Sue Heyes Ruth Hart

There is a busy programme of special events that varies from year to year. These sometimes include Holiday Specials in the school holidays and various outreach events. Further details of all church activities can be found at <www.beacon-church.org.uk>.

Governance

Beacon Church's trustees have independent authority and legal responsibility for the organisation. They play a key role in decision-making, compliance, and establishing the church's values, standards, and expected behaviours. Together, these shape the organisation's culture—"the way we do things around here"—which can have either positive or negative effects.

Good governance is about more than simply meeting legal and regulatory requirements. As highlighted by IICSA, an effective charity should ensure that people's behaviour is proper, ethical, and consistent with the organisation's purposes and values. A healthy culture, supported by strong governance, is essential to achieving the church's mission.

The trustees have overall responsibility for safeguarding and understand their duty to refer relevant matters to the appropriate charity regulator. This includes reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission when required.

Beacon Church's Safeguarding Policy aims not only to provide a safe environment but also to develop an open and accountable safeguarding culture. This includes leaders setting a positive example, safe recruitment and appropriate training for workers and volunteers, clear accountability structures, a Code of Conduct, consistent application of organisational values, and open communication.

The church's charitable purpose includes advancing the Christian religion. It fulfils this through a wide range of activities, including Sunday worship and teaching, children's

groups, mid-week Bible studies and prayer meetings, one-to-one mentoring, prayer partnerships, accountability relationships, social activities, and outreach events.

Because these activities involve people of different ages and levels of vulnerability, effective governance and safeguarding are essential to ensuring that everyone can participate in church life safely, respectfully, and appropriately.

Section C:

Definitions of Terms Used in This Policy

Adult at risk of abuse: A person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs.

Adult with care and support needs: An adult aged 18 or over who requires additional help to manage their life and remain independent. This may include older people, people with disabilities or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers. Support may be practical, financial or emotional.

Adult Social Care: Services provided by Local Authorities to adults aged 18 or over who meet the relevant criteria for care, support, or protection from abuse or neglect.

Allegation: A claim that a staff member, volunteer, or anyone acting for the charity may have behaved in a way that could harm a child or adult at risk.

Child: Anyone under 18 years of age.

Children Social Care: Local Authority services for children under 18 who need protection from harm or support because of additional needs.

Concern: A situation where signs or indicators suggest that someone may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

Deacon(s): People appointed by the church to support the elders and serve the church in practical and legal matters.

Disclosure: When someone communicates that they have experienced, or are worried they may experience, abuse or neglect.

Domestic abuse: A single incident or pattern of abusive behaviour between people aged 16 or over who are, or have been, personally connected. Abuse may include physical or sexual abuse, violence or threats, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, and psychological or emotional abuse.

Early Help: Services that support children and families when problems first emerge, aiming to prevent needs or risks escalating and improve outcomes.

Elder(s): People appointed by the church to provide spiritual leadership and instruction and who hold spiritual authority within the church.

Investigating Officer: A person appointed by the elders to lead an investigation into a complaint or allegation that does not fall within the DSL's safeguarding remit.

LADO: The Local Authority Designated Officer, responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children. The LADO oversees and directs investigations to ensure they are thorough, timely and fair, rather than conducting them directly.

Low-level concern: A concern that an adult working or volunteering may have acted inconsistently with the Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside work, but which does not meet the harm threshold or require referral to the LADO.

LSAB: The Local Safeguarding Adults Board, or equivalent Local Safeguarding Adults Partnership, which leads local adult safeguarding arrangements and coordinates and oversees the effectiveness of safeguarding work by partner agencies.

LSCP: The Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership, or equivalent Safeguarding Children's Board, which coordinates how local services work together to safeguard and promote children's welfare. The Local Authority, Police and Health are safeguarding partners with shared and equal responsibility for these arrangements.

Officers: All those holding formal office within the church, including elders, deacons and trustees.

Position of trust: A role involving an adult caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of a child under 18. It is unlawful for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if the child is over the age of consent.

Regulated activity: Activity that a person who is barred must not undertake. In simple terms, this is activity that may require a DBS check.

Safeguarding arrangements: The overall approach to safeguarding, including the church's policies, procedures, processes, culture and day-to-day practice.

Single Central Record: The master record of pre-appointment checks and safeguarding processes completed before someone takes up a role.

Sub-threshold (or consent-based) safeguarding: Concerns that do not meet the criteria for mandatory referral to statutory authorities but may still be serious and require an appropriate response through the church's internal processes.

Trustee(s): Those legally responsible for the governance and oversight of the charity.

Universal safeguarding: Activities and measures required to keep everyone safe, including those without additional needs. This includes the connection between safeguarding and wider responsibilities such as Health and Safety and employer duties.

Section D: Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines our moral and legal responsibilities and sets out our commitments in light of those responsibilities. It aims to establish a framework and appropriate standards that apply to the whole church and to support the trustees in their responsibilities to safeguard everyone who engages with our church community, with a specific focus on those who have identifiable vulnerabilities.

Scope

The requirements of this policy apply to everyone who acts for the Beacon Church – whether volunteers, staff, officers, or anyone else acting on behalf of the church. It applies to all the official activities of the church.

Our Responsibilities and Commitments

1. General duty of care

We recognise that we have a general duty of care to everyone who is involved in the life of our church. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Ensuring that we identify and manage risk appropriately through our policies and procedures, our risk register, and our risk assessments.
- (b) Developing, monitoring, and maintaining a church culture that is healthy and nurturing across all areas of church life. This includes promoting the spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing of those who engage with us.

We recognise there is an overlap between pastoral care and safeguarding and therefore information will be shared where appropriate between the safeguarding team and those providing pastoral support. Where necessary, records will be retained as sub-threshold levels concerns, in line with safeguarding best practice.

2. Those who are vulnerable

Beacon Church recognises a biblical responsibility to protect and care for people who are weak or vulnerable, particularly children and adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect. For the purposes of the safeguarding policy, a child is anyone under 18 years of age.

For adults, the policy follows the Care Act 2014, which identifies safeguarding duties for people aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs
- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect,
- Is unable to protect themselves because of those needs.

These individuals are referred to as adults at risk of harm.

The church's understanding of abuse is also informed by international human rights standards. For children, it follows Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect, maltreatment, exploitation, and sexual abuse. It also highlights the importance of

prevention, identifying and reporting concerns, appropriate referral and investigation, treatment, follow-up, and support for children and their carers.

For adults, the church draws particularly on Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that no person should be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. The church's policy provides further information about different types of abuse, signs and indicators, and appropriate responses to disclosures.

We therefore commit to:

- (a) Establishing proportionate safeguarding arrangements.
- (b) Developing a culture that is protective and healthy.
- (c) Ensuring that our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our biblical values and that it is fully legally compliant and in line with safeguarding best practice.
- (d) Monitoring the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements.

We recognise that there are some adults who do not meet the criteria for adult with care and support needs but may still be vulnerable in other ways. These vulnerabilities would be classed as sub-threshold, therefore any support offered would be on the same basis. However, we aim to care well for all who come into contact with the church and, as we are able, we will support and signpost to other organisations who may be able to support the individual.

3. Dignity and respect

The Bible teaches us that all human beings (including unborn children, those who are disabled, and the elderly) are made in God's image and therefore have intrinsic value to him. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Treating everyone who engages with us as loved by God and precious in his sight.
- (b) Treating everyone as equal in God's sight, showing neither fear nor favour.

4. Sin and the fall

We recognise that, while the good news of forgiveness of sin and eternal life with God are at the heart of the gospel message, in this life, even Christians continue to sin, and we all have to live in the context of this fallen and broken world. We therefore recognise the need to be vigilant and to oppose all forms of abuse, exploitation, or other injustice in our midst. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Establishing clear expectations and standards for all who act on our behalf.
- (b) Establishing clear processes for handling abuse that is discovered or disclosed – whether that abuse has occurred in the church or elsewhere.
- (c) Ensuring that we have clear processes for handling complaints, allegations, grievances, whistleblowing, or any other expression of dissatisfaction.
- (d) Promoting across the whole church community the importance of caring well for everyone who engages with us through our various activities.

All adults who work with children, young people, and vulnerable adults are regarded as being in a position of trust. This carries power and authority, which must never be misused. Workers are expected to recognise their responsibilities, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, and avoid behaviour that could be inappropriate or open to misinterpretation.

The policy also highlights an important legal protection concerning young people. Since April 2022, it has been illegal in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland for someone in a position of trust within a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16- or 17-year-old who is under their care or supervision.

Overall, Beacon Church seeks to create a culture where power is exercised responsibly, boundaries are respected, concerns are addressed, and everyone is treated with dignity and care.

5. Governance and leadership

Beacon Church is committed to authentic, integrity-driven and effective servant leadership, grounded in biblical values and informed by charity law and Charity Commission guidance. The church will:

- (a) Model biblically grounded servant-hearted leadership.
- (b) Appoint a Safeguarding Trustee to champion safeguarding, while trustees retain ultimate legal responsibility.
- (c) Appoint competent Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and at least one deputy.
- (d) Demonstrate a visible commitment to safeguarding throughout church life.
- (e) Provide support, oversight, accountability and appropriate challenge for all workers and leaders.
- (f) Regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
- (g) Promote ongoing reflection, learning and improvement.
- (h) Clearly define safeguarding roles and responsibilities, ensuring those carrying them receive appropriate support, accountability and oversight.

Overall, Beacon Church seeks to ensure safeguarding is embedded within its leadership, culture, structures and everyday practice.

6. Safeguarding arrangements

We recognise that we have a responsibility to the state to ensure that we have compliant and effective safeguarding arrangements in place. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Appointing suitably trained, competent and experienced safeguarding leads and at least one deputy and ensuring that we will support them in their role.
- (b) Maintaining a compliant safeguarding policy, procedures, and systems to ensure that we fully meet legal and best practice standards and ensure that they are regularly reviewed (at least annually).
- (c) Ensuring that relevant safeguarding information, including our safeguarding policy documents and contact details for our safeguarding leads is publicly available.
- (d) Ensuring that a healthy culture is supported by processes for listening to expressions of dissatisfaction (complaints, allegations, whistleblowing, grievances, etc.) and that such expressions are encouraged, taken seriously, and responded to positively.
- (e) Ensuring that we keep records of safeguarding concerns in line with safeguarding expectations and that we share information appropriately with relevant statutory bodies as required.

7. Suitability and competence of staff and volunteers

We recognise that we have a responsibility to ensure that those who act on our behalf are competent in and suitable for the roles that they take. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Implementing proportionate Safer Recruitment processes.

- (b) Ensuring that our leaders are competent, fulfilling their responsibilities and leading the church with humility, clarity, and biblical faithfulness.
- (c) Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are supported and that we provide appropriate guidance, oversight, and accountability.
- (d) Providing appropriate training and skills development as required.
- (e) Ensuring that as a church we are alert to the risks within society, including risks associated with grooming, online abuse, radicalisation, gender-based violence, exploitation, domestic abuse, etc.
- (f) Reporting safeguarding concerns that meet relevant thresholds appropriately and in a timely manner as required.

8. Healthy culture

We recognise that we have a responsibility to encourage a healthy environment that is transparent, accountable, and biblically faithful. We therefore commit to:

- (a) Developing a ministry environment that reflects biblical principles; encouraging growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency, and sensitivity, in accordance with our fundamental beliefs as laid out in our statement of faith, charitable aims, and governing documents.
- (b) Valuing, respecting, and listening to the wishes and views of every member of our community, including children and young people, and others who are vulnerable or find it difficult to make their voice heard.
- (c) Developing a culture that challenges any form of bullying, harassment, abuse, exploitation, or any other harmful contact – both in the online and the physical environments.
- (d) Ensuring that we set clear standards and expectations of those who participate in our church community, and that we have clear processes to challenge and address failure to live up to the standards that we have set for ourselves.

The Beacon Church PED are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a Code of Conduct towards children, young people, and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and outside of their role. They will also receive further training as necessary. The Code of Conduct can be found in Appendix 5.

9. Partnership working

We will ensure that we work appropriately with our safeguarding partners in both the statutory and other services, sharing information in accordance with legal requirements, and involving parents, children, young people, and adults with support needs or in need of protection in the decisions that affect them as far as they are able.

10. Supporting those who have experienced abuse or other trauma

When working with those who have experienced abuse or trauma, or those who are experiencing poor mental health, etc., we will seek to do so with sensitivity and keeping them at the centre of the work we do. We will seek to give them a voice and allow them to progress at their own pace while recognising the limits of our own competence and signposting to specialist support where required.

Section E:

Safeguarding Procedures

1. Governance and oversight

The trustees will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

- (a) Ensuring that a Safeguarding Trustee is appointed from among the trustees to provide strategic leadership, guidance and oversight on safeguarding, including compliance.
- (b) Ensuring that church leadership promotes safeguarding and develops a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent and accountable, with safeguarding appropriately prioritised and its profile maintained.
- (c) Ensuring that suitably knowledgeable, trained and skilled Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and a Deputy DSL (DDSL) are appointed, supported and adequately resourced.
- (d) Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is implemented and reviewed by the trustees at least annually, with input and support from the DSLs and DDSL.
- (e) Ensuring that clearly defined safeguarding procedures and systems are in place and are understood and followed by staff, volunteers and anyone else acting on behalf of the church.
- (f) Ensuring that the DSLs provide safeguarding updates at all trustee meetings through the Safeguarding Trustee, and that the Safeguarding Trustee, DSLs and DDSL provide a written annual report to the trustees.
- (g) Ensuring that the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements is monitored continuously and reviewed annually alongside the safeguarding policy and procedures.
- (h) Ensuring that safeguarding roles and responsibilities are clearly defined (see Appendix 7), with appropriate accountability and support.
- (i) Ensuring that a clear safeguarding statement is included in the annual Charity Commission submission.
- (j) Ensuring that any 'Serious Incidents' (as defined in the Charity Commission Guidance – How to report a serious incident in your charity – GOV.UK) are reported accurately and in a timely manner.

2. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

The recruitment/appointment and support of staff and volunteers is of critical importance to the Beacon Church and to our work and ministry. To fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by Scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

3. Management of recruitment processes

- (a) At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of staff or appointment of volunteers will be trained in Safe Recruitment.
- (b) Staff and volunteers will be provided with written job/role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position/role.
- (c) Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- (d) Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions.
- (e) A 'Single Central Record' of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained by the DSLs and/or their deputy.

4. Recruitment process

Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form, which includes a self-declaration of fitness and suitability for the role. Where necessary and appropriate, support will be provided to completion of the form.

Paid staff positions

The appointment of staff is the responsibility of the trustees, who may delegate the lead responsibility for any given appointment to one of more of their number, or to other competent people.

- (a) Prior to appointment, all paid staff will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation.
- (b) Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought including a reference from the current or previous employer.
- (c) Prior to appointment, the applicant's identity and right to work in the UK must be verified.
- (d) Upon commencement of their position, all staff will be required to complete a formal induction process as outlined in their role description, including any areas for development identified during the recruitment process.
- (e) The Single Central Record, training Log, and Personnel file will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

Volunteer positions

The appointment of volunteers for teaching/ministry/practical roles is the responsibility of the elders, who may delegate the lead responsibility for any given appointment to one of more of their number or to other competent people.

- (a) Prior to appointment, all volunteers will be required to attend a discussion to ensure their suitability and clarity of understanding of the role and its requirements.
- (b) Prior to appointment, references will be sought.
- (c) Following appointment, volunteers will be required to complete a formal induction process as defined in the role description.
- (d) The Single Central Record, training Log, and Personal File will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

5. DBS Checks

- (a) Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, staff, and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check.
- (b) Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the result of the DBS check has been received.
- (c) Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to commence prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a formal risk assessment will be completed by the DSLs or their deputy and signed off by the Safeguarding Trustee. The person will not be permitted to have unsupervised access to children and must be supervised by someone who is DBS checked. In this context, they will be treated as a 'visitor' until the DBS check is received (see Section 11 below).
- (d) A formal agreement that outlines the duties that are permitted, and all measures implemented to prevent the individual having unsupervised access to vulnerable people will be drawn up and signed by the appointee and the DSLs or the Safeguarding Trustee. A copy of the agreement will be provided to the individual's team leader who is providing supervision.
- (e) Once formal notification of a clear DBS check has been received, the Single Central Record will be updated with the relevant information.

- (f) The staff member/volunteer will be encouraged to join the DBS Update Service.
- (g) The Beacon Church will keep a record of the documents used to validate each identity for a minimum of two years on the Single Central Record. This is to aid fraud investigation work carried out by DBS.

6. Blemished DBS Checks

- (a) The applicant will be asked to present the DBS certificate to the Lead Recruiter (DSL).
- (b) The applicant may, if they wish to, withdraw their application.
- (c) If the application is withdrawn, consideration will be given to whether this requires the triggering of the procedure for the 'Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people'.
- (d) If the applicant self-declared the blemish and it has been discussed previously, the Recruiter will check to ensure that the detail provided in the self-disclosure is consistent with the information on the DBS certificate.
- (e) If the applicant did not self-disclose, an open conversation will explore the circumstances of the blemish, any implications or risks that need to be managed, the reason for the non-disclosure, and any other relevant factors that need to be considered. The failure to disclose does not automatically either justify or contradict a negative inference. Negative inferences can be drawn if justifiable. Any such negative inference will be discussed as part of the open conversation.
- (f) Whether the discussion arises from self-disclosure or examination of the certificate, a formal assessment will be conducted to ascertain the applicant's suitability for the role by the DSLs and/or the Safeguarding Trustee, and the outcome will be recorded in the personal file.
- (g) Advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS) if required.
- (h) The applicant will be given every opportunity to provide input to the assessment and the outcome will be explained to them.
- (i) A blemished DBS check does not necessarily prevent the individual from engaging in regulated activity. The risk assessment may conclude:
 - i. That the individual is unsuitable for the role.
 - ii. That further investigation is required.
 - iii. That the person is suitable for the role with restrictions.
 - iv. That the blemish does not indicate unsuitability.
- (j) If the risk assessment concludes that the individual is unsuitable for the role, consideration will be given to:
 - i. Whether there are other roles for which the individual would be suitable.
 - ii. Whether the 'Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people' (see Section 18 below) process needs to be triggered.
- (k) Once the details of the certificate have been recorded in the Single Central Record, the certificate will be returned to the applicant, and no copies will be retained.

7. Probationary/settling in periods

The precise nature and expectations of probationary/settling in periods will vary from role to role as described in the role description. However, they are intended to be supportive of the volunteer/employee and to provide a framework that provides accountability to both the individual and the organisation. Probationary periods will not be used for punitive purposes.

- (a) All staff and volunteers will be subject to a probationary/settling in period.
- (b) Prior to commencement of the role, a clear statement of the criteria for successful completion of the probationary period will be provided.

- (c) Regular support, guidance and review will be provided throughout the probationary period and the outcome (passed, extended, failed) will be communicated to the employee or volunteer prior to the end of the probationary period. Records will be retained of all discussions.

8. Ongoing support and supervision

- (a) All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management.
- (b) Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years.
- (c) If the individual is on the Update Service, this will be used rather than requesting a new DBS.

9. Training

- (a) All staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular refresher safeguarding training.
- (b) Trustees will receive initial training. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their understanding of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance is up to date.
- (c) Church leaders will refresh their Level 2 training every three years.
- (d) Volunteers and staff involved in working with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their Level 2 training at least every three years.
- (e) The DSLs and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years.
- (f) All staff, volunteers and trustees will undergo Safeguarding Refresher Training annually.
- (g) Training should include themes on domestic abuse and trauma and their impact on victims including children and Prevent awareness.
- (h) A training log will be maintained by the DSLs/Deputy DSL.

10. Young leaders

There may be occasions when a teenager (17 years and under) wants to volunteer at the church. Where this occurs, because they are legally defined as children, we have a responsibility to safeguard them. Therefore, we will implement the following procedures to safeguard any young leaders:

- (a) All young leaders will go through the recruitment process and undertake training and induction. As part of this we will provide them with a young volunteer role description and person specification.
- (b) If the role involves regulated activity, volunteers aged 16 and 17 years old will be required to have a DBS check. If a volunteer is under 16 years old, a DBS check cannot be conducted. In these situations, a risk assessment will be completed in lieu of a DBS check.
- (c) For all young volunteers, a risk assessment will be conducted to identify any potential safeguarding issues that might occur with the tasks that young people are asked to undertake. These include:
 - i. the potential risks for exploitation of the young volunteers.
 - ii. the possible emotional impact of tasks.
- (d) We will provide a young volunteer with a Code of Conduct to reflect their role and their age.
- (e) We will allocate an experienced adult leader to be their point of contact for support and supervision during the activity they are volunteering for.

- (f) We will never leave a young leader solely in charge of under 18s.
- (g) We will ensure all young volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities, know what it is we expect from them, and what steps they should take if a safeguarding matter arises.
- (h) We will make it clear to young volunteers that by volunteering with under 18s they are in a position of leadership and trust, and the implications of this both in when they are volunteering at church and outside of church.
- (i) We require signed consent from the young volunteer's parents/carers for the young person to volunteer. Their parents will be provided with a role description so they understand what will be asked of their child.
- (j) Young volunteers will not be placed in roles where they would be leading their peers (for example, a 17-year-old leader wouldn't be leading a group of 16-year-olds). We would endeavour to have a minimum of a four-year age gap between any young leader and those they are leading.

11. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

The Beacon Church fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.

Health and Safety

The officers aim to ensure that the health and safety of everyone who encounters our church community is protected by:

- (a) Regularly reviewing our health and safety policy to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance.
- (b) Maintaining, communicating and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments for both the premises and the activities of the church.
- (c) Maintenance and analysis of Accident and Incident Reports on receipt to ensure appropriate lessons are learned and timely responses are implemented. We will also review, at least annually, all reports within the year to identify trends and recurring themes.
- (d) Ensuring that adequate First Aid cover is available, and that only qualified First Aiders administer First Aid, except in emergency situations when instructed to do so by Emergency Services.
- (e) Ensuring that appropriate safety equipment such as First Aid kits, Fire Extinguishers, etc. are available and maintained on an ongoing basis.
- (f) Ensuring that key Health and Safety information will be prominent, and best practice will be promoted through announcements, effective signage, etc.
- (g) Encouraging a culture where all members are alert to dangers and risks, and the importance of reporting them to the church officers so that they can be addressed.

Awareness raising

The Beacon Church recognises that any member of our church community could discover or receive a disclosure of abuse, and therefore all members need a basic awareness and competence, regardless of whether they engage directly in ministry to children, young people, or vulnerable adults. We will raise awareness by ensuring that:

- (a) Information about our policies, procedures and codes of conduct are publicly available and promoted by our leaders.
- (b) Details of our safeguarding team are prominently displayed.
- (c) We set clear expectations of conduct and that clear processes for identifying, challenging, investigating, and dealing with inappropriate conduct.

- (d) We implement and promote clear and transparent processes for the raising of concerns or complaints, supported by a culture that encourages and welcomes these as opportunities to learn and improve.

Ministry to children and/or young people

When engaging in ministry to children and/or young people that involves those acting for the church to assume responsibility for minors we will:

- (a) Ensure that registers of children attending, and leaders present are maintained and retained in line with our data retention policy.
- (b) Ensure that those involved in such ministries have been appointed in accordance with our Safe Recruitment procedures.
- (c) Ensure that consent is obtained for their attendance at the group and that contact details and information about any additional or specific needs are recorded.
- (d) Ensure that appropriate child: adult ratios are maintained in line with guidance from the NSPCC and as indicated within any activity risk assessment. A minimum of 2 adults must be present in any group. The minimum ratios are:
 - 0 – 2 years – one adult to three children
 - 2 – 3 years – one adult to four children
 - 4 – 8 years – one adult to six children
 - 9 – 12 years – one adult to eight children
 - 13 – 18 years – one adult to ten children
- (e) In situations where an adult is present with a specific role to support a particular child, the additional 'carer' can be counted as one of the minimum of 2 workers, if they will be present throughout the group. However, since their role is to support one child, they will not count towards the ratios listed above. (For example, if a group consisted of 10-year-olds and there were 11 children present, if one volunteer is allocated to provide specific 1:1 support for a child, they cannot be counted as a second adult because they are focusing on the one child, and the number of children present requires 2 adults. Whereas if there were 9 children present the 1:1 worker would be supervising the 9th child and therefore the ratio of 1:8 would be met).
- (f) Ensure that appropriate accident/incident reporting is in place and that any accidents or incidents are reported in line with the church's Health and Safety Procedures. All accidents and incidents must also be reported to parents/carers in a timely manner.
- (g) Ensure that appropriate order and discipline are maintained.
- (h) Ensure that children are encouraged and empowered to raise any concerns that they may have with leaders or their parents as appropriate.

Visitors to children's or youth groups

From time to time, adults who are not part of the Beacon Church's children or youth ministry teams may be present. For example, a parent may wish to stay with a child for a specific purpose, or a visiting speaker may attend the group.

- (a) Visitors must be supervised at all times by someone who has a DBS check in place.
- (b) Visitors must be made aware of expected standards of conduct during the time they are visiting the group.
- (c) Visitors must be made aware of what they need to do if they become aware of a concern.
- (d) If visitors attend a group on behalf of another organisation (e.g. a worker from a youth organisation or someone who serves as a youth leader in another church, etc.) the 'employing organisation' will be asked whether the visitor has a current DBS check, whether their safeguarding training is up to date and whether there are any

safeguarding concerns or allegations against the individual. If written confirmation is provided and the visitor identity is confirmed, the visitor will be classed as a DBS-checked worker rather than as a visitor.

- (e) If a visitor notifies the church that they have a current DBS check which is registered with the update service, following a check of the original certificate and the update service, the individual will be classed as a DBS checked worker rather than as a visitor.

All-age group meetings

When children or young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and childcare is not provided and their parents are present.

- (a) During these times, children remain the responsibility of their parents who are responsible for their safety and care.
- (b) Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSLs in the usual way.

When young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and participating in that meeting in their own right (and their parents are not present):

- (a) Although there are not specific procedures for such meetings, the normal principles of safeguarding will apply.
- (b) If the young person is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their parents/carers.
- (c) If the young person is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their parents/carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact the parents and establish open communication and transparency.
- (d) Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the young person is adequately protected.
- (e) Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSLs in the usual way.

Ministry to Adults at Risk of Abuse or Adults with care and support needs

- (a) If the individual is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their carer.
- (b) If the individual is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their carer, and consent will be sought for the church to contact the carer with a view to establishing open communication and transparency.
- (c) Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the individual is adequately protected.
- (d) Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

General provisions

- (a) The church will ensure that information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed in the building and online.
- (b) Leaders will promote the need for every member to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, teaching, and culture of the church and by personal example.
- (c) A clear process for raising concerns will be available on the church website.

12. Responding to safeguarding concerns or disclosures

Managing immediate risk

- (a) Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual.
- (b) The worker should seek advice from the team leader or from the DSLs. However, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.
- (c) In such urgent situations and if the DSLs cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the relevant emergency service on 999 or Social Care (see contact details below) to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSLs should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads

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

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Julian Pollard/Emma Billington (the DSLs).

Contact numbers:

Julian – 07880 891956

Emma – 07922 091896

Julian and Emma are nominated by the Beacon Church PED 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.

In the absence of the DSLs, or if the suspicions in any way involve the DSLs, then the report should be made to James Lycett (the Deputy DSL) – 07541 963612.

If the suspicions implicate both the DSLs and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Glyn Tither (Safeguarding Trustee) – 07733 364676

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the Cause for Concern form and share this with the DSLs/DSL Deputy or Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible. (Please see a copy of the Cause for Concern form in Appendix 9.)

The DSLs may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, e.g. Chair of Trustees or Safeguarding Trustee who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the Charity Commission for England.

Managing the risks: the role of the DSLs

- (a) The DSLs will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required.
- (b) Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSLs will establish an electronic password-protected 'Confidential File' in relation to the person at risk, or if there is an existing confidential file, it will be updated.
- (c) An electronic Chronology will be established and kept in the afore-mentioned the confidential file.
- (d) The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis.

- (e) The DSLs will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned, sharing any information on a 'need to know' basis.
- (f) Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSLs will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care. Advice can be sought from CSS or from the relevant social care service if the DSLs are unsure if the statutory threshold has been met. Information will not be shared with the parent/carers in situations where:

- To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or abuse.
- To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse.

Where the concern is about a child, the DSLs should contact Children's Social Services in the area the child or adult lives. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, the DSLs should contact Adult Social Services or take advice from CSS.

The local Wigan Children's Social Services office telephone number (a 24-hour service) is 01942 828300.

The local Wigan Adult Social Services office telephone number (a 24-hour service) is 01942 828777.

The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 0161 872 5050.

The DSLs should also inform the designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

- (g) If the referral has not been acknowledged within 2 working days, the DSLs will follow up with Social Care (or other agencies as required).
- (h) The DSLs will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.
- (i) All conversations, correspondence, and documentation, etc. will be placed into the confidential file and the 'Record of action' and a Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- (j) Confidential files will be stored in a secure folder, only accessible to the DSLs, the Deputy DSL and the Safeguarding Trustee on a password protected cloud-based drive.
- (k) The DSLs/Deputy DSL/Safeguarding Trustee will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding.
- (l) The Beacon Church PED will support the DSLs/Deputy 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. Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child

Allegations of physical injury, neglect, or emotional abuse

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

- (a) Contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns, if the child requires immediate medical attention.
- (b) Contact Children's Social Services (CSS) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety, or if a child is afraid to return home.
- (c) Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted CSS.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DSLs/Deputy will:

- (a) Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct.
- (b) Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parent(s) of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact CSS.
- (c) Seek and follow the advice given by CSS if, for any reason, they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. CSS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

14. Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm include: physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

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

- (a) If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- (b) Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, CSS can be contacted for advice.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the DSLs/Deputy will:

- (a) Identify support services for the victim, i.e. counselling or other pastoral support.
- (b) Contact CSS and, in discussion with them, will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

15. Sub-threshold concerns and Early Help

- (a) Where concerns are sub-threshold and do not meet the requirements for a statutory referral, the DSLs will keep a written record of the concerns.
- (b) Staff and volunteers who work with under 18s will be alert to identifying those children who would benefit from the local Early Help process. We will work with our local safeguarding partners to put in place support to address identified or emerging problems and needs and improve a family's resilience and outcomes or reduces the risk of escalation.
- (c) If a child has a Team Around the Family in place through the Early Help process, if invited by the Lead Professional to do so, the DSLs will join the Team Around the Family.

16. Disclosure of historic child abuse by an adult

- (a) If an adult makes a disclosure of historic abuse during their childhood, it is the decision of the individual whether or not they wish to report the historic abuse.
- (b) If they choose to report the abuse, they must make their report to the Police. We will offer support to the individual in doing this.
- (c) If the adult does not want to report the abuse but the alleged perpetrator is currently in a position of trust, consideration of the potential risks will be assessed, and appropriate action will be taken. The DSL can take advice from Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS) or statutory services in this situation.

17. Allegations against or concerns about staff and volunteers

The Beacon church will always take allegations against our staff or volunteers seriously, ensuring that they are investigated proportionately via a transparent and accountable

process that expedites the matter in a timely manner, recognising both our responsibility to keep vulnerable people safe as well as our responsibility to support the person accused throughout the process.

- (a) If an allegation is raised during a church activity, for example a youth group meeting, if appropriate, the team leader should take any immediate action to ensure the safety of others.
- (b) Allegations against staff or volunteers within the church should be reported to the DSLs or the Safeguarding Trustee.
- (c) If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Trustee, it should be reported to one of the other elders or the DSLs.
- (d) Full details of the allegation will be recorded.
- (e) The trustees will nominate an investigating officer who will assess whether any additional immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- (f) Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable.
- (g) If so, care will be taken not to compromise the gathering or preservation of evidence.
- (h) If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation will not be divulged.
- (i) Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims.
- (j) At the earliest opportunity, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer - see Safeguarding Notice Board) should be consulted. If the LADO cannot be contacted due to working hours, initial advice can be sought from CSS. However, CSS can be contacted at any point for advice.
- (k) If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the church's investigating officer will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed.
- (l) If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the investigating officer will consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency.
- (m) Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
- (n) These records will be held confidentially in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.
- (o) The investigating officer will seek and follow specialist advice throughout the process as required.
- (p) Where the concern is of a low-level nature, our Low-Level Concerns process will be followed (Appendix 4).

18. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others, particularly to vulnerable people

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected, particularly those who are vulnerable.

- (a) Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the Beacon Church leaders will enter into an open and frank conversation with that individual to understand the context and the risks.
- (b) If the individual has an allocated offending officer, e.g. probation/police etc., the Beacon Church leaders will seek to work in partnership with those statutory services supporting the individual where this is appropriate.

- (c) The Beacon Church leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated.
- (d) A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the church leaders and the individual concerned. The agreement will include:
 - i. The church's commitments to the individual who poses the risk.
 - ii. The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community.
 - iii. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the church.
 - iv. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement.
 - v. When and how the risk assessment and formal agreement will be reviewed.
- (e) All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.
- (f) The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the leaders either:
 - i. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk.
 - ii. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people, and then only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared.
- (g) If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice either from CSS or from statutory agencies as to whether this information should be passed on.
- (h) All records of risk assessments and formal agreements will be stored in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.

19. Complaints and concerns

- (a) The Beacon Church recognises the importance of listening to all members of our church community, including those who find it hard to make their voices heard and those who hold contrary views to the church leadership. The trustees will proactively seek the views of all who engage with the church in a variety of ways. However, we also recognise the importance of responding well when concerns, criticisms or complaints are raised with us.
- (b) Any complaints that have a safeguarding element or implication will be discussed with the DSLs and the Safeguarding Trustee who will ensure that the safeguarding aspects are identified and managed in a proportionate way.

Section F:
Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The elders are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and supporting all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship. Please see below the details for the individual responsible for wellbeing support/pastoral care:

Name: Antony Billington
Tel: 07892 950946
Email: antony@beacon-church.org.uk

Working with those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the place of worship is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs, the elders will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in their 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.

Adoption of the Policy

This policy was agreed by the elders of the Beacon Church and will be reviewed annually.

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Appendix 1:

Recognising Signs of Abuse

(a) Definitions of abuse: children

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the Convention within its legislation and guidance.

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)'.

What is 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, e.g. via the internet. An adult or adults, or another child or children may abuse them.

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 causes, illness in a child.

Injuries caused by accidents such as trips and falls are not uncommon, especially in children, but these usually occur on prominent areas such as knees, shins, and elbows.

Abusive injuries tend to involve softer areas that are harder to damage accidentally, e.g. upper arms, forearms, chest, back, abdomen, and thighs.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse (or psychological abuse) involves harming a person emotionally and includes any persistent emotional ill-treatment that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on a person'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 online 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Children also need protecting from radicalisation and being exposed to extremist views. Churches should be alert to anyone who discloses that they have been exposed to extremist actions, views or material, including online. Where there is concern that someone may be vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation, advice should be sought from

the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Where there is concern about a child, young person, or adult, advice should be sought from the Police Prevent Team.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is coercion and control of a person by another in a spiritual context. It could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. This may include: manipulation and exploitation, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of Scripture to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, and isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his or her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences if disobeyed.

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, and whether or not it is claimed they have consented or agreed. 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 the 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, using sexual language toward a child, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Financial or material abuse

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to other areas. It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse.

Neglect

Neglect (or acts of omission) is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or emotional needs, which is likely to have a serious negative impact on the child's health or development. It happens when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide an appropriate level of care and support which is needed by another person. Neglect may happen because of a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action, whether deliberate or not.

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, or assistance with personal hygiene;
- provide adequate shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) and heating;
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- ensure access to prescribed medication and appropriate medical care or treatment;
- ensure access to educational services;

- meet a child's basic emotional needs;
- take action when a child is taking unnecessary risks (especially when the child lacks capacity to properly assess risk).

Neglect is the most common form of child abuse in the UK.

(b) Definitions of abuse: adults

The following information relates to the Safeguarding of Adults as defined in the Care Act 2014, Chapter 14, Safeguarding.

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);
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect;
- 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 wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives, and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professional and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act.

The Care Act 2014: <<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>>

Care and Support Statutory Guidance under the Care Act 2014: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>>

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect, and the different circumstances in which they may take place. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour that could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse

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

Domestic abuse

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, or financial abuse for those in family or close relationships, and so-called 'honour' based violence.

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.

Psychological or emotional abuse

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

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is coercion and control of a person by another in a spiritual context. It could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. This may include: manipulation and exploitation, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of Scripture to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, and isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his or her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences if disobeyed. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or God's) acceptance and approval.

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.

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.

Discriminatory abuse

This includes any form of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment pertaining to race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

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 ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes, and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts 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.

Self-neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more.

(c) Signs and indicators of abuse: children

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place, but should be considered in the context of the child's whole life.

Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation.*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.*

Sexual

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse.
- Physical injuries and bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks, upper arms, and neck.
- Bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area or when walking or sitting.
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play, or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia.*

Financial or material abuse

- Travelling alone, particularly in school hours, late at night or frequently.
- Looking lost or in unfamiliar surroundings.
- Anxious, frightened, angry or displaying other behaviours that make you worried about them.
- In possession of more than one phone.
- Carrying lots of cash.
- Potentially under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Being instructed or controlled by another individual.
- Accompanied by individuals who are older than them.
- Seen begging in a public space.

Emotional

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.

- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

Spiritual

- Scripture is misused to coerce behaviour.
- Children may feel unable to ask questions, disagree, raise issues, or make their own choices.
- Children may be isolated from others due to perceived non-conformity or disobedience.
- Children may be excluded or isolated in an overly punitive way for non-compliance.
- Children may experience public shaming and humiliation because of a perceived lack of obedience or conformity.
- Children may be controlled through threats of spiritual consequences for non-compliance with personal directives.
- Inappropriate mentoring relationships.

Neglect

- Poor appearance or hygiene, e.g. being smelly or dirty.
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing.
- Signs of malnutrition or not being given enough food, e.g. failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food.
- Having frequent and untreated medical issues.
- Body issues, such as sores, skin complaints, poor muscle tone or prominent joints.
- Poor language or social skills.
- Being left alone for a long time.
- Being withdrawn, depressed, or anxious.
- Tiredness or finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities.
- Self-soothing behaviours, drug or alcohol misuse, and self-harm.

* These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 cases are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

(d) Signs and indicators of abuse: adults

Physical abuse

- History of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries.
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems left unattended.
- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Bruising and discolouration – particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Recurring injuries without plausible explanation.
- Loss of hair, loss of weight, and change of appetite.
- Person flinches at physical contact and/or keeps fully covered, even in hot weather.
- Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or people.

Domestic abuse

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.

- Signs of distress, tearfulness, or anger.
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person.
- Physical injuries or bruising.
- Injuries that don't match the explanation given.
- Unexplained falls.
- Subdued or changed behaviour.
- Changes in weight, being excessively under or overweight or malnourished.
- Signs of coercive control.
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it's not.
- Isolation – not seeing friends or family.
- Limited access to money.
- So-called 'honour' based violence and Female Genital Mutilation.
- These definitions include 16 and 17 year olds, as those in the 16–19 year old age-group are statistically most likely to suffer domestic abuse from a partner.

Sexual abuse

- Pregnancy in a woman who lacks mental capacity or is unable to consent to sexual intercourse.
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Torn, stained, or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Full or partial disclosures or hints of sexual abuse: self-harming, emotional distress, mood changes, disturbed sleep patterns.
- Psychological abuse.
- Alteration in psychological state, e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful.
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a carer.
- Fearful, flinching, or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes.
- Unexplained paranoia.
- Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour, excessive fear or anxiety.
- Changes in sleep pattern or persistent tiredness.
- Loss of appetite.
- Helplessness or passivity.
- Confusion or disorientation.
- Implausible stories and attention-seeking behaviour.
- Low self-esteem.

Psychological or emotional

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Signs of distress, tearfulness or anger.
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person.

Spiritual

- Scripture is misused to coerce behaviour.
- Individuals may feel unable to ask questions, disagree, raise issues, or make their own choices.
- Individuals may be isolated from others due to perceived non-conformity or disobedience.
- Individuals may be required to be accountable to another without consent, and without choice and control over boundary setting in the relationship.
- Individuals may be excluded or isolated as a punishment for non-compliance.

- Individuals may experience public shaming and humiliation because of a perceived lack of obedience or conformity.
- Individuals may be controlled through threats of spiritual consequences for non-compliance with personal directives.
- Inappropriate mentoring relationships.

Financial abuse

- Unusual financial activity, such as making an unexpected change to a will, a sudden sale or transfer of a property, or unusual activity in a bank account.
- Sudden inclusion of additional names on a bank account or where a signature does not resemble the person's normal signature.
- Reluctance or anxiety by a person when discussing their finances.
- A substantial gift to a carer or other third party.
- A sudden interest by a relative or other third party in the welfare of the person.
- Bills remaining unpaid.
- Complaints that personal property is missing.
- Signs of coercive control or neglect.
- Inappropriate granting and/or use of Power of Attorney.

Modern slavery

- Signs of physical abuse or emotional abuse.
- Signs of neglect.
- Isolation from the community.
- Seeming under the control or influence of others, e.g. movement monitored, rarely alone, travel early or late at night to facilitate working hours.
- Lack of personal possessions or identification documents.
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened, or hesitant to talk to strangers.
- Fear of seeking help or trusting people, including law enforcers.

Discriminatory abuse

- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- The person appears withdrawn and isolated.
- Signs of distress, tearfulness, anger, or anxiety.
- The support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic, e.g. disability, race, etc.

Organisational abuse

- Signs of neglect.
- Inadequate staffing levels.
- Poor standards of care.
- Lack of adequate procedures.
- Absence of visitors.
- Few social, educational, or recreational activities.
- Unnecessary exposure during bathing or using the toilet.
- Lack of management overview and support.
- Signs of physical or emotional abuse.

Neglect and acts of omission

- Deteriorating despite apparent care.
- Poor home conditions, clothing, or care and support.

- Lack of medication or medical intervention.

Self-neglect

- Hoarding inside or outside a property.
- Neglecting personal hygiene or medical needs.
- Person looking unkempt or dirty, and has poor personal hygiene.
- Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss, and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food.
- Person is dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions.
- Dirt, urine, or faecal smells in a person's environment.
- Home environment does not meet basic needs, e.g. no heating or lighting.
- Depression.
- Collecting a large number of animals in inappropriate conditions.

(e) Low-level concerns

As part of our whole church approach to safeguarding, we will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working or volunteering with under 18s or adults at risk are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working or volunteering may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of church, and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion, complaint, or disclosure made by a child, parent, or a volunteer.

Examples of such low-level behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to church policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door or via any form of technology;
- humiliating children/adults.

We recognise that such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working/volunteering at the Beacon Church from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Anyone is free to share a low-level concern with the DSLs.

All low-level concerns will be recorded. Records will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted.

The records of low-level concerns will be reviewed so that potential patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of

such behaviour is identified, the DSLs will decide on a course of action, either through our disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO.

Appendix 2:

Leadership Safeguarding Statement

We, the elders (Antony Billington, David Case, James Lycett, and Glyn Tither) of the Beacon Church recognise the importance of our ministry work with children, young people, and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care. We are committed to creating and enabling a healthy culture in order to minimise any coercion and control within our church. The Beacon Church is committed to the safeguarding of children, and adults with care and support needs, and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age), and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe, and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to, and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs, and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery, and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our church where the value of all people is recognised and challenges are responded to appropriately.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults, and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Supporting the Designated Safeguarding Leads in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship.
- Supporting parents and families.
- Nurturing, protecting, and safeguarding children and young people.
- Ensuring we have enough workers – both male and female – for activities with secondary school age children (though a single worker may spend some time with a small group of children, providing there are other adults to call upon if required).
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring, and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.

- Supporting all in the place of worship affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the policy and guidance provided by Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS).

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social
- Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If anyone connected with the Beacon Church has any concerns for a child or adult with care and support needs, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Designated Safeguarding Leads for this place of worship.

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Emma Billington and Julian Pollard
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: James Lycett

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available on the church's website: <beacon-church.org.uk>

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Signed by: _____ Pastor/Elder

Date: _____

Appendix 3:

Guidance on Physical Contact

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child, young person, or vulnerable adult's needs, not the worker's, and should be with the person's consent where possible.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child, young person, or vulnerable adult, rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that may be sexually stimulating.
- All children, young people, and adults with care and support needs are entitled to personal privacy and the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in circumstances such as a medical emergency.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc.), encourage the child, young person, or vulnerable adult to do what they can themselves but, in their best interests, giving appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported.
- Consider how physical contact might this be perceived by an onlooker, including contact with our own children.

Appendix 4:

Guidance on Transporting Children and Adults with Care and Support Needs

Some of our activities at the Beacon Church involve transporting people to and from activities. It is important that we are very clear on this area. The simple argument would be to give no lifts, but this would mean a number of people would then not be able to access church activities.

- Transport and travel arrangements are the responsibility of parents if they make informal arrangements among themselves. They are the responsibility of the church if church workers organise or provide them.
- Children and young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to giving lifts to and from a church activity.
- All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 21 and should have held a full driving licence for over two years.
- All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts during church activities. The insurance company should be informed that lifts may be given.
- Driving minibuses requires separate arrangements.
- All cars that carry children should be considered to be clean and in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats.
- Take care in assisting children to board or leave vehicles.
- At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.
- There must be a seat belt for every passenger.
- If a child is known to have a disability or special need, consideration should be given whether to have a non-driving adult in the car. This adult should sit in the back, behind the driver, with the child in the seat beside him or her.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of six points or more on their licence should inform one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Any driver who has an 'unspent' conviction for a drink-driving offence or for dangerous driving or racing on the highway should not transport children.
- There should preferably be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.
- To ensure that these guidelines are adhered to, group leaders need to obtain a signed undertaking covering the above issues from those people who are prepared to transport children in their cars.

Appendix 5:

Code of Conduct

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers), to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy. The Code of Conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers)

When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for the Beacon Church. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Expected good practice

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

Unacceptable behaviour

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns.
- Taking unnecessary risks.
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way.
- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details.
- Using my phone to take and/or share photographs of children/young people without the express permission of their parents/carers.
- Developing inappropriate relationships.
- Engaging in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc.) language or behaviour with children, young people, or adults with care and support needs.
- Smoking, consuming alcohol or illegal substances whilst working with children, young people, or adults with care and support needs.
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged.

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff, where one of the PED team will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Leads as appropriate). Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave the Beacon Church. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's or adult's social care departments or DBS. If you become aware of a breach of this Code, you should escalate your concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Declaration

I agree to abide by the expectations outlined in this document and confirm that I have read the relevant policies that assist my work with children and adults with care and support needs.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 6:

Practice Guidelines

(a) Group activities

When running group activities you should:

- Consider the ratios or number of workers needed to run the group safely.
- Consider the mix of workers needed e.g. How many male/female or senior/junior leaders you should have.
- Have a clear process for bringing in extra help or support when needed e.g. in situations where a worker is working alone with a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Consider the level of personal care required appropriate to the needs of the individual e.g. help with toileting.
- Have clear guidelines on personal privacy e.g. when working with children avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- Not allow anyone under 18 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age.
- Not leave the group unsupervised.
- Conduct a risk assessment for each activity e.g. an informal check before the start of an activity.
- Ensure that only workers assigned to the group are allowed to participate in the activity.
- Other adults should not be allowed free access.
- Make a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time.
- Have rules about how transportation to and from an activity or venue is provided and who is authorised to provide it.
- Have rules about use of mobile phones during activity.
- Keep records of your activities such as a register of who attended, a log book for recording concerns, and use the church accident book as needed.
- Ensure you have sufficient first aid cover and abide by food hygiene standards.

(b) Peer-led activities for 16–18s

- All peer-led activities should be overseen by named adults who have been through the organisation's safer recruitment process.
- Junior leaders must be trained and supported by at least one adult worker and should be aware of safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns to their supervising adult and that sensitive information should not be shared openly in the group.
- No person under the age of 18 should be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising other children or adults with Care and Support need.
- Although it is possible to undertake DBS checks for those aged 16–18, best practice is that only those aged 18 or over are responsible for working with children or vulnerable adults.
- People aged 16–18 who help with caring for other children/young people should be subjected to the same recruitment process as adults and have undertaken safeguarding training.

(c) Consent forms

For a range of church activities, we may need to seek consent from parents/carers e.g. around giving lifts in cars, around photographs and videos, around social media groups for specific groups for teens.

Before a group commences, or in the period leading up to the restart of activities in September, leaders for each group will consider:

- Whether or not they may need to give lifts to children/young people, even if only in an emergency.
- Whether or not they will be taking photographs and/or videos, and how they might like to share/use these.
- Whether or not a social media group, e.g. a WhatsApp group for leaders and young people in a group might be a good form of communication.
- How parents/carers wish to be contacted for routine information.
- It is also good practice to include a general statement of consent for emergency medical treatment to be given, and emergency contact information e.g. both parents, any other adults trusted to collect a child/young person.
- Ensure that their regular registering of children at the start of the year includes relevant consent.
- Ensure all parents/carers complete the form.
- Ensure all leaders for a group are aware of any parents/carers who have NOT given consent, and what adjustments may need to be made (if any).

(d) Communicating safely with under 18s via electronic devices and live-streaming meetings where vulnerable people are present

Beacon Church recognises the value of using social media groups such as WhatsApp to communicate quickly and effectively. They are also a great way to stay build friendships and have fun! We also recognise in our church community that many of our children and young people are already connected on various social media sites because of the many long-standing friendships and interwoven families.

The purpose of our safeguarding guidelines in relation to these online activities is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people when using online platforms related to our official church activities. These guidelines apply to all staff, volunteers, children, young people, and anyone else involved in the Beacon Church activities.

We recognise that many under 18s have access to mobile devices and these present opportunities for easier communication. However, we also recognise the risks associated with online activity for under 18s including (but not limited to):

- Unwanted contact;
- Pressure to respond to messages;
- Live location features;
- Inappropriate content;
- Cyber bullying;
- Forming inappropriate relationships;
- Grooming.

We will keep under 18s safe by:

- Ensuring our DSLs oversees all aspects of online safety for under 18s.
- Provide a Code of Conduct to our staff and volunteers who work with under 18s outlining our expectations of how they behave online with under 18s.
- Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms, messaging apps and new technologies before they are used within our church.

Mobile Phones in Kids Church

We do not anticipate that any of our Class 1 and 2 children will bring a mobile phone into Kids Church, but if they did, we would ask that they put them away for the whole session, and request that parents keep them in church rather than allow their children to bring them into Kids Church.

For Class 3 Kids Church, children will:

- Have access to Bibles and other resources required for the session – there will be no requirement or expectation that children will have a mobile phone.
- Be asked by the group leader to place their mobile face down on the table if they have brought one to Kids Church.
- Be invited to use them to read a Bible passage if they have the Bible app.
- Only use their mobiles under direct supervision.

For Class 4 Kids Church, children will:

- Have access to Bibles and other resources required for the session – there will be no requirement or expectation that children will have a mobile phone.
- Be invited to use their mobile phone, should they have one, to read a Bible passage using a Bible app.
- Be encouraged to access the NCC App related to the lesson being taught.
- Be invited to look up information under the direction of the kids church teacher.

Adult leaders in Kids Church may use their mobile phones in the context of delivering the material e.g. to play a song, use a timer etc. Adult leaders will not use their phones for their own personal/ social use whilst in Kids Church.

WhatsApp (or other messaging apps) guidelines

We recognise that messaging apps present an opportunity for young people to be in communication with one another, for example, our church youth group. Where a church group has a WhatsApp group, we will take steps to mitigate risk of harm.

The following steps will be put in place:

- Group Leaders will share the parameters of any planned social media group with the DSLs before going ahead
- Explicit signed parental consent will be sought before inviting any under 18s to join a WhatsApp group.
- Group leaders will develop a Code of Conduct for the young people within a church WhatsApp group which will outline how we expect them to behave within the group and the consequences of not adhering to the Code of Conduct. Parents/carers will also be provided a copy of the Code of Conduct.
- There will be a minimum of two adult leaders in the WhatsApp group to oversee and moderate the group. These leaders must have a current DBS check in place.
- Parents who wish to be can be added to the WhatsApp group.
- Consideration will be given concerning the impact on any young people for whom consent is NOT given in terms of being 'excluded' from any group chatter.
- The youth leaders will continue to comply with GDPR and data protection standards.
- WhatsApp does not allow under 13s to use the App. We will never invite a child younger than 13 to join a group. If this means that younger members of the youth group are excluded, we will look at other communication options to ensure no young person is excluded.

- Whilst private messaging between leaders and young people is not encouraged, if private messages take place relating to official church activities, the leader must keep copies of all messages and be willing and ready to share when asked to do so.
- Leaders will make no direct, private contact with any child under the age of 13 years. If contact is necessary, the leader must communicate with the parent.
- If the leader needs to send a private message to a young person between 13–16 years old, a parent/carer must be included in messages.
- Where a member of the youth group is aged 17–18 years old (and the 18-year-old is still in full time education) explicit parental consent is required before the leader makes any direct contact with the young person.
- All volunteer/staff leaders will only make contact with under 18s for the purposes of their church role.
- Where concerned that there may be an e-safety incident ensure that this is reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Use an appropriate tone in communications.
- Be warm and friendly but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share and be clear to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or behaviour.
- Do not share personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which would be appropriate as part of your role.
- Have a clear cut off time for communicating with children and young people e.g. no contact past 9pm.

Social media accounts

Where leaders have a personal social media account (such as Facebook, Instagram etc.) they must not request or accept a friend request from anyone under the age of 18 years.

If there is already a pre-existing relationship with the under 18, e.g. a family connection, the DSL must be informed of this and a record of this will be noted.

We advise our youth work leaders to have their personal account's privacy settings set as high as they can be so that a young person cannot access their photos, posts, etc.

Live-streaming of meetings

We recognise that live streaming and/or uploading videos of meetings (e.g. YouTube) presents unique safeguarding risks and considerations.

We recognise that by filming and/or posting video content online this may put individuals at risk. Examples include:

- A survivor of domestic abuse may need to be protected from another person and information about their location may be highly sensitive.
- Children may be present who are subject to legal child protection measures and who are potentially fleeing violence or are being 'searched for' by others.
- Children who are being fostered or adopted may be being 'searched' by birth families.

We will take the following steps to protect the identity of people who may be at risk when meetings are live streamed/recorded:

- Explicit and signed consent will be sought where possible from church members in relation to filming.
- Where we have visitors, we will always give a notice at the beginning of the meeting about filming. Signage will be clear in and around the entrance informing people the service is being live-streamed.

- We will be clear where is filmed and, on the whole, we will not film the congregation. If there are times when the congregation may be filmed, clear instruction will be given before filming, clarifying which seating will be exempt from filming.

(e) Guidelines for Children's and Youth Ministry in Personal Homes

The Beacon Church recognises that homes can be places that play a key role in nurturing wellbeing and spiritual growth, and contributing significantly to the pastoral care and development of young people. We also recognise the need to be aware of, and follow, current safeguarding guidance on the use of the home as a setting for youth work. At the Beacon Church, this includes:

Risk assessments

A full risk assessment should be done for each property to be used, and of the activities to be carried out. This will include the active involvement of hosts in setting up any activity to ensure their home meets safety standards.

- Ensure potentially unsafe places are out of bounds, e.g. garages, tool sheds.
- Ensure that a clean toilet with a lock is available to all users without access via a bedroom.
- Have a fire evacuation plan to be shared with the group.
- Alcohol, medication and dangerous items must be removed from any room accessible to young people and kept locked away securely.
- Ensure there is a first aid kit available, and someone suitably competent to carry out basic first aid.
- Consider risks not listed above, e.g. in a kitchen/bathroom etc., and take appropriate action.
- Check that the Beacon Church insurance covers home-based activities.

Appendix 7:

Safeguarding Responsibilities

Governance of safeguarding

The trustees will ensure that they provide leadership of safeguarding across the organisation by:

- Ensuring that legally compliant policies, procedures, codes of conduct and systems are implemented.
- Ensuring that a Safeguarding Trustee is appointed to act as a link between the DSLs/ Deputy DSL and the trustees.
- Ensuring that suitably skilled and knowledgeable Designated Safeguarding Leads and at least one deputy are appointed, supported, and resourced.
- Providing accountability to those responsible for various aspects of safeguarding.
- Reviewing the safeguarding arrangements to ensure that an effective and proportionate approach is thoroughly implemented and consistently enacted across the church.
- Ensuring that the DSLs and Deputy DSL provide regular updates to the trustees.
- Ensuring that Charity commission requirements, including the responsibility to report any serious incidents, are fully met.
- Ensuring that clear and transparent processes for raising complaints, concerns or allegations or other expressions of dissatisfaction are in place.

Leadership and management of safeguarding

The DSLs and their deputy will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed, updated and any changes signed off by the trustees.
- Safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely and proportionate manner, including making referrals to statutory agencies as required, working with partner agencies such as the Local Authority and the Police and the maintenance of accurate records and systems.
- They lead on the implementation of the safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Those engaged in ministry on behalf of the Beacon Church are provided with proportionate and appropriate training and that they are competent to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Regular reports are provided to the trustees and that any urgent issues are communicated to the chair of trustees in a timely manner.
- They will raise awareness of safeguarding and promote its importance across the church.

Individual responsibilities

Everyone working on behalf of the Beacon Church is required to:

- Ensure they understand and act in accordance with the policies, procedures, risk assessments and Codes of Conduct provided.
- Adhere to local legislation, guidance, and procedures.
- Ensure that they remain vigilant to the risks of harm to under 18s and adults at risk of harm.

Appendix 8:

Taking, Storing, and Using Images

The Beacon Church is aware of the safeguarding risks around taking photos and videos. The purpose of this policy is to protect children where photographs or video are taken at church. Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the activities of the children and young people and provides a record of our activities.

We recognise that parents and carers have a right to decide whether images of their children are taken and how these will be used and stored. We also recognise that images and videos of children is classed as personal data and we comply with the Information Commissioner's Office guidelines.

The Beacon Church will:

- Always seek explicit written consent from parents/carers before taking a photo/video of a child and using the image. Parents/carers can withdraw their consent at any point.
- Always seek the explicit consent of the child where they are aged 11 years + (School Year 7 upwards) before taking a photo or video of them. The young person can withdraw their consent at any point.
- Always seek explicit consent from the parent/carer (and where age appropriate the child) if we wish to display an image in our church building where they feature on the photograph.
- Always outline how the images will be used and stored (and for how long) and if there are any possible risks associated with the sharing of an image.
- Never disclose any personal information about the child.
- Only use image of children in appropriate clothing, for example, not in swimwear at a swimming activity.
- Never take close up photographs of children.
- Use church owned devices to take images of children for official purposes, or identify specific volunteers to act in the capacity of 'official photographer'.
- Only use images for a valid reason (referred to in data protection law as 'lawful bases')

We recognise that some children and/or their families may be more vulnerable, for example, a child who has come into the care of the Local Authority of a family fleeing domestic abuse. Extra care and precautions in relation to the use of images/video will be taken in these scenarios.

If anyone has a concern about the abuse or misuse of an image this must be reported to our DSLs.

We will never exclude a child from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

We will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with data protection law.

Images will only be retained when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so. Images will be stored in a protected folder with restricted access and password protected. Images will be disposed of securely in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

We will never store images of children on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

We do not permit staff to use any personal devices to take photos and recordings of children. Only cameras or devices belonging to the church are used.

Photography/filming by parents/carers for personal use

When parents or carers take photographs or film at our meetings or events and the images are for personal use, we will remind them (before the event) that photos taken during the event are not to be shared on social media or shared elsewhere.

When parents take photos or videos at a church event they will be reminded that under Data Protection Law they need to consider whether individuals in the photos or videos would reasonably expect the images to be used in this way. Data protection law states that extra care must be taken when using images of children, to ensure their interests are protected.

If parents become aware that images of their child have been posted online, they can request that they are removed. If they refuse or don't reply, the parent can submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Appendix 9: Forms

The Beacon Church Volunteer application form

Volunteers will be sent a link to complete an electronic version of this form: [Volunteer Application Form](#)

About You		
Full name		Address
Phone number		
Mobile number		
E-mail address		
About the role		
Department /Group / ministry area		Role applied for
Is the role subject to a DBS check?		
Children only	Adults only	Children and adults
Personal statement		
Please briefly describe your reasons for applying for this role and any appropriate experience in similar roles.		

Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?

Please supply details of 2 people who can comment on your suitability for this role.

Reference 1	Reference 2
Name	Name
Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them	Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them
Address	Address
Phone	Phone
E-mail address	E-mail address

Self-declaration

	Yes	No
Do you have any criminal convictions that would affect your ability to perform this role?		
Is your state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health adequate to fulfil this role?		
If the role involves working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, are you, or have you ever been barred from such work?		
Are you in agreement with the church's beliefs as outlined in the statement of faith?		

Do you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, codes of conduct, risk assessments etc that are relevant to this role?		
Is there anything that you wish to add or that you wish us to consider in relation to this self-declaration?		
I confirm that the information supplied in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. Signature: Date:		
For office use only: Form reference / volunteer reference as per Single Central Record.		

Beacon Church: Volunteer Reference Form

Referees will be sent a link to complete an electronic version of this form: [Volunteer Reference Form](#)

(name of applicant) has applied to volunteer at.....for the role of.....

They have given your name as a referee.

Volunteer Role Summary: please see attached

Your name and position:
Please state what your relationship is with the applicant:
How long have you known the applicant?
What skills, attributes or experience makes the candidate suitable for this volunteer role?
Please provide your understanding of the applicant's spiritual walk, spiritual maturity etc:

Please rate the applicant on the following:

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Trustworthiness					
Responsible					
Maturity					
Reliability					
Time-keeping					
Team player					

If you rated Poor for any of the above, please provide further information below:

We are committed to safeguarding children and adults and providing a safe environment for all. Therefore, we need to understand the applicant's suitability to volunteer with children / vulnerable adults.

Are you aware of any safeguarding concerns or allegations relating to the applicant? If yes, please provide details:

Do you have any concerns with the applicant's suitability to work with under 18s or vulnerable adults? If yes, please provide details.

Please summarise any other information that you think would be helpful for us to know, when assessing the candidate's suitability for this volunteer role:

Thank you for providing a reference for the applicant.

Signature.....

Print name.....
Telephone number.....
Email address.....

The Beacon Church: Incident/concern reporting form

A link to complete an electronic version of this form is available [here](#) and a QR code will be displayed on the Safeguarding Noticeboard in church:

Notes for completion

About this form and the person completing it

Please complete all sections.

About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident.

When reporting a concern involving a child or young person, please complete all sections.

When reporting a concern about an adult, the parent / carer details may not be required. Where this is recorded, please include the relationship to the person involved. Please insert additional lines as required.

Details of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

When reporting a disclosure, please quote the individual where possible. Please also comment on their body language or any other non-verbal communication that might be useful.

When drawing conclusions, please include the evidence that has led to that conclusion.

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

Action taken to ensure immediate safety

Please provide details. If no action was required, please indicate by writing 'None'.

Other action taken or advice sought

If any advice was sought, please provide details including who you spoke to, their contact details and what advice was given or action that was taken.

Signature

Please ensure that you sign the form.

About this form and the person completing it			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed
About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / carer (where appropriate)
<i>Please insert more lines as required</i>			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?</i>			
Context of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>Where / when / who else was present etc.</i>			

Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety.	
Other action taken or advice sought.	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	