



Gateway (York) CIO  
Registered Charity Number 1165744  
The Gateway Centre  
Front Street  
YORK  
YO24 3BZ

# Safeguarding Policy

Approved by the trustees of Gateway (York) CIO via email on 2nd May 2026

This policy is to be reviewed no later than: 2nd May 2027

Gateway Church is a working name of Gateway (York) CIO, a charitable incorporated organisation (Registered Charity Number 1165744).

Gateway, Gateway Church and Gateway (York) CIO should be read as being synonymous with each other throughout this document.

Throughout this document, capitalised terms are used to convey particular meanings as in the table, below:

Term	Meaning
MUST	This word (or the alternative terms "REQUIRED" or "SHALL") means that an action, condition or task is an absolute requirement.
MUST NOT	This phrase (or the alternative phrase "SHALL NOT") means that the action or condition is expressly prohibited.
SHOULD	This word (or the alternative term "RECOMMENDED") means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to not undertake a particular action, or that a particular condition may not be met, but the implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing to deviate from the recommendation.
SHOULD NOT	This word (or the alternative phrase "NOT RECOMMENDED") means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to specifically undertake a particular action, but the implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing to deviate from the recommendation.
MAY	This word (or the alternative terms "OPTIONAL") means that an action, condition or task is left to the reader's discretion, preference and convenience.

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# **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **CHURCH DETAILS**

Name:	Gateway Church [ <i>Gateway Church is a working name of Gateway (York) CIO</i> ] (hereafter, "The Church")
Address:	The Gateway Centre, Front Street, York, YO24 3BZ
Telephone:	01904 781983
Email:	office@gatewaychurch.co.uk
Denomination:	ChristCentral (part of Newfrontiers)
Reg Charity No:	1165744
Insurance:	Public Liability Insurance with Congregational & General Insurance plc
Safeguarding Team:	Caleb Ellwood is the elder responsible for Safeguarding. Sarah Edwards is our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Sue Coward, Nancy O'Neill & Tom Ross are our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL). This team confidentially deals with any Safeguarding concerns, as well as regularly reviewing policies and codes of conduct. When Caleb Ellwood is absent for any reason, Ben Greene will be the elder responsible for Safeguarding and will temporarily join the Safeguarding Team.
Recruiting Team:	Safer recruitment of staff and volunteers is integral to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk of harm. Where relevant and appropriate, safeguarding concerns are shared with those responsible for recruiting to enable them to recruit safely.
Admin Team:	Val Ashton coordinates the DBS checks on our staff and volunteers. She is assisted by Lucy Walters in this task. Christine Hobson administers our church database (ChurchSuite) that holds information on individuals' DBS checks. Christine also assists in typing up unnamed Safeguarding contracts on behalf of the Safeguarding Team.

Gateway Church runs several ministries serving children and adults who have care and support needs including Sunday morning groups for children aged 0-18, parent and baby/toddler groups, evening youth groups, lifegroups, debt advice in association with Christians Against Poverty, foodbank sessions in association with York Foodbank, drop-in advice sessions and drop-in cafés (this list is not exhaustive).

## **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Good governance helps an organisation prevent abuse and means it can respond quickly and with integrity when concerns arise. Central to this are the Trustees. The Trustees are appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for an organisation or charity and have a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation. The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object.” (ICSA The Governance Institute, 2017)

## **POSITIONS OF TRUST**

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022 it is illegal (England and Wales) for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

The following Safeguarding Policy and accompanying Codes of Conduct aim to go beyond the minimum legal requirements for safeguarding and create a culture where safe practice underpins everything we do. This will look like:

- leaders leading by example in safe practice,
- everyone being committed to the safeguarding of all,
- workers and volunteers being safely recruited and trained for their roles,
- robust accountability structures,
- clear, practical Codes of Conduct for all areas of ministry, with ministry teams regularly reviewing these Codes,
- open communication in regards to safeguarding, with due regard for confidentiality.

## OUR COMMITMENT

As Elders and Trustees (hereafter referred to as “the Leadership”) we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by the organisation thirtyone:eight

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and guidance, including *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*, the *Care Act 2014*, and the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, as well as any relevant local authority procedures.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all workers, with a review of training needs annually, and ensure training is refreshed at least every three years.
- Ensure that the church premises meet the requirements of the *Equality Act 2010* and other relevant legislation, including being accessible, welcoming, and inclusive for all individuals.
- Support the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies in their roles, providing regular supervision, access to external safeguarding advice (e.g., thirtyone:eight), and resources to act promptly in protecting children and adults at risk of harm.
- Permit sharing of the policy with other organisations, with explicit permission, to promote safeguarding best practices in faith communities.

## **SECTION 2: RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

### **UNDERSTANDING ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Abuse is any form of maltreatment by an individual or group that causes harm or poses a risk to the health, well-being, or development of another person. Abuse may involve inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. It can occur within families, institutions, or community settings and can be perpetrated by those known to the individual or, less commonly, by strangers. Abuse can also happen online or via digital communications.

This policy reflects definitions and guidance outlined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*, the *Care Act 2014*, and the *Information Sharing Guidance for Safeguarding Practitioners 2023*.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

*1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

## **STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (CHILDREN)**

### **What is abuse and neglect of a child?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. They occur when someone causes harm or fails to act to prevent harm. Abuse can happen in various settings, including family homes, institutions, or communities. It may be perpetrated by someone known to the child or, less commonly, by a stranger, including through online environments.

For the purposes of this policy, a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old.

Children may be abused by adults or by other children. Abuse can involve a single incident or repeated actions. The definitions below align with current statutory guidance (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*).

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse involves causing physical harm to a child. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise inflicting harm. Physical harm may also result from a parent or carer fabricating symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child (*fabricated or induced illness*).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, leading to severe and long-lasting effects on their emotional development. It may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or only valued based on meeting someone else's needs.
- Not allowing a child to express their views or deliberately silencing them.
- Exposing children to inappropriate expectations that are beyond their developmental capacity.
- Limiting social interaction or exploration through overprotection.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (e.g., domestic abuse).
- Serious bullying, including cyberbullying, that makes a child feel frightened or in danger.

Emotional abuse is a factor in all types of maltreatment, though it may occur independently.

N.B. Under the *Domestic Abuse Act (2021)*, children are recognised as victims of domestic abuse if they witness or are impacted by it, even if not directly harmed.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to engage in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes:

- **Physical Contact:** Assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. masturbation, kissing, rubbing, or touching outside of clothing).
- **Non-Contact Activities:** Involving children in viewing sexual images, producing sexual content, watching sexual activities, or behaving in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse is not limited to adult perpetrators; it can be committed by other children, and both males and females can be offenders.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, and psychological needs, resulting in serious harm to their health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy due to maternal substance misuse or after birth when a carer fails to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Provide proper supervision, including leaving children with unsuitable caregivers.
- Ensure access to medical care or treatment.

Neglect also includes failing to respond to a child's emotional needs or exposing them to persistent unsafe environments.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

We recognise FGM as a severe form of abuse, a violation of human rights, and a criminal offense under the FGM Act 2003. All staff and volunteers are expected to be vigilant regarding the signs and risk factors associated with FGM, particularly regarding females from affected communities. Any suspicion, disclosure, or concern that a female is at risk of, or has already undergone, FGM must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). We are committed to working with statutory agencies and local authorities to ensure the immediate protection of any individual at risk.

### **STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (ADULTS)**

Under the *Care Act 2014*, abuse is defined as any behaviour or action that violates an adult's human and civil rights, causes harm, or risks harm. Abuse can involve a single act or repeated actions and may be intentional or unintentional. It can occur in any relationship and affect adults in a variety of settings, including their home, the community, or care institutions.

The *Care Act 2014* identifies **10 categories of abuse** and stresses the importance of personalised safeguarding responses based on the adult's circumstances and preferences.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse includes causing physical harm to an adult, either deliberately or through neglect. Examples include:

- Hitting, slapping, or pushing
- Misuse of medication
- Restraint or inappropriate physical interventions
- Assault or causing injury

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves engaging an adult in sexual activities without their consent or understanding. This can include:

- Rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts without consent
- Coercion or pressure to engage in sexual activity
- Non-contact sexual abuse, such as indecent exposure, sexual harassment, or forcing someone to view explicit materials

### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

Psychological abuse includes actions or behaviours that harm an adult's emotional well-being or undermine their dignity. Examples include:

- Verbal abuse, humiliation, or ridicule
- Threats of harm, abandonment, coercion and/or control
- Isolation or preventing contact with loved ones
- Cyberbullying and online harassment

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

Financial abuse involves the illegal or improper use of an adult's finances or property. It can include coercion in relation to finances. Examples include:

- Theft, fraud, or coercion to transfer money or assets
- Misuse of wills, property, or inheritance
- Controlling access to finances
- Exploitation of financial resources

### **Neglect and Acts of Omission**

Neglect involves failing to meet an adult's basic needs, such as food, shelter, or healthcare. Examples include:

- Ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs
- Failing to provide necessary aids (e.g. hearing aids, glasses)

- Leaving individuals in unsafe or unhygienic conditions

### **Self-Neglect**

Self-neglect refers to an adult's failure to care for themselves, leading to serious harm or health risks. It may involve:

- Hoarding or living in squalid conditions
- Neglecting personal hygiene, nutritional or medical needs
- Avoiding essential services or support

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

Discriminatory abuse involves unfair treatment or harassment due to a person's characteristics, such as:

- Age, disability, gender identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation
- Denial of culturally appropriate care
- Use of derogatory language

### **Organisational Abuse**

Organisational abuse occurs in care settings where systemic practices harm individuals. Examples include:

- Rigid routines or lack of personal choice
- Substandard care or neglect by institutions
- Poor professional practice

### **Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises adults experiencing domestic abuse, including:

- Physical or sexual violence
- Emotional or financial abuse
- Coercive control or intimidation

### **Modern Slavery**

Modern slavery involves exploiting adults for personal or financial gain. It includes:

- Human trafficking
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

We recognise FGM as a severe form of abuse, a violation of human rights, and a criminal offense under the FGM Act 2003. All staff and volunteers are expected to be vigilant regarding the signs and risk factors associated with FGM, particularly regarding females from affected communities. Any suspicion, disclosure, or concern that a female is at risk of, or has already undergone, FGM must be reported

immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). We are committed to working with statutory agencies and local authorities to ensure the immediate protection of any individual at risk.

## **SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in 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
- 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\*

### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- 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

### **Neglect**

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses,
- Inadequate care, etc

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Our Codes of Conduct for working with children & young people outline details of how workers & leaders should be alert for risk factors and signs of potential FGM.

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

### **SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE (ADULTS)**

#### **Physical**

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

#### **Sexual**

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

#### **Psychological or Emotional**

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

#### **Modern Slavery**

- This is a complex form of abuse that can be difficult to recognise. Look out for things that seem amiss, such as...
  - Appearing to be under the control of others
  - Relationships that present in conflict with the narrative given
  - Restrictions on movement and interactions with others

### **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Our Code of Conduct for working with adults outlines details of how workers & leaders should be alert for risk factors and signs of potential FGM.

## **HOW TO RESPOND TO AN INDIVIDUAL WISHING TO DISCLOSE ABUSE**

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the individual to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

## **HELPFUL RESPONSES**

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you
- Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

## **DON'T SAY**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else
- Are you being abused? (this is an example of a leading question)

## **SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs have access to information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

## RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

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 must report concerns as soon as possible to our DSL **Sarah Edwards** (tel no XXXXXXXXXXXX) who is nominated by the Leadership 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 DSL or, if the suspicions in any way involve the DSL, then the report must be made to **Sue Coward** (tel no XXXXXXXXXXXX), **Nancy O'Neill** (tel no XXXXXXXXXXXX) or **Tom Ross** (tel no XXXXXXXXXXXX). If the suspicions implicate both the DSL and the Deputies, then the report should be made in the first instance to thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0303 003 11 11. Alternatively contact MASH or SAB (information below) or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the DSL must contact Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The local MASH office telephone number (office hours) is 01904 551900. The out of hours emergency number is 0300 1312131.
- Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, the DSL must contact Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). The local SAB telephone number (office hours) is 01904 555111. The out of hours emergency number is 0300 1312131. SAB also offers the option to submit a concern using an online form. This can be found at [www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/raise-concern](http://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/raise-concern)
- The Public Protection Unit at North Yorkshire Police can be contacted using the telephone number 101.
- When dealing with any safeguarding situation or concern, all members of the church Safeguarding Team will be made aware of the situation, as soon as possible via the secure online reporting system.
- The Safeguarding Team may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern. For example this could include...
  - the Chair of Trustees to log that a safeguarding concern is being dealt with,

- o the Insurance Company to log that there is a possibility of a serious incident concerning safeguarding,
- o a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if allegations have been made about a person who has a role with children or adults at risk of harm elsewhere,
- o another denominational officer e.g. Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or similar,
- o the elders if the situation could cause serious reputational harm to the church.

This list is not exhaustive.

- Where a Safeguarding concern results in an individual being forbidden from working with children, young people or adults with care and support needs, the Safeguarding Team may need to inform the relevant ministry leader(s) to ensure they are not recruited to one of their teams. This should be done while maintaining confidentiality and not disclosing the nature of the concerns.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- Following a conversation with a member of the Safeguarding Team, a factual record of the concerns must be made as soon as possible after disclosure/allegation. This must be submitted via the Safeguarding Reporting Form found at [gatewaychurch.co.uk/safeguarding](http://gatewaychurch.co.uk/safeguarding). If you are struggling to complete this form, please ask a member of the Safeguarding Team for help. Written records should not be stored locally on personal electronic devices.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the DSL, the absence of the DSL or Deputies should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the DSL/Deputies 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.
- Any disclosure or complaint taking place in our Foodbank Distribution Session will be reported and actioned under our Safeguarding Policy. However, because our Foodbank Session is in Partnership with York Foodbank, our DSL will inform the York Foodbank Safeguarding Officer of all relevant details and actions taken. All of our foodbank volunteers will also adhere to the York Foodbank Volunteer Code of Conduct as a way of ensuring that the service given to clients is the best we can offer.

- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the church will use the procedure outlined above. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the DSL/Deputies have not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the DSL(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the DSL/Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

## **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 DSL/Deputy will:

- Contact MASH (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted MASH.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact MASH directly for advice.
- If unsure whether or not to refer a case to MASH, seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing).

### **Allegations of sexual abuse**

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

- Contact MASH or the Police directly. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

- If, for any reason, they are unsure whether or not to contact MASH/Police, seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight. thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

## **DETAILED PROCEDURES WHERE THERE IS A CONCERN THAT AN ADULT IS IN NEED OF PROTECTION:**

**Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse**

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

- contact the SAB who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

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

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the DSL, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). In addition to this, whether or not there are such mechanisms in operation, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults at risk of harm. Where you are liaising with the LADO, discuss with them about the need to refer to the DBS. If the LADO is not involved, you need to contact the DBS if the situation is that the nature of concern leads you to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have made this decision in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH ADULTS WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS.**

The Care Act places the duty upon **Adult Services** to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they

have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide, not the church.

## **KEEPING RECORDS**

In responding to any of the above situations, the DSL/Deputy must record details of incidents, conversations and actions taken, via the Safeguarding Reporting Form at [gatewaychurch.co.uk/safeguarding](http://gatewaychurch.co.uk/safeguarding) as soon as possible after the event. These digital records are dated and stored securely. Access to these records is strictly limited to the members of the Safeguarding Team.

## **SECTION 3: PREVENTION**

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

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

For paid positions:

- There is a written Job Profile for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given access to a copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy, any relevant Codes of Conduct and knows how to report concerns.

For volunteer positions:

- The person has a clear understanding of the position (and a job description where relevant)
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form (where relevant)
- Safeguarding has been discussed at induction
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Suitable training is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has been given access to a copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy, any relevant Codes of Conduct and knows how to report concerns.

### **ADDITIONAL RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES**

- Before the application process begins, prospective workers may make one visit to observe the children's/youth work. This will only take place once permission

has been granted by the recruiters and with the close supervision of the appropriate leader(s).

- Normal practice for appointing leaders and workers is that the recruit should have been regularly attending Gateway Church for more than 6 months before being appointed to a role working with children and/or adults with care and support needs. This may not apply when the worker (paid or voluntary) has extensive prior experience working with children and/or adults with care and support needs at a previous church. When this is the case, references MUST be taken prior to the individual commencing in the role.
- Workers will be given the opportunity to meet together with a leader to discuss expectations of the role and areas of concern, including issues related to discipline.
- The appointment of workers will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- When an individual has a previous conviction for offences against children, young people or adults at risk of harm, they will not be permitted to work with children, young people or adults at risk of harm.
- Other criminal convictions may prevent an individual from being recruited to a staff or volunteer position.
- Attendees of the church will be informed that if they have previous criminal convictions for offences against children, young people or adults at risk of harm, they would be expected to disclose that information to the Safeguarding Team at the earliest opportunity. Anyone who knows of someone in the church with such a history also has a responsibility to share this with the Church Safeguarding Team.
- The expectation of the Charity Commission is that all volunteers in a role that we deem to be suitable for a DBS check will have an up to date DBS Certificate which is renewed (via the update service or a new DBS check) every 3 years, Three months notice will be given to volunteers and staff to complete an application. If a volunteer or staff member does not complete their application in this timeframe they will be asked to stand down from their area of service until such time as a check is made. The Church insurance may be invalidated if an incident occurs and there is no check in place for the volunteer or staff member.

## **MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS – CODES OF CONDUCT**

As a Leadership we 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.

## PREVENT DUTY GUIDANCE

Under the *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015*, Gateway Church has a responsibility to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the *Prevent Duty*.

### (i) Awareness

Youth workers and volunteers must remain vigilant for signs that a young person or adult may be vulnerable to radicalisation or extremist influences. Indicators can include:

- Expressing extremist views or sympathies.
- Accessing or sharing extremist materials, including online.
- Significant changes in behaviour or isolation from family and friends.

### (ii) Action

If a worker has concerns that someone may be at risk of radicalisation:

1. **Report Concerns:** Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
2. **Escalation:** The DSL will assess the concern and, where necessary, refer it to the local Prevent Lead or Channel Panel for support.

### (iii) Training

All staff and volunteers will receive basic training on the Prevent Duty to help them recognise and respond to potential risks.

### (iv) Balanced Approach

Preventing radicalisation is part of the church's broader safeguarding role, and all actions will respect the individual's rights while focusing on their safety and well-being.

## **SECTION 4: PASTORAL CARE**

### **SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the church.

### **WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

When someone attending the church is deemed to pose a risk to children or adults at risk of harm, the Leadership will engage with this person to support them and to determine what level of participation in church life is appropriate. This may involve supervising the individual concerned, setting a contract to establish boundaries that the individual is expected to keep, or in some cases, asking the individual not to attend certain (or all) church events and groups.

# **SECTION 5: PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

As a church working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusations.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have codes of conduct that are specific for every activity we are responsible for and these are attached to the general code of conduct.

## **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse. We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and, where appropriate, have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight’s safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This Safeguarding Policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: Caleb Ellwood  
Position: Elder responsible for Safeguarding