

Oundle Baptist Church Safeguarding policy and guidelines for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY- Based on Safe to Grow 2011(Baptist Union)

OBC recognizes the importance, responsibility and challenge of ensuring the church has safeguards in place to protect children, young people and adults at risk within all its activities.

As a Christian church committed to presenting the reality of God to all people, we affirm our belief in the God given value of each individual with whom we work or have contact. In recognition of God's wholehearted commitment to them, we will also treat each individual with value and dignity and protect them from harm and abuse of any kind.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk against harm or physical, sexual, neglect, spiritual and emotional abuse and to be familiar with the procedure to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

These guidelines are intended to protect the staff, volunteers, children, young people and adults at risk associated with Oundle Baptist Church.

DEFINITIONS

A person is classed as a child until their 18th birthday

A person is classed as a young adult between their 14th and 18th birthdays

An adult at risk is defined as any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

APPOINTMENTS

All employees and volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults must hold a DBS Certificate of enhanced disclosure for Oundle Baptist Church.

DBS disclosures are to be obtained before staff or volunteers start work and volunteers must agree to undergo safeguarding training within 12 months of receiving their DBS disclosure.

POLICY MONITORING

The church will appoint a designated person for children, young people and adults at risk and a safeguarding advisor to implement the safeguarding policy.

A Safeguarding Ministry Team will meet termly and review the policy annually or following new legal requirements or significant updates from the Baptist Union. The team will check DBS status of volunteers and employees and update procedures.

This group will consist of the Minister, (or member of the leadership team, designated persons for safeguarding, the safeguarding advisor, DBS checkers and an administrator.

All Enhanced Disclosures to be reviewed every five years or sooner if needed.

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Safeguarding Ministry Team	
Minister	Rev Martin Hills
Designated Person for children under 12 years (from birth to end of primary school)	Jennie Burnham
Designated person for Young People aged 12-18 (Secondary school age)	Carita Hills
Designated Person for Adults at Risk	Judith Brashaw
DBS administrators	Judith Brashaw, Martin Hills
Administrator	Vacant

Behaviour not consistent with these guidelines will be managed by the safeguarding ministry team using OBC's procedure and by following the East Midlands Baptist Association Procedure if required.

COMMUNICATION & TRAINING

All employees and volunteers will receive a copy of this document and training regarding Safeguarding when they commence their role within the church.

CONCERNS & ALLEGATIONS

It is important to recognise that children and young people can be subject to harm in any and every setting. The Church will clearly display the name and contact of both the designated person for each group of people and/or the Safeguarding Advisor who have been given responsibility to act on their behalf in relation to safeguarding concerns. However all employees and volunteers must be aware of the procedure to follow if a child, young person or adult at risk chooses to disclose that abuse of any nature is taking (or has taken) place, as people tend to disclose to someone they know and trust. Remember it is not your place to cast doubt on what is being said but to remain objective and listen carefully to the person without interruption. Situations have arisen where the first person to be told of such an event failed to take it seriously and this in turn led to the continuation of the abuse.

If a child, young person or adult at risk discloses abuse please follow the brief suggestions below, document the conversation and contact the appropriate designated person or the safeguarding advisor the same day.

General points are:

- Accept what the person says
- Keep calm
- Be honest
- Look directly at the person
- Do not appear shocked
- As soon as you believe there is a concern explain that you will need to tell someone else
- Assure them that they are not to blame for abuse
- Do not ask leading questions only ask questions to clarify information.
- Allow the person to speak without interruption and do not fill in words, finish their sentences or make assumptions
- Be aware that the child, young person or vulnerable adult may be frightened if they have been threatened

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- Do not promise confidentiality

Make detailed, dated notes as soon as possible and contact the appropriate designated person or the safeguarding advisor the same day.

The individual must be kept informed at all times of what is being done, what is likely to happen, and should be prepared for such an eventuality before they disclose such information. Where the abuse is current this will need to be reported to the authorities normally by the designated person. However, it is also important that the person concerned is aware that no action is likely to be taken by the authorities without them being listened to.

SAFE BEHAVIOUR CODE

1. Treat everyone within OBC with respect.
2. Provide a Christian example you wish others to follow but remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
3. Respect the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults to personal privacy
4. All activities/ meetings that involve Children (under 18 years of age) or vulnerable adults will have a minimum of two helpers present in the room at all times and work within ratios agreed for your activity.
5. Recognize that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse
6. Do not plan to transport any unaccompanied child/young person or vulnerable adult. If this is necessary in an emergency, then please inform the appropriate designated person or the safeguarding advisor the same day of the circumstances surrounding this within 24 hours.
7. Put a stop to any abusive activities - bullying, name-calling, games which involve any victimisation.
8. Avoid making suggestive gestures or remarks to a person, even in 'fun'.
9. Ensure all contact with others (including physical, verbal or electronic) is appropriate.
10. Avoid exclusively befriending a particular child, young person or vulnerable adult.
11. In a position of trust (a leader or a helper) must not develop an exclusive relationship with a group member, however small the age gap.

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12. Obtain written parental consent for all activities which should include the following, address, and emergency contact details, notification of any allergies / medical condition and authorization for consent in an emergency.

Good practice is not a straightjacket to prevent employees and volunteers carrying out their roles effectively but enables a church to provide a safe welcoming environment to all members of the community.

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