

REVIVAL CITY CHURCH (RCC)

Safeguarding Policy

According to the NSPCC (2018), Safeguarding refers to the process of protecting children (and adults) to provide safe and effective care. This includes all procedures designed to prevent harm to a child.

The contents of this document constitute a summary of safeguarding policy and practise at Revival City Church (RCC). The policy is intended to shape the way that we think and act in relation to supporting those most vulnerable around us. Whether you are a children's worker, pastoral carer for vulnerable adults, a church leader, departmental head or simply attending our services, we want everyone aware. It should be read in conjunction with policies and guidelines published our website.

The safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility; procedures and formal processes alone (though essential) will not protect them. The Church, including all its members, needs to be aware of dangers and be prepared to report concerns and take action if necessary. The child's/adult's welfare is paramount and where there is conflict between the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult and that of the adult, it is the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult that will be given priority.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY and COMMITMENT

Revival City Church is a community of volunteers, with members contributing to its life in different ways; reflecting the nature of Jesus Christ through love. **The leadership are responsible for and recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults in all church activities.** They are also responsible for making sure, as far as possible, that no false accusations can be made against their workers and volunteers.

Our church will:

*adopt and implement safeguarding policies and procedures accepting as a minimum, London Borough of Merton Safeguarding procedures and Evangelical Alliance Policy.

*accept the prime duty of care placed upon leadership to ensure the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults in the church community;

*endorse Safeguarding Policies annually, so that new members are aware of their responsibilities, and can confirm their existence. A signed copy of our policy is to be kept in the church records, and one copy displayed prominently in the church.

*appoint a Safeguarding Officer for RCC to work with the leadership to implement policy, procedures and good practice. He or she will have an overview of all the children, young people and vulnerable adults in the church, taking responsibility for the implementation of these procedures and guidelines and liaising as necessary with the Safeguarding Coordinator. The RCC Safeguarding Officer should either be a member of leadership of the church or have the right to attend annual church leaders meetings and should report on the implementation of the safeguarding policy within the church;

*display in the church premises where children's and vulnerable adults' activities take place, contact details of the RCC Safeguarding Officer;

*display the “Childline” and “Parentline Plus” telephone number and Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website;

*appoint a Lead Recruiter. It is recommended that this is a different person from the RCC Safeguarding Officer.

*ensure that all workers, voluntary and paid, are appointed in line with Practice Guidance

*direct all authorised personnel to copies policies, procedures and good practice guidelines;

*ensure that all those authorised to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults or in a position of authority are appropriately recruited, trained and supported according to the safer recruitment documents.

*ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults undertaken in the name of the church;

*ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken for activities (on and off church premises) involving children, young people and vulnerable adults.

*review this policy annually in line with CCPAS recommendations and regulation changes.

SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

We aim, at Revival City Church, to create an atmosphere and environment where people can discuss any concerns and receive support. The leadership and church safeguarding officer are readily available to fulfil this role.

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 appropriate safeguarding training on a regular basis, which should cover signs and symptoms of abuse and how to respond as a minimum.

Paid and unpaid workers who have responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults should attend suitable safeguarding training at least every three years. It is their responsibility to ensure that this is completed.

Training is required for anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities or who have contact with children, young people and/or adults who may be vulnerable. This may include but is not limited to: Safeguarding Officers, safeguarding lead, church workers, pastoral visitors, Sunday school teachers, servers, and church administrative staff.

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:

- There is a written role description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed a standard application form and a self-declaration form
- Those short listed have ALL been interviewed
- Roles and attitudes regarding safeguarding have been discussed at interview

- Written references have been obtained for ALL candidates, and followed up verbally where appropriate
- A Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) disclosure is completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information) prior to the successful candidate commences employment
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable induction training programme (including safeguarding) is provided for the successful applicant
- The successful applicant completes a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of this safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safer recruitment practices should be used regardless of the setting or activity where workers are working with either children or vulnerable adults.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers will be issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

A code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults should be drawn up which all workers agree to follow. It is important there is a culture of dignity and respect towards those being cared for. This can be achieved by workers:

- understanding the organisation's safeguarding policy and good working practice
- listening to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- respecting boundaries and privacy of those being cared for
- knowing how to deal with issues of discipline in line within the organisation's code of conduct
- developing an awareness of disability issues as well as issues of equality and inclusion



• 'Caring for the Young & Vulnerable' (Home Office, 1999)

Management of Workers – Training and Supervision

All workers, paid or voluntary, should be provided with appropriate training and given the opportunity to develop their skills as well as feel supported and valued by the organisation for which

they work. When this happens, workers will be more inclined to express concerns over issues that arise and it will also help to ensure a high level of care, professionalism and expertise towards those being cared for.

As a Leadership, we commit to ensuring all workers are supervised (where possible by a named individual who arranges regular meetings) where concerns or issues can be raised, work related or personal. It is also the role of the supervisor to ensure all training needs are met. Where supervision with a named individual is not possible, or impractical, group supervision may be used as an alternative as this can maximise resources and allows for the sharing of issues and concerns.

Management of Workers - Team Meetings

The leadership recognises the importance of team meetings. These should be convened on a regular basis and should provide an opportunity for ideas and issues to be aired, concerns expressed and feedback given.

Management of Workers – Whistleblowing

In addition to effective management of allegations against staff, there needs to be a mechanism in place such as supervision or meetings with a team leader for workers to be able to raise any concerns (e.g. improper actions or omissions) about other workers, with impunity. Commonly known as ‘whistleblowing’, the reporting principles are contained in the Public Disclosure Act 1998. Further information and advice can be obtained from Public Concern at Work:



Public Concern at Work
7-14 Great Dover Street
LONDON
SE1 4YR
Tel: 020 7404 6609
E-mail: whistle@pcaw.co.uk

Paid and unpaid workers, in line with Safer Recruitment policies, should undergo a DBS check. These need to be completed every five years.

N.B. It should be noted that safeguarding and DBS checks are not transferable from other places of work.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

At Revival City Church we value and respect all church members.

We will:

- *treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity;
- *ensure that our own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful;
- *adhere to our ‘no lone working’ policy;
- *ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be accompanied to the toilet;
- *ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern;
- *respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around;
- *administer any necessary first aid with others around whenever possible;
- *obtain consent for any images to be taken, shown or displayed. Photographs may only be taken by our nominated church photographers;
- *record any concerning incidents and give the information to our group leader. We will sign and date the record;
- *always share concerns or the behaviour of another worker with the Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Incumbent;
- *if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand.

We will not:

- *initiate physical contact;
- *invade a child's/adult's privacy while washing or toileting;
- *play rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
- *use any form of physical punishment;
- *be sexually suggestive about or to a child/vulnerable adult, even in fun;
- *touch a child/adult inappropriately or obtrusively;
- *scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult;
- *permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;
- *show favouritism to any one child or group;
- *allow a child, young person or vulnerable adult to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature. Any such activity should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer;
- *give lifts to children, young people or vulnerable adults on their own or on your own. In an emergency, a driver may transport one child/adult on their own but the child must sit in the back of the car;
- *smoke tobacco or any other substance in the presence of children;
- *drink alcohol when responsible for young people;
- *invite a child/vulnerable adult to your home. All contact should be with the parent and take place on church premises;
- *arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions;
- *allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- *allow strangers to give lifts.

Touch.

Our church-run groups and activities aim to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Abuse is harm of a very serious nature. It is important that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work should not be able to be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult. Church workers are mostly volunteers and should not be placed or place themselves, in vulnerable situations.

Revival City Church is an inclusive church, open and welcoming to all. Where a child or vulnerable person with special needs requires additional support, we will work with and take advice from parents and careers.

Additional guidelines when leading groups.

In addition to the above, team members will:

- *ensure any health and safety requirements are adhered to;
- *ensure that the room and equipment to be used is safe and in good order;
- *ensure that external doors are unable to be opened by children;
- *undertake risk assessments, where necessary, with appropriate action taken and record kept;
- *keep registers and consent forms up to date;
- *have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present;
- *create space for children/vulnerable adults to talk – either formally or informally;
- *liaise with the RCC Safeguarding Officer over good practice for safeguarding;
- *always inform RCC Safeguarding Officer of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The RCC Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the appropriate Safeguarding authority.

Administration

We will keep registration forms for all children, young people and vulnerable adults attending groups and activities. These will include up to date details of home address and telephone number, any specific medical information and parents' or carers' names and contact numbers. Permission to use photographs will be included on these forms. At each meeting or activity, a register of the young people and children attending will be kept, along with the names of the leaders and helpers present. Registers should be kept indefinitely.

We will keep a log book of incidents.

Forms giving permission for special activities will be used when undertaking one-off events and activities.

All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely.

Recommended staffing levels.

For all our groups (Sunday school; Kiddies Church and Infusion365, choir) we operate a 'no lone worker' policy. Each group should have at least two adult workers or a chaperone where this is not possible.

It is sometimes necessary for small groups to operate in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them. In these circumstances it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity. For Sunday school at RCC, we require a minimum of two adults with our younger age group and one with the older children, with doors open between them. Sessions are planned with this in mind but, if necessary, a parent can be co-opted into the younger group if non-attendance of one of the two planned leaders is notified late in the day.

Our young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping, will always be overseen and we will ensure that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and that the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding.

SAFE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

We acknowledge that whilst children and young people may appear technologically competent, they do not necessarily have the maturity to understand the dangers they may be exposed to. It is important that children, young people and vulnerable adults understand and stay safe if technology is used at our church and the following guidance should be followed:

We agree that:

*all electronic communications are appropriate and professional. If using e-technology as a group activity, we will ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.

*communication between children and adults by whatever method will always take place within clear and explicit boundaries.

N.B. It is the policy at RCC Church that all communication between workers and children will be done through the responsible adult, using their contact details and not the child's/vulnerable adults. Communication will be made directly between a worker and a child only with permission and consent from parent/carer.

*no images or video footage will ever be permitted in an area of personal privacy e.g. toilet or changing area

*adults will not give their personal contact details to children or young people, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites, only with permission and consent from parent/carer.

*we will not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site. We will only make contact with children for professional reasons, through their parent.

*any paid or unpaid worker will have a separate 'Facebook' account for their work with young people and should not give out any personal information about themselves.

*privacy settings and use of strong passwords will be used to keep personal data private. In addition, all shared computers will have a different password for all users so that they cannot be accessed secretly.

Receipt of inappropriate material by electronic means

Receipt of any inappropriate material by electronic means will be downloaded into hard copy if possible and any texts of such nature will not be deleted and will be shown to the leader and Incumbent.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES

Guidance from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), reproduced here is as follows:

“Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

**It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.*

**When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include email or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.*

**Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.*

It should be noted that:

“Publishing images of children brings good publicity and usually gives pleasure to children and their parents, but also raises some issues worth noting briefly:

**Images count as personal data under the terms of the Data Protection.*

**Images of children in media with a wide circulation may lead to children being traced by people who should not be able to find them. This affects children who have been involved in disputed custody matters, adoptions, abductions or other civil or criminal matters.*

**Images of children may be used by paedophiles to target prospective victims, which is possible if identifying details are given.*

**Images of children may be used or manipulated for the purposes of child pornography, which is a growing problem on the internet.”*

At Revival City Church, photographs are used in our magazine, flyers and on the website to promote activities and celebrate the life of the church. Permission to take and use photographs is included in the registration forms for children’s Sunday school groups. At other times, it will be announced that photographs are being taken. Parents who donate photographs to celebrate important family occasions, such as baptisms, dedications, births, do so knowing that they will be published in the magazine or on the website. We will do our best to request that photographs taken by members of the congregation during church services or events are not to be posted on Social Media. Parents are entitled to withdraw their children from group photographs.

Children who are photographed will not be named. Where an event is to be celebrated (e.g. Baptism) specific permission will be sought from the parent to name their child.

Photographs or images are not to be stored on personal cameras, phones or computers. Those who manage our website and magazine use their own authorised computers where data is securely stored. They should take note of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998) and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

Procedure to be followed if there are disclosures, allegations, complaints or suspicions

Hearing a child's disclosure of abuse:

If a child asks to talk in confidence DO NOT promise confidentiality. You have a duty to refer a child or young person who is at risk.

Imminent risk

If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child.

Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to children's social services.

If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused

Agree with your group leader, RCC Safeguarding Officer who will make the referral.

Make an immediate telephone referral to the children's social services. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral

Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family. Remember to give as much detail as possible, distinguishing between fact and opinion and also what is first-hand knowledge and what has been heard from others (hearsay).

For out of hours referrals, call the emergency social work team or where urgent, the police.

Ensure that you notify your supervisor and RCC Officer/Adviser.

Sharing concerns with parents

Where there are concerns that the parent(s) may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with parent(s) may place the child at further risk. In such a case advice must always firstly be sought from children's social services or police as to how and who informs the parent(s).

Police Emergency Telephone Number 999

Police Non-emergency Telephone Number 101

Children's social services telephone number 020 8545 4226 or 020 8545 4227 (out of hours: 020 8770 5000)

Churches Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

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RECORD KEEPING AND DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Act 1998 contains principles governing the use of personal data. This means that the eight principles put in place by the Data Protection Act 1998 need to be applied. These say that the data must be:

- (i) fairly and lawfully processed;
- (II) processed for limited purposes;
- (III) adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- (iv) accurate;
- (v) not kept for longer than is necessary;
- (vi) processed in line with your rights;
- (vii) secure; and,
- (viii) not transferred to countries without adequate protection.

Revival City Church should maintain records relating to church appointments, including a note of when a DBS check was obtained. Records should be kept secure and retained after the people concerned have left the church. Records of child protection matters should be kept, together with a note of the outcome. These should be retained even if the information received was judged to be malicious, unsubstantiated or unfounded.

Records of known offenders against children should be retained indefinitely, together with a copy of any agreement and reviews.

Nothing in data protection legislation seeks to limit appropriate disclosure in order to protect an individual who either is, or may be, at risk. What matters is that the process of information sharing is reasonable and proportionate.

Further advice if necessary is available from the website of the Information Commissioner.

At Revival City Church, specific safeguarding issues are shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis, managed by the Church Safeguarding Officer. Information is not to be shared with others and privacy and confidentiality is to be maintained at all times. Churches are small, tightknit communities and speculation is not to be encouraged.

It is the responsibility of **all** of us at Revival City Church (congregations, members of all groups, etc) to be aware of safeguarding and to report to the Safeguarding Officer any concerns they may have or awareness of any divergence from this policy.

This policy will be published on the church website and a hard copy will be displayed in church.

The Revival City Church Safeguarding Officer will keep a list of those who work regularly with children and will ensure that they receive personal copies of this document.

The church website regularly updates its policies and guidance and it is the responsibility of all of us to inform ourselves of any changes. The information therein provides full information, guidance and procedural support relating to all aspects of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Elsie Nunoo

Revival City Church Safeguarding Officer

Review date: January 2018