

# CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## **Beulah Baptist Church**

### **1. Policy Statement**

As the people of Beulah Baptist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual, within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community regardless of age. It is the responsibility of each one of us to follow good practice guidelines in our work/interaction with young people and be alert to the main areas of abuse.

We aim to make sure all paid or volunteer workers are aware of what constitutes abuse and the noticeable signs of abuse; including neglect and discrimination; financial, institutional, physical, psychological and sexual abuse.

### **2. The Church trustees and the Safeguarding team**

#### **3.**

The safeguarding team will comprise

- i) the designated person
  - ii) the safeguarding deacon
  - iii) the youth deacon
  - iv) the pastoral elder
  - v) an independent person
  - vi) the church senior pastor and associate pastor
- additionally a church officer may attend.

The church trustees with the safeguarding team will

- a) oversee implementation of the policy
- b) approve all new work and workers with children and young people
- c) review annually the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

### **4. Appointment of Volunteer Workers with Children and Young People (CYP) and Adults at Risk (AaR)**

All new volunteer workers with children, young people or adults at risk will:

- a) be known within the Beulah Baptist Church community
- b) be approved by the Church Trustees and/or child protection team and or the leader of the group that they will be working in
- c) apply for the Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ( **DBS** ) disclosure, according to current guidelines of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, outlined in 'Safe to Grow' and 'Safe to Belong';
- d) have a pastoral conversation with a relevant worker within the church. This conversation and any relevant paperwork including an application form should cover:
  - the responsibilities of the job
  - supervision and support
  - applicant's background and relevant experience
  - any appropriate training.
- e) provide the names of two referees

### **5. Appointment of Paid Workers with Children and Young People or Adults at Risk**

All new paid workers with children, young people and adults at risk will:

- a) be approved by the Church Trustees
- b) apply for the Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ( **DBS**) disclosure, according to current Baptist procedures
- c) be interviewed by an experienced appropriate worker within the church
- d) provide adequate references
- e) undertake a probationary period
- f) undertake appropriate training

*These requirements are in line with Beulah Baptist Church's recruitment policy.*

Any staff member/volunteer/applicant for any role within Beulah Baptist Church who is found to be barred from working with children or adults at risk, will be dismissed and the Independent Safeguarding Authority informed.

## **6. Managing Work ( Volunteers and Paid staff)**

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- a) All workers will be provided with a job description informing them of their responsibilities and the person to whom they are accountable
- b) There is an expectation that workers will prepare thoroughly for their work.
- c) Wherever applicable, workers will undertake appropriate training, with the church's support, including Child Protection and/or Adults at Risk, or refresher courses at least every three years.

## **8. Recognising and Dealing with Abuse**

- a) If abuse is suspected, workers must make a signed and dated written record and report this to the person to whom they are responsible.
- b) Workers must be aware of what to do in the event of a child disclosing to them alleged abuse or concerns regarding adults at risk (see Safeguarding Booklet in the church office or on request from the church's safeguarding team)
- c) Appropriate training in this area will be offered

## **9. Good Practice**

- a) All workers must report to the Safeguarding team any incidents concerning the welfare and well being of a child, young person or adult at risk.
- b) All workers must read, sign and adhere to the Beulah Baptist Church code of conduct.
- c) Workers will be made aware of procedures relating to practical issues concerning:
  - i) When only one worker is available (appendix 1)
  - ii) Transporting in cars and minibuses (appendix 2)
  - iii) All matters to cover health and safety.

## **10. One to one working with children, young people and adults at risk**

### **a) Adults at risk**

Except in emergencies, at least two workers should be present when working with adults at risk. If only one worker is available, and only where appropriate, groups could merge together or use the same or open plan adjoining rooms.

Adults at risk should travel with more than one volunteer except in emergencies in which case another responsible adult should be notified of the circumstance at the time. Where appropriate, the permission of a parent/guardian or carer should be obtained.

### **b) Children/young people**

Beulah recognises that in some circumstances, particularly with young people, one to one work and mentoring relationships are a necessary part of a good youth work program. These relationships must adhere to the following guidelines

- i) Relationships of this nature are known by the youth worker or church officials
- ii) All relationships of this nature coincide with the appropriate guidelines set out in appendix 3

### **11. Office Holders within the Church**

Church members who are asked to consider taking an office within the church must be aware that they cannot hold office if they have any conviction or caution for offences against children and young people or adults at risk. They would be expected to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ( **DBS**) check

### **12. Rehabilitation of Sex Offenders**

Beulah Baptist Church will, in conjunction with any appropriate outside official (e.g. police, probation officer) set up a signed agreement/contract with any known sex offender who wishes to attend the church.

### **13. Church website**

The following restrictions are imposed on photographs of children, young people and adults at risk included on the church website:

- a) No one will be listed by name on the website
- b) Only groups of people will be shown,
- c) Photographs will only be displayed after permission has been obtained from either the people in question, family member or nominated supporter or, in the case of children or young people; from parents/legal guardians

### **14. First Aid**

Whenever possible, first aid should be administered by a qualified first-aider. If it is necessary for clothing to be removed for treatment, two adults should be present. Similarly if help is needed with toileting or washing after soiling, two adults should be present. All first-aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded.

### **15. Communicating electronically**

- a) If young people want a leader to hold their mobile phone numbers, email addresses or similar, agreement should be sought from their parents/guardians. In the case of adults at risk, permission should be sought if appropriate (see Appendix 4)
- b) Any electronic communication should be such that it would not cause embarrassment were it to be seen by the person's parents/guardians or church officials.
- c) Communication through social networking sites (e.g. 'facebook') should not be over familiar; photographs should only be posted in accordance with restrictions in section 11 Church website (see Appendix 3 for more information)

### **16. Resources**

A variety of resources exist to assist and support Beulah Baptist Church in the wellbeing of their children and young people:

- i) SEBA the regional Baptist association who will give help and guidance or endeavour to pass you on to the relevant organisation

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- ii) 'Safe to Grow' the Baptist Union child protection guidelines (copies available from Baptist House and Beulah church office)
- iii) 'Safe to Belong' the Baptist Union safeguarding adults at risk policy
- iii) "Can we chat? Working safely with young people one to one" John Langford, Grove publications, 2006
- v) Respond- Supporting people with learning difficulties, their families, carers and professionals affected by trauma and abuse.
- vi) Mencap Learning disabilities helpline 0808 808 1111

## **17.Complaints/Allegations made against staff**

Beulah Baptist church takes seriously all complaints made against members of paid staff or volunteers. All such concerns/complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Designated Person and the Church Leadership in order that appropriate procedures may be activated. If the allegation involves what appears to be physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, the Designated Person in collaboration with the Leadership will take action. If the complaint is against the Designated Person, the Minister (or in his/her absence, a member of the Leadership Team) should be consulted. Where it appears a criminal offence may have taken place, this will be reported to the Police and the appropriate Social Services Department.

## **18.Records**

Signed and dated, brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents or concerns relating to this document and actions taken relating to children and young people or adults at risk. These will be kept by the Designated Person in a locked cupboard in the church office. They may be accessed by the Designated Person or Church Leadership. Referrals to Social Services under the Protection procedures will be recorded in detail.

## **19.Safety on Church Premises**

The presence of intruders or suspicious persons approaching children and young people or adults at risk will be reported to the Police immediately.

## **20.Availability of the Policy**

Copies will be given to all workers and the Church leadership. It should be brought to the attention of Church Members at a church meeting and available on request to Church Members, carers of adults at risk who attend church and parents/guardians of children and young people attending church groups.

## **Appendix 1 Procedure for one worker**

Except in emergencies, at least two workers should be present with children, young people and adults at risk at all times. If there is only one worker available then groups should merge together, use the same room or open plan adjoining rooms if possible. If this is not possible the session should be cancelled.

Pastoral visitors should follow the guidelines detailed in Appendix 5

## **Appendix 2**

### **Procedure for transporting**

Children, young people and (where appropriate) adults at risk, should travel with more than one adult except in emergencies when another responsible adult should be notified of the circumstances at the time. In each case the permission of the CYP's parent or guardian must be sought and agreed before the journey, either verbally or in written form.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Guidelines for one to one work with children and young people and adults at risk**

#### **Accountability –**

Any one-to-one work must have the support of the church youth worker or another church official for support, guidance and accountability. It is important that a signed record is made of any issue that may arise through conversation. This should include, when and where the meeting took place, the essence of conversation, any advice given or recommendations made and what was agreed. The person affected has the right to view these records at any time.

#### **Maintaining distance –**

The worker needs to maintain healthy boundaries when working with young person or a adult at risk they should understand appropriate distance and healthy levels of self-awareness including appropriate times of day for corresponding with young person and adequate knowledge of where to refer a young person or adult at risk if necessary. Relationships must be beneficial for the development of that young person or adult at risk and not the worker involved.

#### **Confidentiality –**

Appropriate confidentiality is necessary. Workers must never promise 100% confidentiality. If worker believes young person/ adult at risk is at risk of harm they must report this through the appropriate channels. It is imperative that the boundaries of confidentiality are stated at the beginning of this relationship and reminders of these are given when necessary. There are times when the worker may believe that it would be helpful to talk to others about the matters that have been shared. In this situation, the worker should talk this through with the young person/ adult at risk before proceeding.

**Venue –** Any contact with young people should be in a public place (e.g. doors should be left open), at an appropriate time and in view of another adult (i.e. not early morning, late night or whilst they should be at school). Contact with adults at risk should also be in similarly appropriate places and at appropriate times.

It is unlikely that workers will need to make a pastoral visit of children and their families at home on behalf of Beulah Baptist Church. If a situation occurs where it is needed then it can only be done with agreement of one of the Pastors.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Good practice for electronic communication.**

#### **Text and e-mail communication**

All young people need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to email, messenger services, social networks and mobile phones including texting. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people will have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their email address or mobile telephone number and will not be pressurised into divulging information they would rather keep to themselves.

### 1) Email

Email is sometimes used by workers to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used workers ensure messages are in the public domain by copying each message to [safeguarding@baptist.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@baptist.org.uk). It is important workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, and although it should be obvious when an email is ending, workers should never use inappropriate terms such as 'luv' to round things off.

### 2) Communicating using Instant Messaging (eg. MSN Messenger, AOL AIM, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.)

Instant messenger should be kept to an absolute minimum. Workers should save significant conversations as a text and also keep a log of any significant communication stating with whom and when they communicated. Restricted profiling should be used on Facebook

### 3) Mobile Phones

Particular diligence needs to be applied when workers use mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- All mobile phone use will be primarily about information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on/shown to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language, particularly when texting, and should not use words such as 'luv' or abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Paid children's/young people's workers are issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing or by agreement with the church officers may use their own phone if they agree to make their phone records available to the leadership on request.
- Workers should not take photos on their personal equipment.

## **Appendix 5 Pastoral visitors' guidelines**

### **What do pastoral visitors do?**

- Show friendship
- Be a listener
- Pray for others
- Encourage other's faith
- Possibly give some practical help

### **How often should they visit?**

Home visiting once a month is suggested as a minimum, depending on circumstances. Occasional telephone calls may also be helpful at times

### **Who should be a pastoral visitor?**

Someone who:

- is called to minister the love of Jesus through words, actions and prayers

- has an active personal faith
- possesses practical & spiritual gifts, particularly 'people skills'
- is aware of confidentiality issues
- is willing to undertake training, particularly adult safeguarding
- agrees to have a DRB check
- knows the limits of their capabilities and experience and when to advise or refer pastoral situations to the pastoral elder or one of the ministers
- speaks well of Beulah Baptist Church
- maintains a distinction between pastoral care and professional counselling, (unless they possess the necessary professional qualification)

### **Safe visiting practice**

It is preferable to not visit someone of the opposite sex on your own. Make sure that someone else knows where you are when you visit, especially the first time.

### **Who might need a pastoral visitor?**

Most pastoral visits by this team would usually be longterm to elderly people in their own homes who are housebound, or are in residential care. There may be occasions when other people are ill or undergoing difficult circumstances where short term support is appropriate

### **Know your limits**

Avoid allowing people to become dependent on you as a pastoral visitor. Be clear about what you are able to offer and what the person might need to go elsewhere for. Don't promise anything you cannot fulfil.

### **Food for thought**

Ron Bushyager, a registered psychotherapist and Anglican clergyman says this:  
 'One of the challenges in offering pastoral care is that individuals sometimes believe that the church should care for them as they want God to care for them. This often looks like a total and comprehensive level of support, with great disappointment when there is a boundary set or a small failure of provision. It is useful to acknowledge that although the church points towards God in the way it endeavours to support others, they can never truly embody the nature and qualities of divine care'