

CONNECT Church Maidstone (CCM)

Safeguarding Guidelines for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Version 1: Approved by the Elders:

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Safeguarding Policy

CCM has a Safeguarding Policy which is available for viewing on Sunday mornings and copies can be obtained by contacting the Church Administrator. This Policy will be reviewed as required, and at least every three years, to ensure maintenance with best practice. All children's and youth workers and those working with vulnerable adults will be supplied with a copy of the Policy, and should familiarise themselves with its contents.

These Safeguarding Guidelines explain how the Policy is to be applied in practice.

Appointment Process

No person shall be permitted to work with children, young people¹ or vulnerable adults unless appointed to such purpose by the CCM Elders. Such appointments will be minuted by the Elders' meetings.

The appointment process contains some key components:

- Elders' approval of Job Specification for each role;
- Completion of Job Application Form by applicant;
- Completion of Self-Disclosure Form by applicant;
- The taking up of references;
- Interview of applicant by Elders and/or others as appropriate;
- Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check;
- Assuming no questions raised by DBS check, sign-off by the CCM Safeguarding Co-ordinator;
- Record of appointment in Elders' meeting minutes.

Responsibility for arranging documentation lies jointly with the CCM Church Administrator and Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who have oversight of safeguarding administration.

List of Appointed Staff

The Church Administrator will hold a register of all appointed workers.

DBS Checks & Records

DBS checks will be undertaken as necessary for all appointed workers. Those under the age of 18 who are assisting in-group will be regarded as Junior Helpers, working under supervision, and will not normally be DBS checked.

First Aid

Where possible, children's and youth groups will have a qualified first aider on the premises during meetings or present at activities and events. CCM undertakes to arrange training for those volunteering to be first aiders.

The Church Administrator will hold a register of all qualified first-aiders.

CCM are responsible for providing First Aid boxes in the premises it uses. First aid boxes will normally be present in the main meeting hall, the crèche and Light Club rooms, and available for other church activities as necessary.

¹ CCM defines children and young people as those who have yet to reach their 18th birthday.

There is a process for recording any accidents requiring attention (see "Accidents" section below) and administration of First Aid. Use of First Aid equipment must be advised promptly to the Church Administrator, so that materials can be replenished without delay.

Accidents

If an accident occurs at any CCM meeting or function which results in personal injury or significant damage to equipment/property (whether CCM- or third party-owned), then an **Accident Form** shall be completed. The person completing the Form shall normally be the CCM person-in-charge or group leader at the time of the incident, and the Form counter-signed by the Elder with pastoral responsibility (or, if not present, his nominated deputy).

Spare Accident Forms will be held by the Church Administrator, be available at all main CCM meetings and can be downloaded from the church's website.

In the event of an accident to a child or young person, parents/carers will be promptly informed of the incident by the person-in-charge of the group activity at the time. The completed original of the Accident Form will be held by the Church Administrator and a photocopy provided to the parents/carers. A photocopy will also be sent to the church Elder with pastoral responsibility, who will review the details, take any necessary remedial action, and then destroy the photocopy.

Completed Accident Forms will be securely filed in the church office by the Church Administrator, and retained for a minimum of 3 years.

Safeguarding Incidents and Concerns

Workers should write down unusual events or conversations, recording what they witnessed or were told, on a **Safeguarding Incident Form**. Group leaders should ensure that they have spare copies of this Form at the functions for which they are responsible.

The completed original Form should be handed in person as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator (or their deputy), along with any other relevant documentation. Where no member of the Safeguarding team is available the worker should keep the documents until they can be handed over. If the concerns are serious and urgent then the appropriate authorities must be contacted immediately by the worker concerned. THIRTY-ONE EIGHT operates a 24 hour helpline, if in doubt call THIRTY-ONE EIGHT in the first instance for advice.

Under no circumstances should the details of the incident or concern be shared with any other third party.

Contact details for relevant authorities as follows:

- ThirtyOne Eight helpline: 0845 120 4550 or 01322 517817.
- Children's Social Services office: (24 hours): 0300 333 5433.
- Adult Social Services office telephone number (24 hours): 0300 333 5433.
- The Police Child Protection Team can be contacted by dialling 101 and asking to speak to someone in the child abuse investigation unit.

Guidance for Children's & Youth Meetings

- **General Information and Consent Forms:** Every child or young person joining a group should have a **General Information and Consent Form** completed and signed by a parent or guardian at the earliest opportunity. The form will include basic personal information, emergency contact details, information on allergies and/or relevant medical conditions, and whether adult assistance with toilet visits is required. The

form should be completed and signed by the parent/carer and returned to the group leader. The original of the Form shall be securely filed by the Church Administrator, with a photocopy sent to the group leader for reference.

- **Keeping Records:** A register of children or young people attending a group or activity shall be maintained, together with a register of the workers present. A record of departure times should be maintained if the child/young person does not attend the whole session. Group leaders should be aware of other people/events in the vicinity and should supervise accordingly. The registers should be kept by each group leader when not in use.

Any disclosure by a child or vulnerable adult, or suspicion raised, should be recorded on a **Safeguarding Incident Form** and reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or their deputy as soon as possible. If the situation is urgent then immediate advice must be sought from the appropriate external authorities.

- **Adult/Child Ratios:** Below are ratios of adults to children that will apply for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or one-off holiday club events, although it should be regarded as a minimum for any residential activities. These are the ratios required in regulations governing day care for those aged under 8:

	Adult : Children	
2 yrs & under	1	: 3
3 years	1	: 4
4 to 8 years	1	: 8

N.B. Day Care regulations (OFSTED) cover activities which last for six days or more, for children up to eight years of age where there is no one with parental responsibility with them and where the activity lasts for two hours or more in a day. However, the church requires that these guidelines are used for all relevant activities.

For children over 8, there is no official guidance. A suggested ratio for internal or local events is a minimum of two adults (with at least one of each gender for mixed-gender groups, and of the same sex for single-gender groups) for up to 20 children, with an additional leader for every 10 further children. Following a risk assessment, this ratio would need to be increased for outdoor activities or residential events, and more so if that activity is considered high risk or dangerous, or when catering for children with disabilities/special needs.

For any group meeting on its own in the building, there needs to be a minimum of 3 adult workers present.

- **Parental Presence:** Except where parents are present on duty as a worker or as part of the group structure (e.g. parent and toddler group), parents should be welcomed to observe. Where parents are intended to be present, overall supervision by appointed and DBS checked workers is essential.

Whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they might be strangers.

Be aware that for some children with special needs it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

- **Listening to Children:**

The children's or youth workers need to communicate effectively to children/young people that they are valued, that what they say is important and that there are people who are happy to listen to them.

If a child wants to talk:

- Offer the child/young person privacy but remember their and your safety;
- Remember not to promise confidentiality;
- A child/young person may not be wanting to talk about abuse;
- Be aware of how to respond if a child/young person does disclose abuse;
- Remember your role is to listen and report, and not to investigate.

- **Touching Children**

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Discourage horseplay that can over-excite children, lead to undesirable physical contact between children, and increases risk of accident and injury.
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported (***Safeguarding Incident Form***).

- **Discipline:** Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life and is an expression of God's love for an individual. (Hebrews 12:5-12 & Proverbs 22:6)

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the children in your care.
- Work on each individual child's positives. Do not compare one child with another, but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect children to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.

- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children attention and resist allowing demanding children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- If children are bored they often misbehave, so review your programme regularly.
- **NEVER** smack or hit a child and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love, NEVER in anger. (Call on support from other leaders/workers if you feel so angry you may deal with the situation unwisely.)
- Lay down ground rules (e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, respect for property) and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if not kept.
- Every child is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows, therefore, that each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Some children have a tendency to be disruptive in a group. This can be for a variety of reasons, often for attention. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.

Guidelines for discipline:

- Have a disruptive child sit right in front of you or get a leader/worker to sit next to them – be proactive and encourage leaders/workers to be proactive rather than wait to be asked to deal with a situation.
- At the earliest opportunity, take a disruptive child to one side, speak to them and try to establish any reason for the upset, engaging with them, encouraging their strengths while challenging them to change their behaviour.

If a child/young person continues to be disruptive:

- Warn the child/young person that you may speak to their parents/carers about their behaviour.
- Inform the child/young person that they may be asked to leave the setting, either to go back into the church service or go outside the room, under supervision.
- If the behaviour continues over a period of several sessions, after advising the parents/carers the child should be warned that their continuing disruptive behaviour may result in longer term exclusion from the group.

If a child/young person is harming him/herself, another person or property then other children/young people present should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request the child/young person to STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling for additional help, (e.g. parents, police) if they do not stop. In exceptional circumstances and with assistance, you might need to restrain the child/young person to prevent them harming themselves, others or property whilst you wait for the parents or police. In these circumstances a report should be made to the Safeguarding Coordinator (***Safeguarding Incident Form***).

- **Toilets**

- Children of Infant School age and below should be accompanied to the toilet area by a DBS checked leader. Unless assistance is required, as either a function of age or disability, the leader should merely wait outside the toilet block and then escort the child back to the group.
- If assistance is required, this should have been notified on the **General Information and Consent Form** and permission given. Where help is given (or where injury of a private nature is being checked), two adult workers should be present.
- Where children or young people are unescorted to the toilet block, the group leaders should be aware of their absence and, if absence is longer than is deemed appropriate, checks should be made.

- **Food & Drink**

- Permission will be sought on the **General Information and Consent Form** to serve refreshments. This Form requests information about relevant medical conditions and any food allergies.
- Appropriate hygiene standards are expected to be maintained.

Day Visits & Activities

Day visits and activities that take place away from regular meeting venues should have leadership cover that at least meets minimum guidelines (see above). However, certain types of activities will require a higher ratio of leaders to children/young people and this should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

In addition an **Activity Consent Form** should be completed (preferably in advance of the event date). The signed Forms should be carried by the group leader during the event/activity.

Blank forms should be available at the drop off point for completion by a parent/carer. Only children who have submitted a completed form should be allowed to attend the visit or activity.

Once the activity is over, the completed forms should be handed to the Church Administrator for secure filing in case of any future investigation.

Residential Based Activities

Residential activities, either away from the church's premises or on it, should have leadership cover that at least meets minimum guidelines (see above). However, it may be appropriate, depending on the age and gender mix of the children/young people, to have a higher ratio of leaders to children/young people and this should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

An **Activity Consent Form** must be completed in advance for this type of activity. The signed Form should be kept on file at the church office with a photocopy to be carried by the group leader during the event/activity.

Once the activity is over any photocopies of the forms should be destroyed and all originals filed securely by the Church Administrator.

Holiday Bible Club

Holiday clubs will have a specific registration form which will be signed by parents/carers and kept on file at the church.

Leadership cover will be at least that which meets minimum guidelines (see above). However, it may be appropriate, depending on the age and gender mix of the children/young people and the activities planned to have a higher ratio of leaders to children/young people and this should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Groups Attended by Parents/Carers

Where activities are attended by parents who retain responsibility for the children/young people (e.g. Little Steps), an appropriate registration form should be signed and retained on file. The key clause in the form is recognition that responsibility for children/young people at the activity remains in the hands of the parent/carer.

Where a child is involved in an accident or incident during one of these group sessions, check that the parent is aware and is taking appropriate action. It is the parent's responsibility to deal with any issue relating to his or her child. However, assistance should be offered and, in the event of any accident, an Accident Form should be completed and handed to the church administrator for secure filing. A copy of the completed form should be sent to the child's parent/carer.

Photography

Care must be exercised with regard to photographs, videos and web cams of clearly identifiable people. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission (verbal or written) must be obtained of all the people (children and adults) who will appear in a photograph, video or web cam image before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, or telephone/mobile numbers.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.

Transporting Children

These guidelines shall apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children and young people, organised by or on behalf of the church or any of its organised groups. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between parties with parental responsibility.

An **Activity Consent Form** should be signed by parents/carers where transport of children or young people is necessary or appropriate.

Guidelines on transporting children are as follows:

- Only those who have gone through the church recruitment procedures and have read and accepted CCM's Safeguarding Policy should transport children.
- Any motor vehicle adapted to carry more than eight passengers for hire or reward is regarded in law as a Public Service Vehicle (PSV). A small bus permit is therefore

required for all mini buses used to carry between 6 and 16 passengers. [CCM has obtained a standard bus permit (also known as a Section 19 permit under the Transport Act 1985).]

- If a church uses a mini-bus and the children/young people are asked to make a contribution towards the trip, these contributions must only cover out of pocket expenses such as fuel, parking and toll fees.
- Car drivers shall be 21 years of age or over, have held a full driving licence for at least two years and have adequate insurance. The vehicle must have a current UK roadworthiness certificate. Drivers should inform their car insurance company that they are involved in or are planning to be involved in the transport of children or young people from the church.
- It is possible that drivers may be alone with a child for short periods (e.g. dropping off the last child). Consideration should be given to dropping off the least vulnerable child last and plan routes accordingly.
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist children stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid the confusion over whether a child has been transported home or at worst left behind.
- If travelling in convoy with cars and minibuses, please note that the maximum speed for a minibus is 50 mph on single lane roads, and 60 mph on dual carriageways, even where the limit for cars is higher. On motorways minibuses may travel up to 70 mph.
- At collection or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult. When a child is dropped off at home, ensure that the child has entered the premises.
- It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular child (e.g. where there has been a disagreement or where a child/young person has a 'crush' on a driver).
- If parents transport their children (e.g. to and from activities), ensure that all are made aware that such arrangements are the responsibility of the parents involved and not the church.
- Seat belts must be worn by all passengers and drivers.
- Appropriate child restraints (baby seats, child seats, booster seats, booster cushions) should be used for children up to 135 cm in height or their 12th birthday (whichever they reach first).

Visiting Children At Home

Children's workers and leaders will need to visit children and their families at home from time to time. The parents/carers may or may not attend church and it is important therefore they have been given information about the group including contact telephone numbers.

Guidelines for visiting:

- Inform the church's Safeguarding Co-ordinator or another worker of the proposed visit.
- Never go into a child's home if a parent/carer is absent except in an emergency.

- Keep a written record of the visit detailing the following:
 - Purpose
 - Time you arrived and left
 - Who was present
 - What was discussed
- If the parent/carer is absent when the call is made, leave some means of identification and explanation for the visit that can be given to them if the child is home alone or with other children. **Do not enter the house if the parent, guardian or carer is absent, unless there is an emergency situation.**
- The invitation of a child to a worker's home, other than as part of a group/programme meeting, must **only** be done with the knowledge and permission of the parent, guardian or carer. Under no circumstances should a child visit a worker without another person being present.
- Any visitor to the home of a child or young person should carry a recognised form of identification (e.g. driving licence, passport).

Electronic Media & Communication

- Electronic communication with a child of young person should generally relate to group activities or should be in response to electronic communication received. The author of any electronic communication should be clearly identified and, where appropriate, the name of the group should be specified.
- When using social networking sites, children's or youth leaders should be mindful whether it is appropriate for children or young people to be included as "friends". They should also consider whether the content of their home page is appropriate for children or young people.
- Official church computers should not be used by children or young people for any purpose.
- Any discovered misuse of church internet access should be reported to the church's Safeguarding Officer.

Forms

A range of forms is available from the church website and church office for use in children's and youth work. These are:

- General Information and Consent Form
- Activity Consent Form
- Accident Form
- Safeguarding Incident Form

Data Protection

No personal data should be obtained or held unless the individual has given consent. In the case of sensitive data, (defined as race, religious belief, physical or mental health, sexuality, criminal offences) specific consent must be obtained (i.e. the individual must be informed that this type of data is being held, told the reason for it and give permission for its use). NB: photographs count as sensitive data since they may reveal information about the subject's race. Permission should always be obtained to keep a copy or use a photograph of an individual.

Data obtained for one purpose should not be used for a different purpose.

Do not collect information about individuals which is not necessary for the purpose intended. Do not ask questions or seek data without ensuring that the information is relevant. If data is given or obtained which is excessive for the purpose it should be immediately deleted or destroyed.

If data is kept for a considerable length of time it must be reviewed and if necessary updated. No data should be kept unless it is reasonable to assume it is accurate.

There should be regular reviews of files containing data to ensure that it is not kept for longer than required for the particular purpose.

You should always consider the rights of the individual in respect of their data. These are, briefly, that consent should be obtained if data is to be kept and used for any purpose; that individuals are entitled to know what data is kept about them; and that no personal data must be disclosed to anyone outside or inside the church who does not strictly need to know, without the individual's consent.

Personal data must be kept in a secure place (e.g. in filing cabinet which can be locked or in a room which can be locked when unoccupied). Unauthorised access to any computers that contain personal data should be prevented.

No data can be transferred, even for a legitimate purpose, outside of the EEA (European Economic Area - most of Europe) without the consent of the individual. This is particularly important when putting information on the Web which can be accessed from anywhere in the world.

Review

These guidelines will be reviewed annually and any changes will be advised to all children's and youth workers.

Useful Contact Information

In an emergency where there is imminent danger call 999.

CCM Safeguarding Co-Ordinator: Karen Kamundi: t. 07757129136 or 07903361417

CCM Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Lloyd Morgan: t: 07712893211

CCM Church Administrator: Karen Kamundi: t. 07757129136 or
office@connectchurchmaidstone.org.uk

THIRTY-ONE EIGHT helpline: t. 0845 120 4550 or 01322 517817

Children's Social Services (24 hours): t. 0300 333 5433.

Adult Social Services (24 hours): t. 0300 333 5433.

Police Child Protection Team: t. 101 (ask to speak to someone in the child abuse investigation unit).