

Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

Introduction

These good practice guidelines have been written to enable mission and ministry. Christchurch Baptist Church wants to ensure that all people have the opportunity to engage with church and its community life in ways that promote well-being and safety. Everyone is welcome.

As a church we are aware that it is not possible to guard against every eventuality of abuse and those who perpetrate it, however, we are committed to following robust guidelines to ensure we do everything possible to minimise risk. We want everyone, including adults at risk, to feel safe and supported.

Who Are Adults At Risk?

The term *'adults at risk'* has replaced the previously used *'vulnerable adult'*, focusing on the situation rather than the characteristics of the adult themselves. The label *'vulnerable adult'* may wrongly imply that some of the fault for any abuse lies with the abused adult.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following definition taken from CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service):

'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.'

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are some situations where risks may increase. Some of these circumstances may include:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty (especially if it creates a dependency on or needing help from others)
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past abuse or trauma
- English is not their first language

What Is Abuse?

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

It comes from the misuse of power and control that someone has over another. Harm is the result of this mistreatment or abuse.

Abuse may consist of one single act or many repeated acts, and it can occur in any relationship at any time of life. It can take many forms, not just physical or violent acts, but it may also be verbal, sexual, psychological, spiritual or financial. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act. Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

Who Can Abuse?

Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual or a group. Those who may abuse include:

- A partner, child, relative or friend
- A paid or volunteer carer
- A health, social care or other worker
- A church worker or minister of religion

Abuse can be committed by one adult at risk towards another. This is still abuse and should be handled appropriately.

Where Could Abuse Happen?

Abuse can take place in all kinds of different settings. For example:

- At home.
- In supported housing.
- At someone else's home.
- Within a nursing home, hospital, residential care or day care.
- At work or in educational establishments.
- In a church.
- In a car or other vehicle.
- Online or via mobile communications.

Types of Abuse

There is no single definition for each different type of abuse, with different terminology used by different organisations. Using many different sources, we have compiled a simple definition for each of the main types of abuse, along with some of the behaviours that each type of abuse may include:

Type Of Abuse	Typical Behaviours
Physical Abuse	To inflict pain, physical injury or suffering by, for example, hitting, slapping, pinching, kicking, burning, use of inappropriate restraint or medication.
Emotional Abuse	The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component but will likely includes, for example, mocking, coercing,

	controlling behaviour; bullying, harassment, humiliation, the lack of privacy or choice, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation; making someone feel worthless, a lack of love or affection, or ignoring the person.
Sexual Abuse	<p>Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour including, for example, rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting, incest, making sexual remarks, suggestions or teasing, enforced nakedness or photography of a person in sexually explicit ways.</p> <p>No one should ever enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.</p>
Neglect	A person's wellbeing is impaired, and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding that someone's needs are. Neglect includes, for example, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services; ignoring medical or physical care needs, including not giving someone proper food or assistance with eating or drinking; failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult (particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess the risks to themselves or to others); deliberately withholding aids, such as walking sticks or hearing aids; denying social, religious or cultural contacts, or denying contact with the family.
Financial Abuse	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions which can include, for example, theft, fraud or embezzlement of monies, benefits or goods; exploitation or profiteering; applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance, or financial transactions; the abuse of influence, power or friendship to persuade a person to make gifts or change their will; being charged excessive amounts for services.
Spiritual	The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g. minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack which can include, for example, forcing religious ideas or practices onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices; extreme pastoral interference in personal matters - reducing individual choice and responsibility; the misuse of scripture or power to control behaviour and pressure to conform; the requirement of obedience to the abuser, or the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position; intrusive

	healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in people experiencing emotional, physical or sexual harm; The denial of the right of faith or opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God; exclusion of people to the full range of church life (no arrangements for gluten-free wafers or non-alcoholic wine at Communion, or fear of involving those who are HIV positive).
Institutional	<p>The mistreatment or abuse of an adult by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill- treatment.</p> <p>The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse which might include, for example, the inability of an institution to safeguard people from emotional or even physical harm and neglect; having fixed rules and routines by which people are controlled; people being prevented from doing things that are their rights; not having access to personal possessions or personal allowance.</p>
Discriminatory	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability. This may include, for example, ageist, racist, sexist, or abusive behaviour based on a person’s disability; abuse linked to a person’s sexuality; harassment, slurs or similar treatment; withholding services without proper justification, or lack of disabled access to services and activities.

PLEASE NOTE: Abuse does not have to fit solely into any one of the categories, and often more than one type of abuse may be taking place including other forms of abuse:

Other Forms of Abuse	Typical Behaviours
Domestic Abuse	<p>Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of their age, gender, sexuality or social status.</p> <p>Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually there is a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner.</p> <p>For more information on domestic abuse, see the BUGB Guide To Domestic Abuse.</p>
Cyber Abuse (also known as cyber	Cyber abuse is the use of information technology (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging,

<p>bullying or cyber stalking)</p>	<p>chatrooms, etc.) to harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner. It can include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate the recipient. It may also include threatening a person’s earnings, employment, reputation or safety.</p> <p>For more information on cyber abuse, see the BUGB Guide To Cyber Safety.</p>
<p>Self-Harm or Self-Neglect</p>	<p>Self-Harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person’s own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An adult at risk may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.</p> <p>For more information on dealing with issues of self-harm, see the BUGB Guide To Self-Harm.</p>
<p>Mate Crime</p>	<p>‘Mate crime’ is When people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.</p>
<p>Modern Slavery</p>	<p>Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. It is illegal in every country of the world.</p>
<p>Human Trafficking</p>	<p>Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.</p>
<p>Radicalisation</p>	<p>The radicalisation of individuals is the process by which people come to support any form of extremism and, in some cases, join terrorist groups. Some adults are more vulnerable to the risk of being groomed (see glossary) into terrorism than others.</p>
<p>Honour Marriage or Forced Marriage</p>	<p>An honour marriage/forced marriage is when one or both of the spouses do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage. There may be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure exerted in order to make the marriage go ahead. The motivation may include the desire to control unwanted behaviour or sexuality.</p>
<p>Historic Abuse</p>	<p>Historic abuse is the term used to describe disclosures of abuse that were perpetrated in the past. Many people who have experienced abuse don’t tell anyone that happened until years later, with around one third of people abused in</p>

	childhood waiting until adulthood before they share their experience.
--	---

If you are concerned about an adult at risk experiencing one or more of these forms of abuse, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Trustees or a Church Minister, who will follow the necessary safeguarding procedures.

How To Respond To Suspected Abuse or Concerns

It is often not easy to recognise abuse or harm. Therefore, it is important to act if you suspect abuse – don’t wait until you are absolutely sure. This doesn’t mean that you are jumping to conclusions or making judgements about the situation, it simply means that there is a safeguarding concern. You may suspect abuse because:

- You have a general concern about someone’s wellbeing.
- You see or hear something which could be abusive.
- Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive.

In these circumstances, do not delay. Pass on your concerns to our church Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding within 24 hours by completing an [online reporting form](#). If they are not available or are implicated in the concern, speak to another member of our church Safeguarding Team or a Minister. If an adult is in imminent or immediate danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay.

If abuse is disclosed or suspected:

Listen	Take what is said seriously;
Reassure	Tell them that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that you believe them;
Remain Calm	No matter how difficult it is to listen to what is being disclosed. You have been chosen because the person feels able to talk to you;
Be Honest	Do not promise full confidentiality or offer false reassurance;
Be open	Do not ask leading or closed questions, such as “ <i>Did she hit you?</i> ” It is not your role to investigate. As soon as you feel concerned, stop probing.
Ask	Request their consent to share information and seek help;
Explain	Tell them that you are going to tell ‘x’ the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or an appropriate alternative if necessary - see above) and give them a timescale;
Write	Document everything the adult at risk has told you, in their own words. You will need to record the questions you asked as well as the answers or information given. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure and should include the time and date;
Report	Contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours (or appropriate alternative if necessary see above) and report the disclosure;
Keep Quiet	The concerns you have should be kept confidential between you, the adult concerned, the Designated Person for Safeguarding (and the

	church safeguarding team, if applicable). The Designated Person for Safeguarding may need to inform the Association Safeguarding Contact and the statutory authorities.
--	---

If you have concerns, witness the abuse of someone or have seen changes in behaviour or living patterns that make you suspect that someone is being abused, it is important that you don't ignore what you have seen or suspect. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse of any kind, and there is help and support available to put a stop to it. But remember that it is not your job to investigate - as soon as you feel concerned you should implement our church safeguarding policy and procedures.

Communication Difficulties

Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language, communication skills and disability. You may need to ask the person to repeat themselves or to check that you have understood what they said.

Summary

In summary, when responding to abuse or concerns:

What To Do	What Not To Do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and acknowledge what is being said. • Try to be reassuring & remain calm. • Ask their consent for you to pass on their concerns. • Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next. • Try to give them a timescale for when and how you / the Designated Person for Safeguarding will contact them again. • Take action – don't ignore the situation. • Be supportive. • Tell them that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were right to tell you; • You are taking what they have said seriously; • It was not their fault; • You would like to pass this information on to the appropriate people, with their permission. • Be open and honest. • Give contact details for them to report any further details or ask any questions they may have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not promise confidentiality. • Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval. • Do not minimise what is being said. • Do not ask probing or leading questions or push for more information. • Do not offer false reassurance. • Do not delay in contacting the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding. • Do not contact the alleged abuser. • Do not investigate the incident any further. • Never leave an adult at risk to wait to hear from someone without any idea of when or how that may be. • Do not pass on information to those who don't need to know, not even for prayer ministry.

Safeguarding Incident Reporting

A [Safeguarding Incident Form](#) should be completed as accurately as possible, and within 24 hours after the disclosure or suspicions of abuse. This can be found on our church website: <https://www.christchurchbaptist.org.uk/safeguarding-reporting>

Where possible use the person's own words, sticking to the facts and avoiding opinion. You will need to record what questions were asked as well as the answers or information given.

Please remember that it is not your role to verify or prove that the information given is true. It is simply your role to listen, record and report any concerns, allegations or disclosures to the appropriate people. This is true no matter who the alleged abuser is.

If the adult at risk doesn't want help it may still be necessary to inform the Police or our Designated Safeguarding Trustees, so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
- When there is a risk of harm to others
- In order to prevent a crime

If at all unsure of whether or not to pass on information about abuse without permission, report your concerns using our [Safeguarding Reporting Form](#) on our website and our Designated Safeguarding Trustee(s) will be able to discern what action, if any, needs to be taken.

Considered and Careful Use of Language

The language people use can often reflect their attitudes and opinions of others. In addition, it should be considered that negative and uncaring attitudes can be a major barrier to accessing church life. This can include the language used within worship (for example referring to God as a father or lover can be difficult for some, and words like mankind and brotherhood exclude others) or the language used to describe people (such as derogatory words focusing on aspects of someone's disability, race or sexuality rather than the person themselves). Therefore, every effort should be taken to use appropriate language and suitable vocabulary, enabling the greatest level of inclusivity and accessibility.

Managing Finance

Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done which will include the completion of a mutually signed *Managing Other Peoples' Finances Permission* form (by the adult at risk and worker), available from and to be returned to the church office.

- Church workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances or expenses.

- Church workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Any gifts received should be reported to the deacons and elders, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.

Clear and transparent systems should be put into place to prevent the possibility of financial irregularities occurring within our church context. Any allegations of financial discrepancies may be based on misunderstanding or confusion; therefore, we have clear processes in place will help to protect church workers as well as any adults at risk.

Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated lay people.

- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved.
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the deacons.
- Church workers (including ministers) should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.
- Church workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest.

There are several legal procedures which may be used to protect the financial and business affairs of adults at risk, such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship. Expert legal advice should be sought to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.

Photographs

With mobile phones and tablets with cameras, it is very easy to take pictures and immediately upload them to the internet. Make sure that you have the person's permission to take a picture, and if you intend to upload it, make sure that they're happy for people to see it online. When taking group pictures remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

Bear in mind that there may be many reasons why someone doesn't want their picture on public display, from simply not liking their photo being taken, to not wanting an abusive ex-partner to be able to identify their current location.

Record Keeping

It is good practice to record pastoral visits or meetings, noting the date, time, location, subject and any actions which are to be taken. The record of these meetings should stick to facts and try to avoid opinion. Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns or disclosures should be stored in a safe and secure manner for at least 75 years.

Confidentiality

With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission.

Pastoral Relationships

All those involved in pastoral ministry should work in a way that follows clearly defined procedures agreed by the church. These procedures should set out the boundaries for pastoral care so that all parties can understand their position and that they protect those carrying out the pastoral ministry as well as those receiving it.

Workers should be aware of the power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust.

- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship, should be avoided.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency within a pastoral relationship.
- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should recognise the limits of their own abilities and competencies, and they should not hesitate to get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.

Adult at Risk Concern/Incident Reporting Flow Chart

