



**BRINGING TRANSFORMATION**

# **ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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The Well Church has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of adults they come into contact with. The need for guidelines and procedures is important to ensure that this is done with understanding and clarity. The Leadership & Trustees of The Well Community Church fully endorse and support the safeguarding policies for children, and adults at risk, that are implemented across the charity's projects and congregations.

**The person with lead responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation is:**

**Sarah Plummer - Designated Safeguarding Lead**

**Alison Murr - Deputy Safeguarding Lead**

**Caroline Boxall - Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding**

All staff and volunteers are to be made aware of this policy and the process for reporting concerns by issuing the policy at induction.

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## SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

### 1: Introduction

The Well Church considers the welfare of any child, young person or adult 'at risk', who engages with The Well Church to be of paramount importance, and we are committed to ensuring that they are valued, listened to, and respected within the work that we do.

The Well Church believes that all adults, no matter their sex, disability, racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs or sexual orientation, have the right to be in a safe, caring environment.

Everyone working with The Well Church, including its trustees, employees and volunteers, are responsible for ensuring that any adult 'at risk' is safe.

#### 1.1 Aims and Principles of Adult Safeguarding

The Well Church will adopt and uphold the Local Safeguarding Adults Board recommended policies and will reflect principles of The Care Act 2014 and Southwark Council Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

##### The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.

##### The six principles of adult safeguarding are

- **Empowerment** - presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** - it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** - proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** - support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** - local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

## 1.2 Aims of The Well adult safeguarding policy

- Adopting person led safeguarding, respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of adults.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within our church projects and the services it provides, avoiding situations where abuse may occur.
- On-going training, supervision and support for staff and volunteers to adopt local multi-agency good practice.
- Staff and volunteers who work with adults will be subject to Safer Recruitment processes and the appropriate level of Criminal Records check through the Disclosure & Barring Service where deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Keeping secure records of concerns, evidence, allegations and actions.
- Requiring staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Adult Protection Policy and procedures.
- Managing allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately, referring any member of staff or volunteer to the appropriate agencies, including the Disclosure & Barring Service if required.

## 2. Abuse of adults and safeguarding

Prevention is critical to the vision of the Care Act 2014. The care and support system must work actively together to promote wellbeing and independence rather than waiting to respond once a person has reached a crisis point. Safeguarding involves achieving a balance between protecting people and preserving their right to make decisions for themselves.

### 2.1 The Care Act 2014 definition of an adult needing care and support

Under the Care Act 2014 the Government expects local authorities and others to help people with care and support needs, who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs, keep them safe. But this must not mean preventing them from making their own choices and having control over their lives. Everyone in the community should understand the importance of safeguarding and helping keep people safe.

The terminology of what was an adult 'at risk' under 'No Secrets' has changed. A definition now in use is:

“Any adult aged 18 or over, who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect.” (Care and Support Statutory Guidance, published under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health)

This **may** include a person who:

- Is elderly or frail
- Has a mental health difficulty

- Has a physical disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness

This may include a situation where a person receives care or is currently unable to protect themselves, for instance, someone who:

- Is misusing substances
- Is someone who is homeless
- Is in an abusive relationship (this can include women who are being sexually exploited by a partner)
- Is vulnerable due to context or experience e.g. bereavement, poverty.

## 2.2 Person led safeguarding

Organisations are often wary of intervening in abusive situations if the adult does not want them to do so because of human rights and other issues. These dilemmas are very real for staff and volunteers but can lead to an approach of non-intervention which conflicts with a need to ensure a “duty of care”.

Person led adult safeguarding follows the principle of ‘**no decision about me without me**’ and means that the adult, their families and carers are working together with agencies to find the right solutions to keep people safe and support them in making informed choices.

As a member of staff or volunteer with The Well Church we will always ask that you strive to listen to and support the needs and requests of any adult who uses our services. For those adults who may struggle with additional needs and vulnerabilities, who may also be at risk of harm or abuse, this needs to be at the forefront of our care and support.

This person led approach to safeguarding leads to services which are: person-centred and focused on the outcomes identified by the individual; planned, commissioned and delivered in a joined-up way between different organisations, including The Well Church which are responsive, and which can be changed when required.

## 3: Recognising Adult Abuse

### 3.1 Recognising Adult Abuse

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Patterns of abuse may vary and include:

- serial abuse in which the perpetrator seeks out and ‘grooms’ individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse
- long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse; or
- opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

*(Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014, Department of Health)*

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It is the use of power and/or abuse of vulnerability of a person. Abuse can consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented and cannot consent.

### 3.2 Where and how abuse might occur

Abuse of adults may be perpetrated by a wide range of people, including spouses/partners, relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit people who might be at risk, strangers or the elderly. Mate crime happens when someone is faking a friendship in order to take advantage of a vulnerable person.

There is often particular concern when abuse is perpetrated by someone in a position of power or authority who uses his or her position to the detriment of the health, safety, welfare and general well-being of a vulnerable person. Abuse can occur in any setting. Abuse and crimes against adults may occur in different contexts. Actual or suspected abuse of persons at risk in any of the contexts below will trigger a safeguarding response in accordance with this policy.

### 3.3 The main forms of abuse

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. It can take a number of forms:

- **Physical abuse** e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, neglect or abandonment
- **Sexual abuse** e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism.
- **Sexual Exploitation** is a type of abuse in which young people/ adults are sexually exploited for survival, money, power or status.
- **Emotional/psychological abuse** e.g. intimidation or humiliation, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial abuse** e.g. theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Discriminatory abuse** forms of harassment, ill-treatment, threats or insults because of an adult's race, age, culture, gender, gender identity, religion, sexuality, physical or learning disability, or mental-health needs. Discriminatory abuse can also be called 'hate crime'.
- **Personal exploitation** - involves denying an individual his/her rights, to forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- **Violation of rights** e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions.

- **Institutional abuse** e.g. when the routines, systems and norms of an institution compel individuals to sacrifice their own preferred style and cultural diversity to the needs of the institution
- **Neglect and acts of omission** e.g. ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. *Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wilful neglect and ill treatment become a criminal offence.*

### **3.4 Other forms of abuse to consider:**

#### **Hate crime**

Hate crime is defined as any crime that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic, trans-phobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability. It should be noted that this definition is based on the perception of the victim or anyone else and is not reliant on evidence.

#### **Mate crime**

Mate crime happens when someone is faking a friendship in order to take advantage of a vulnerable person. Mate crime is committed by someone known to the person. They might have known them for a long time or met recently. A 'mate' may be a 'friend', family member, supporter, paid staff or another person with a disability.

#### **Self-Neglect**

The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance Chapter 14 recognises self-neglect as a type of abuse. It describes self-neglect as a wide range of behaviours; neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Where self-neglect persists the risks to the individual may increase and could have a significant impact on the person's wellbeing. The Care Act emphasises the importance of early intervention and preventative actions to minimise risk and harm. Central to the Care Act is the wellbeing principle and focusing on decisions which are person-led, and outcomes focused. These principles are important considerations when responding to self-neglect cases.

#### **Carers at risk of harm**

Carers experiencing abuse by the person they offer care to, can expect the same response as any person at risk of abuse. Carers also have a legal right to an assessment of their needs. A carer's assessment should be seen as part of the overall assessment process. Sometimes both the carer and the supported person may be at risk of harm.

#### **Abuse between adults at risk**

Any organisations supporting these individuals have a responsibility to protect them from abuse as well as preventing them from causing harm to other adults. It is important the needs of the adult causing the harm are taken into consideration in the safeguarding responses for both parties.

#### **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.

**Controlling behaviour** is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

**Coercive behaviour** is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.” The Serious Crime Act 2015 created a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships (section 76). The offence carries a maximum sentence of 5 years’ imprisonment, a fine or both.

Domestic Abuse & Violence can be a very difficult area to support where victims of abuse feel unable to leave without putting themselves at greater risk. Specialist support should be sought where risks can be assessed and safeguarding prioritised.

### **Honour based violence**

“Honour based violence is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and or community.” Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code.

### **Forced marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they’re bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor. [The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#) makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

### **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy. FGM constitutes a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls and has severe short-term and long-term term physical and psychological consequences. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

### **Trafficking & Modern Slavery**

Human trafficking is essentially the recruitment, movement or receipt of a person by deception or coercion into a situation of exploitation, this may include:

- prostitution (or other forms of sexual exploitation)
- forced labour
- slavery
- servitude, or
- the removal of organs

### **The Modern Slavery Act 2015 categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking.**

Practice guidance relating to the national strategy to respond to Modern Slavery and human trafficking includes details of the Duty to Notify and how to refer victims into the National Referral Mechanism.

**Exploitation by radicalisers** who promote violence involves the exploitation of susceptible people who are drawn into violent extremism by radicalisers. Violent extremists often use a persuasive rationale and charismatic individuals to attract people to their cause. The aim is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. The Prevent Strategy, launched in 2007, seeks to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is the preventative strand of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

**Cuckooing** is a form of crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for criminal activity. Organised criminal groups are increasingly targeting adults with care and support needs in this way, and the level of coercion and control involved with cuckooing often leaves the victims with little choice but to cooperate with the perpetrators.

**County Lines** is the police term for groups who are supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". It can involve child criminal exploitation and using adults who are vulnerable to move drugs and money. Groups establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'. The Home Office County Lines guidance describes County Lines as a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons. County Lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation have a devastating impact on young people, adults at risk of exploitation and local communities.

## **4: Responding to a disclosure**

### **4.1 Principles of responding to a disclosure**

It is important that an adult is given the opportunity to talk and every effort should be made to ensure this takes place in private. The person at risk may not understand that they are being abused and so may not realise the significance of what they are telling you.

Some disclosures happen many years after the abuse. There may be good reasons for this, for example the person they were afraid of, has left the setting. Therefore, any delay in an individual reporting an incident should not cast doubt on its truthfulness. Often a disclosure can be the 'tip of the iceberg' so it is important to believe the person.

Please take care to follow these recommended points when managing a disclosure:

- assure the person that you are taking them seriously
- listen carefully to what they are telling you, stay calm, try to get a better picture of what happened, but avoid asking too many questions
- do not give promises of complete confidentiality
- explain that you have a duty to tell your Leader/Manager or other designated person (if you are an employee/volunteer), and that their concerns may be shared with others who could have a part to play in supporting and protecting them
- reassure them that they will be involved in decisions about what will happen
- explain that you will try to take steps to protect them from further abuse or neglect
- if they have specific communication needs, provide support and information in a way that is most appropriate for them
- record the words of the person at risk and accept the statements as fact; record the full details, including the time, date and location that disclosure was made. All written notes must be made as soon as practicable and kept securely
- do not confront the person alleged to have caused the harm as this could place you at risk, or provide an opportunity to destroy evidence, or intimidate the person alleged to have been harmed or witnesses
- do not be judgemental or jump to conclusions
- staff and volunteers should follow The Well Community Church's procedures for raising the alert.

#### 4.2 Witnessing abuse

- In situations of immediate danger take urgent action by calling the relevant emergency services i.e. Police, ambulance or GP. You may wish to challenge the person who is abusing the individuals and try to persuade them to stop whilst ensuring your personal safety is not compromised. Remember to have regard for your own safety. Leave the situation if it is not safe for you.
- Report the incident to your line manager straight away and/or Safeguarding Lead. Making as many notes as you can as soon as possible and complete an incident form.

### 5. Referring a concern

#### 5.1 Referring a concern or a disclosure

These procedures inform all staff and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected vulnerable adult abuse, i.e. response actions.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case or suspected abuse is ***not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred.***

However, staff and volunteers do have a duty of care to the adult to report ***any suspicions or concerns*** you may have to a line manager/ Safeguarding Lead.

#### Referring or reporting to other agencies - Alerting Authorities

An alert is a concern that a 'person at risk' is suffering, or at risk of, or may be being, abused, neglected or exploited by a third party, or where a person at risk may be being harmed by others usually in a position of trust, power or authority.

Alerts can be made to Adult Services by anyone and should be made when:

- the person is a person at risk and there is a concern that they are being or are at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited
- the person is a person at risk and there is a concern that they have caused or are likely to cause harm to others
- the adult has capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wants this to happen
- the adult has been assessed as not having capacity to make a decision about their own safety, but a decision has been made in their best interests to make a referral
- a crime has been or may have been committed against an adult who lacks the mental capacity to report a crime and a 'best interests' decision is made
- the abuse or neglect has been caused by a member of staff or a volunteer
- other people or children are at risk from the person causing the harm
- the concern is about institutional or systemic abuse
- the person causing the harm is also vulnerable / adult at risk

The Safeguarding Lead will ultimately decide whether to alert Adult Services in each case.

**If you have any concerns about an adult who may be at risk of harm, contact**

- **for adults with a physical or sensory disability and older people (65 years and above):**
  - **Email: [OPPDContactteam@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:OPPDContactteam@southwark.gov.uk)**
  - **Phone: 020 7525 3324**
- **for adults (aged 18 to 65) with a mental illness:**
  - **Email: [MHContact@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:MHContact@southwark.gov.uk)**
  - **Phone: 020 7525 0088**
- **for adults with a learning disability:**
  - **Email: [LearningDisabilitiesDuty@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:LearningDisabilitiesDuty@southwark.gov.uk)**
  - **Phone: 020 7525 2333**

**In an emergency, dial 999. If you think a crime has taken place, but it is not an emergency, please call the Police on 101.**

***\*\* If someone is deemed at immediate and significant risk, then the Emergency Services (999) should be contacted straight away\*\****

## **5.2 Supporting immediate needs**

In line with information sharing considerations, The Well Church may need to take the following actions:

- Make an immediate evaluation of the risk to the person at risk and any others who may be at risk.
- Take reasonable and practical steps to safeguard the person at risk as appropriate.
- Consider referring to the Police if the abuse suspected is a crime.
- If the matter is to be referred to the Police, discuss risk management and any potential forensic considerations.
- Consider the support needs of the person alleged to have caused harm if they are also an adult 'at risk'.
- Arrange any necessary emergency medical treatment; note that offences of a sexual nature will require expert advice from the Police.
- If there is a need for an immediate Safeguarding Plan, we will refer to the relevant Adult Services or Emergency Duty Services if out of hours.
- Consider appropriate action in line with The Well Community Church's procedures if a staff member or volunteer is suspected to have caused harm.

## **5.3 Sharing Information**

The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information within organisations. If the information is confidential, but there is a safeguarding concern, sharing it may be justified. The General Data Protection Regulations enables the lawful sharing of information. Organisations need to share safeguarding information with the right people at the right time to:

- Prevent death or serious harm.
- Coordinate effective and efficient responses.
- Enable early interventions to prevent the escalation of risk.
- Prevent abuse and harm that may increase the need for care and support
- Maintain and improve good practice in safeguarding adults.
- Reveal patterns of abuse that were previously undetected and that could identify others at risk of abuse.
- Identify low-level concerns that may reveal people at risk of abuse.
- Help people to access the right kind of support to reduce risk and promote wellbeing.
- Help identify people who may pose a risk to others and, where possible, work to reduce offending behaviour.
- Reduce organisational risk and protect reputation.

Frontline staff and volunteers should always report safeguarding concerns in line with The Well Community Church's policy – this is usually to your line manager or safeguarding lead in the first instance, except in emergency situations.

It is good practice to try to gain the person's consent to share information but if the situation is urgent and high risk and as long as it does not increase risk, staff and volunteers should inform the person if they need to share their information without consent.

#### **5.4 Consent**

Wherever practicable, the consent of the adult affected should be sought before reporting a suspected crime to the police. There may of course be circumstances where consent cannot be obtained because the adult lacks the capacity to give it, but it is in their best interests to contact the police.

Whether or not the adult has the capacity to give consent, the police will need to be informed if other people are already or would be at risk. The police should also be informed where it is in the public interest due to the seriousness of the alleged criminal offence. In certain circumstances an adult's right to confidentiality is overruled.

Information about a suspected crime should be shared with the police in the following circumstances:

- If others are, or may be, at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Where there are legal or professional responsibilities of staff who have become aware of the concern, for example, if this relates to a breach of regulation, professional code of conduct, or an offence appears to have been committed.
- Where the adult to whom the concern relates lacks capacity and in this situation the Mental Capacity Act should be followed.
- If the adult is believed to be subject to undue influence such that they are unable to exercise free will, for example Modern Slavery, controlling and coercive behaviour or domestic violence and abuse.
- If an adult is disclosing potential criminal offences, any initial questioning should be intended only to elicit a brief account of what is alleged to have taken place. This brief account should include where and when the alleged incident took place and who was involved and should be recorded in writing at the time or as soon as possible afterwards. A more detailed account will be obtained by the police at a later stage.

#### **5.5 Mental capacity**

People must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before they are considered not to be able to make their own decisions. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to make a decision then any action taken, or any decision made for, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interests. Professionals and other staff have a responsibility to ensure they understand and always work in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Even when a person is assessed as lacking capacity, they must still be encouraged to participate in the safeguarding process.

### **6. Responding to allegations/concerns against a member of staff or volunteer**

Unfortunately, those that live with, care for, work alongside or serve those that are vulnerable can be individuals who go on to abuse them.

The Care Act 2014 requires the local authority, its relevant partners and those providing care and support services to have clear policies in place for dealing with allegations against anyone

working in a position of trust. These policies should clearly distinguish between an allegation, a practice concern, a complaint and a care quality issue.

A position of trust is a paid or unpaid role when working with adults with care and support needs. If anyone becomes aware of allegations about the conduct or behaviour of an individual in a position of trust which might pose a risk to adults with care and support needs, they should raise a safeguarding concern with the local authority.

Should you ever have a concern about a person close to the adult who may be at risk, be that a relative or a member of your team for example you should:

- Take the allegation or concern seriously.
- Consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the adult.
- Report to and inform (if appropriate) your Line Manager or Safeguarding Lead.
- Record in writing on an **Adult** Incident Form all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible.
- Request your Safeguarding Lead informs relevant persons, i.e. Adult Services, and/or the Police if appropriate.
- Also report any allegations involving a line manager/ senior team leader

## **6.1 Reporting abuse for investigation**

Concerns of abuse towards an adult at risk should be referred/reported to the area Adult Service team, or the Emergency Social Services duty team if urgent and outside of normal office hours.

Where a crime may have been committed the Police must always be contacted, and if in any doubt, they should still be notified so that they can make that judgement.

## **6.2 Internal investigation for staff or volunteers**

When a complaint or allegation has been made against a member of staff he/she must be made aware of their rights under employment legislation and internal disciplinary procedures. It is the responsibility of trustees to conduct a thorough investigation in accordance with The Well's Church's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

With a complaint/allegation against a volunteer, they must be reported and investigated in a similar way, although they do not have the same rights as an employee.

A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the member of staff/volunteer. This must include whether it is safe for them to continue their role or any other role within the church and its projects whilst the investigation is being undertaken. The consideration of risk must be considered alongside the right of the employee. Decisions not to suspend an employee must be fully documented. Volunteers would be asked to step back from serving whilst the investigation is carried out.

Action to be considered will include the following:

- Is this a supervisory/training issue?
- Is it a matter of discipline/capability?

- Does discussion need to take place with other agencies, e.g. the Police and Adult Services?
- Is there a need to refer to Disclosure & Barring Service?

### **6.3 Disclosure & Barring Service - referrals**

Employers and managers of volunteers working with people in regulated activity have a legal duty to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service in circumstances where they have permanently removed a person from the regulated activity through dismissal or permanent transfer (or would have if the person had not left, resigned, retired or been made redundant) because the person has:

- been cautioned, arrested or convicted for a relevant offence, or,
- engaged in misconduct in relation to children or adults at risk – i.e. that an action or inaction (neglect) has harmed a child or adult or put them at risk of harm, or,
- satisfied the 'Harm Test' in relation to children or adults at risk – i.e. that there has been no relevant misconduct but a risk of harm to a child or adult still exists.

Managers/Safeguarding Leads must keep all involved agencies informed of outcomes of any internal investigations and disciplinary proceedings being undertaken alongside any Adult Services own safeguarding investigation.

All agencies will work together and decide on the best possible course of action for both the perpetrator and the victim.

## **7: Recording Information**

### **7.1 Using an incident reporting form**

As soon after the disclosure/incident as possible, record in writing on a 'Safeguarding Adult Incident Reporting Form' all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the person's own words. In order to record information as fully as possible you should include:

- The date and time.
- The person's name and address and date of birth if known.
- The nature of the allegation.
- *A description of any visible injuries.*
- *Your observations – e.g. a description of the adult's behaviour and physical and emotional state.*
- Exactly what the adult said and what you said. Record their account of what happened as closely as possible.
- Any action you took as a result of your concerns e.g. who you spoke to and resulting actions. Include names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- Sign and date what you have recorded.
- Store the information in accordance with relevant procedures, e.g. Data protection.

### **7.2 Preserving evidence**

The first concern must be to ensure the safety and well-being of the adult you have concerns about. However, in situations where there has been or may have been a crime, and the Police have been called, it is important that forensic and other evidence is collected and preserved.

Try not to disturb the scene, clothing or victim if at all possible. Secure the scene, for example, lock the door, preserve all containers, documents, locations, etc. Evidence may be present even if it cannot actually be seen. If in doubt, contact the Police and ask for advice.

The Police will always be responsible for the gathering and preservation of evidence to pursue criminal allegations against people causing harm. However, other organisations and individuals can play a vital role in the preservation of evidence to ensure that vital information or forensics is not lost.

### **7.3 Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, i.e.: Safeguarding Lead, Adult Services and the police. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as a breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the adult, their family and any protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parent or carers of the adult 'at risk' you may have concerns about, needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with Adult Services.

Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with Adult Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.

Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. the information stored is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. Staff and volunteers should be informed who the relevant designated spokesperson will be, and all enquiries directed through them. Staff and volunteers should reply 'no comment' to all questions/enquiries.

## Appendix 1 SAFEGUARDING ADULT INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

### THE WELL CHURCH

Your information			
Name			
Role/Position			
Contact number		Email	

Details of adult at risk			
Name of adult		Contact number	
Address			
Date of Birth	Age (if date of birth not known)		
Details of any children at risk			
Are there children at risk in this situation: <b>YES/NO</b>	If yes, state briefly what actions have been taken and attach a child safeguarding incident report form.		
Name of agency, and contact numbers social worker dealing with case			

Incident details*			
Date and time of incident			
Please tick one:	<input type="checkbox"/> I am reporting my own concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am responding to concerns raised by someone else – please fill in their details:	
Name of person raising concern		Contact Number	
Email			
<p>Record details of the incident or concerns (include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay) Detail what you have seen/been told/other that makes you believe the adult at risk is being abused or is at risk of abuse (include dates/times/evidence from records/photos etc.)</p>			

<b>Reasons for not discussing with the adult</b>	
Adult lacks capacity Y/N Details	Adult unable to communicate their views Y/N Details
Discussion would increase the risk – provide details	

\* Attach a separate sheet if more space is required (e.g. multiple witnesses)

<b>Incident details (continued)</b>			
Adult's account of the incident (in their own words where possible)			
Have you discussed your concerns with the adult? What are their views? What outcomes have they stated they want (if any)?			
Do you have permission to refer? Y/N		Are you referring without permission Y/N	
If you are not referring this incident please outline your reasons:			
Please provide any witness accounts of the incident			
Name of witness)		Role within charity or relationship to the adult	
Address			
Email / Contact number(s)			
Details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury			
Name		Role within the charity or relationship to the adult	
Address			

Email/ Contact number(s)			
Please provide details of action taken to date			
Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – please provide further details:	
Name of organisation / agency			
Contact person			
Email / Contact number(s)			
Agreed action or advice given:			

Declaration			
Your signature			
Print name		Today's date	

Reported to Designated Safeguarding Officer/Lead			
Designated Lead Name		Date reported	



**BRINGING TRANSFORMATION**

Appendix 2

# **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH ADULTS AT RISK**

**The Well Church  
Wells Way  
Camberwell  
SE5 7SY**

[admin@thewellcc.org.uk](mailto:admin@thewellcc.org.uk)

**020 7703 0924**

DRAFTED BY:	Sarah Plummer	DATE:	August 2024
TRUSTEE APPROVAL:		ISSUE:	v1
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## The Well Community Church Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct for adult groups

### SAFER BEHAVIOUR

All staff and volunteers at the Well Community church have a duty of care to adults they serve or work with who might be 'at risk' or vulnerable. Alongside the practical issues of making sure the project you are serving in provides safe activities, you also need to ensure your behaviour and actions are reflecting safe practice too.

Our suggested code of conduct goes some way to outline practical examples of what we would expect to see in place as a minimum, and what to do if you have a concern about someone in your project who may be suffering from abuse, coercion or control.

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Think about the language and tone of voice that you are using when engaging with children, young people and adults at risk. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on those you are working with. This applies to both in person and online interactions.
- Listen well to everyone. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or adult at risk is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is being spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the individual's body language to better understand what is being said.
- Be aware of any physical contact you may have with a child or adult at risk and record it when necessary. For instance, if you need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to someone in distress, or protect yourself or others from danger.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult at risk, even in 'fun'.
- Do not scapegoat, belittle, ridicule or reject a child or adult at risk.
- Keep a record of any significant incidents or concerns on a Safeguarding Incident Form. Enter the names of all those present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made, etc. All workers who witnessed the incident, overheard it or responded in any way should record the details and sign and date the form.

## Do:

- **Treat all people with respect.** Some adults 'at risk' may need different help at times, but all of it should be respectful, and value them as adults with choice and capability wherever possible.
- **Be fair in all your dealings** with everyone and do not show favouritism to any individual adult. If extra time or resources are needed for someone, talk to your Team Leader to keep it accountable.
- **Take care** to avoid your actions and words being misinterpreted. You may not know the background of all the people you are serving. For example, be conscious of the appropriateness of any physical contact and verbal comments you may make. Be age and gender appropriate and sensitive to ethnic/cultural boundaries.
- Remember, as a member of staff or volunteer you have **a position of power and trust**. Some charity workers have used their position to take advantage of others, so **be transparent and accountable** in all that you do.
- Ensure where possible there is more than one member of staff or volunteer present during activities, or that you are in the sight or hearing of other staff or volunteers. **There is safety and accountability in numbers**.
- Try to avoid lone working where possible. If this is unavoidable due to the nature of your role then follow the guidelines for lone working, such as only meeting in a public space where other people are around and follow the safety guidelines we need you to observe.
- **If in doubt, ask for advice.** If you are in any doubt as to the appropriateness of your actions, then ask a colleague or the person responsible for your supervision.
- **Report all concerns**, allegations or suspicions of abuse. Please follow the procedures in the safeguarding policy.
- **Be mindful of special diets/halal** etc
- Ensure that you have the person's **permission to take a picture**, and that the subject is happy with the intended use of the pictures. When taking group pictures, staff and volunteers should remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

## Don't:

- **Offer your private contact details to individuals** or arrange to meet up with them outside the project you are representing - unless meeting up is in a professional capacity and remains accountable with your Team Leader.
- **Message individuals privately** on social media or mobiles as a friend. Group messaging is more accountable or including your Team Leader in the message if it is an individual communication.
- **Enter into any agreement to handle money** on behalf of the service user or offer to help them financially. If there is a financial need or crisis report this to your Team Leader who may be able to help through the project or church.
- **Enter into an intimate relationship** with anyone you have a position of trust over. Intimacy can be emotional as well as physical.

- **Allow boundaries to blur** or be broken when serving adults who may be vulnerable.
- **Let suspicions, disclosure or allegations of abuse go unrecorded or reported.**

### **Transporting adults at risk**

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of adults at risk on behalf of the church. They do not apply to private arrangements, for example, transport arrangements made between friends.

- Only those who have gone through the church's safer recruitment procedures for workers will transport children and adults at risk (within the DBS eligibility criteria).
- All drivers will have read the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Drivers will be aged 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that the vehicle being used is road worthy.
- All hired minibuses will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.
- In the minibus there should be at least 2 group leaders.

Statement: I am signing this Code of Conduct to agree that I have read and understood what is expected of me.

Name:

Date:

Signature:

OR if sending electronically, please reply to the email this was attached to and cut and paste the statement above.

**Appendix 3 DECLARATION**

The Well Church is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of adults by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Working as an employee or volunteer of The Well Church it is important that you have taken time to thoroughly read the Safeguarding Adult Policy and procedures.

By being made aware of the policy it is our intention to ensure that all are proactive in providing a safe and secure environment for adults and other people who use our service.

.....

Declaration:

I have read and understand The Well Church Safeguarding Adult Policy and Procedures and I accept the principles therein.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/20\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print)

Position: \_\_\_\_\_