



SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN

Rhiwbina Baptist Church

Registered Charity 1132188

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**Rhiwbina Baptist Church
Lon Ucha
Rhiwbina
Cardiff
CF14 6HL**

Tel 029 2062 3791

E-mail: office@rbc.ac

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THE RHIWBINA BAPTIST CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN

POSITION STATEMENT

As a church leadership has a collective duty to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people below the age of 18 who are entrusted to us. We acknowledge that children and young people can be victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. We recognise our responsibility to prevent abuse of children and report any suspected abuse, whether it occurs on church premises or elsewhere.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights which states that everyone is entitled to 'all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status'.

We also concur with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from 'all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation including sexual abuse while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has care of the child'.

As a leadership we have, therefore, adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. This includes the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Working Together to Safeguard People 2018 (Wales), the Social Service & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

This policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight, an independent Christian charity which helps organisations protect vulnerable people from abuse and prepared in consultation with Rhiwbina Baptist Church and All Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for relevant workers, (employees or volunteers) and will regularly review the operational guidelines.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Designated Persons for Safeguarding (DPS) in their work and in any action they may need to take to protect children.
- The leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

The policy is reviewed annually and is next due for review in April 2026.

RECOGNISING ABUSE

Defining child abuse is a complex issue. Children in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point a definition of abuse, Article 19, which states:

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and as appropriate for judicial involvement.*

Definitions of abuse

Refer to Appendix 1

Possible signs of abuse

Refer to Appendix 2

Safeguarding awareness

The church leadership is committed to providing safeguarding training for all workers (staff or volunteers) who have a specific remit or responsibility for working with children as well as develop a general culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

The church will facilitate access to appropriate training (Levels 2 & 3) via South Wales Baptist Association or Foundation and Advanced via thirtyone:eight.

All our workers will receive induction training (Level 2 or Foundation) before an appointment is taken up and undertake recognised safeguarding training every three years.

All trustees, the Core Leadership Team (CLT), salaried children and youth workers and designated persons for safeguarding should undertake Level 2 & 3 training or Foundation & Advanced every three years.

The leadership also needs to ensure that children with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

A worker or other person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report their concerns as soon as possible to a Designated Person for Safeguarding (contact information on page 8), who will act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or concern and, if indicated, refer the matter on to the statutory authorities (Police, Social Services). Where there is doubt, advice can also be sought from The Baptist Union Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) may need to inform others, depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, for example, the CLT, chair of trustees and insurance company.

Suspicions should only be discussed with the nominated people above and the leadership will support the DPS, accepting that any information in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight although the Leadership hopes that members of the church will feel able to use this procedure.

1. Procedures where there is concern about a child

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the DPS or session leader will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct, for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DPS or session leader will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker or Police Child Protection team direct. They will not speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

2. Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (volunteer or staff), whilst following the procedure outlined above, the DPS in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to the designated officer within the local authority.

In addition, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children. If a Local Authority Designated Officer is not involved the DBS should be contacted if the nature of the concern results in termination of employment.

Useful telephone numbers

Cardiff County Council Social Services Emergency Child Protection Service:

029 2053 6490 (office hours)

029 2078 8570 (weekends or evenings)

Thirtyone:eight help-line:

0303 003 1111 (24-hour number)

Baptist Union Safeguarding Lead

Kath Needham (Partnership Safeguarding Lead)

safeguarding@swba.org.uk

07389 728669

Church staff

Gareth Lloyd

Church Leader

Rach Davis

Young People and Families Co-ordinator

Safeguarding team

The following individuals have overall responsibility for safeguarding oversight and administration.



Jo Oats

Safeguarding Administrator
029 2062 3791

Safeguarding oversight & DBS checks – The church office administrator (Jo Oats) is the designated person to confirm identity and submit completed forms for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Safeguarding administration – The church office administrator (Jo Oats) is also responsible for establishing and maintaining all files and data relating to the safeguarding policy and for monitoring and facilitating its implementation to ensure that new workers, leaders and helpers are appointed in accordance with the policy.

‘Designated Person for Safeguarding’ – Jude Davies and deputies, Siân Hopkins and Gareth James, have experience in safeguarding matters and have been appointed to receive information, advise and respond to safeguarding concerns and ensure the policy is fully implemented. The DPS acts as a link between the church and other agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters.

Email contact for DSP and deputies is: safeguarding@rbc.ac



Jude Davies
Designated Person
for Safeguarding



Siân Hopkins
Deputy Designated
Person for
Safeguarding



Gareth James
Deputy Designated
Person for
Safeguarding

PREVENTION

1. RECRUITMENT

Procedure for appointing children's co-ordinators, session leaders and helpers

The minimum requirement for anybody already working with children in any capacity is to have received Safeguarding training provided by Rhiwbina Baptist Church and to obtain a DBS check. All new children's workers and leaders must follow the procedure below even if they have been working as a helper or have had a previous leader's role with an interruption in service.

For the purposes of this policy, a 'session leader' is defined as any individual who is responsible for planning and supervising the activities of a group of children or teenagers either on a Sunday or weekday. A 'co-ordinator' carries out the duties of a session leader and is responsible for overseeing the ministry area.

This need not necessarily occur on a weekly basis and for some groups two or more individuals may share leadership responsibilities.

Appointments are made by:

- A children's ministry co-ordinator, i.e. the lead worker in that particular area of ministry, be it crèche, Sunday morning children's ministry or key midweek groups in the daytime or evening, such as Little Steps.
 - The Young People and Families Co-ordinator
 - All of whom should make sure that the correct procedure described below, is followed.
1. Prospective co-ordinators and session leaders are to be given the Volunteer Agreement (A) which includes a simple job profile, indicates time commitment and names the person to whom they will be responsible. All new co-ordinators and session leaders will be required to provide the names of two suitable referees.
 2. Prospective helpers are to be given a Volunteer Agreement (B) which includes a simple job profile, indicates time commitment and names the person to whom they will be responsible.
 3. The appropriate person makes the appointment decision after discussing the role with the prospective volunteer. Those making the appointment must satisfy themselves as to the character of the applicant. Applicants must have regularly attended RBC for at least six months prior to their being appointed as a co-ordinator.
 4. Prior to attending safeguarding training, new volunteers may commence an introductory period after they have received a clear DBS check, during which time they should be supervised. This can include up to four visits to a single group. However, to ensure that

appropriate supervision is in place no more than two 'new' volunteers will be allowed in any one session.

5. Training in the church's safeguarding policy will be provided before the appointment is taken up.
6. All volunteers are required to undertake safeguarding training every three years, so as to refresh themselves as to the policy and any new developments. All those involved in children's work, whether they are employees or volunteers, will have their names kept on a church database which will provide an up-to-date record of an individual's appointment in terms of processing of Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure, receipt of a completed Volunteer Agreement and whether safeguarding training has been completed. All Trustees and the CLT of the church must attend a safeguarding training session. All Trustees must undergo a DBS check and any leaders in the church whose role involves children or adults with additional care and support needs, must also have a DBS check.

2. MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS – CODES OF CONDUCT

As a leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been provided with a code of conduct towards children and young people with procedures for working practices detailed below.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Guidelines for supervision

1. Recommended ratios of adults to children are as follows:

| Indoor activities | | Outdoor activities | |
|--------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| 0-2 years | 1:3 | 0-2 years | 1:3 |
| 2-3 years | 1:4 | 2-3 years | 1:4 |
| 3-8 years | 1:8 | 3-8 years | 1:6 |
| 8-17 years | 2:20 (M & F) | 8-13 years | 2:15 (M & F) |
| | | 14-17 years | 2: 20 (M & F) |

2. Consider the gender balance of workers in relation to the group of children and young people. Generally, children and young people attending a group should not be left alone at any time.
3. As far as possible a worker should avoid being alone with a child or children when their activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open. Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) ensure that others know that the interview is taking place and that someone else is in the building. Where this relates to general pastoral care or mentoring of young people away from the RBC building, e.g. at a café, it is good practice to obtain verbal approval from a parent concerned *in addition to* prior written consent via the general consent form which must be obtained first anyway. Any transport arrangements privately arranged between, e.g. the

teenager's family and the leader/mentor must be clear, and the leader/mentor's behaviour beyond reproach.

4. A young person becomes an adult on their 18th birthday and, where possible, should move to an appropriate peer group for young adults with a planned transition in the preceding weeks.

Procedure for the supervision of children's activities

The following must be followed at all times:

1. At no time should one adult be alone on church premises with a child or a group of children below 18 years, unless they are with their own children.
2. Under no circumstances should children aged 0-11 be in the care of only one adult leader in the room where the children gather; a helper should also be present. This allows for one leader to, where necessary, supervise trips to the kitchen or toilet or retrieve a parent. Current Sunday crèche practice is to have a potty available in the room, so workers need not leave with a child. Children aged 12-17 can be supervised by one adult during, for example, Sunday morning bible study groups or evening cell groups on RBC premises., but the door of the room should be left open. There should be another adult present in the building.
3. Children and young people of less than 18 years should not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present.
4. Young persons of less than 18 years should not be left in charge of children of any age.
5. Teenagers 16+ may be involved in cell groups which are led and run by peers. In these circumstances two adult leaders must be present in the church building.
6. Ensure that the only people allowed into a children's activity (e.g. crèche, nursery) are the workers assigned to that group and a parent/carer who needs to be present for their child. There should not be free access for other adults or children unless there is a specific reason.
7. Leaders should be confident they know to whom they are re-releasing children, especially younger ones, back to at the end of a meeting. If in doubt they should keep the child with them and take the child direct to the child/guardian or seek to contact them.
8. Consent forms should be completed by parents/carers of all children confirming their understanding of the general activities (Sundays and weekdays) and providing essential health information. Specific consent forms will be provided for more adventurous activities, day trips and residential trips.
9. Where a **new** child turns up to a meeting or group which is due to leave for a trip away from the church building, the consent form must be completed before the child leaves for the trip. In this situation, the child's parent/guardian must be contacted so they either come and complete the relevant forms or come and collect their child.

The child should not be left unattended in the meantime; they should also not be allowed to go home alone unless specifically agreed to by the parent concerned.

10. Keep a register of those children/young people attending a group together with volunteers; this includes any new children who turn up.
11. Incident forms are available to all workers and can be found in the church foyer. They should be used for the documentation of incidents or concerns about the behaviour of children or adult workers as soon as possible after the event. In all situations, the circumstances of the incident should be recorded as well as an account of what was said (where relevant) and the names of witnesses. The forms should be given directly to the safeguarding administrator or the children & youth leader or posted in an envelope, marked for the attention of safeguarding administration. This process should be followed whether the situation requires immediate action with involvement of the DPS and an external agency or is simply a concern that needs to be recorded.

Procedure for the way we work

1. Children should be treated with dignity and respect in an age-appropriate manner, which includes being prepared to listen.
2. The level of personal care, e.g. toileting must be age appropriate, accepting that some children may have special needs. Privacy in such situations must never be needlessly invaded.
3. Physical contact between an adult and a child is healthy and acceptable in public places in the right context but should be avoided if an adult and child are alone. Touch should only be for the benefit of the child and must be age appropriate. Be sensitive to the needs of the child.
4. Avoid any physical contact that is, or may be thought to be, sexually provocative.
5. Never use physical force to control or discipline. It may be necessary to restrain a child for their own protection or that of others in which case only the minimum force necessary should be employed.
6. Any worker or parent transporting children on behalf of the church (excluding private arrangements made by those with parental responsibility) must satisfy the criteria for drivers and their vehicles. They will be required to sign the 'Transporting Children' form. (Refer to the next section of this document concerning off-site activities).
7. Workers should avoid giving a child a lift on their own.
8. Do not invite a child or young person to your home alone. It is acceptable to invite a group with parental consent providing that another adult, DBS-checked via Rhiwbina Baptist Church, is in the house or room with you. No other adults should be present unless they are DBS-checked.
9. The *Abuse of Trust* guidance issued by the Home Office makes it unacceptable for people in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual

relationship to develop. 'A relationship of trust is one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of the activity.'

10. If you observe inappropriate behaviour in another worker, you should share your concerns with the senior leader present or a safeguarding officer.

Procedure for organised activities taking place *away from the church building and its vicinity**

**The vicinity means: The boundary around the church building marked out by Parc-y-Pentre, Beulah Road, Heol-Y-Felin, Heol Llanishen Fach, Heol-Y-Deri, Heol-Y-Coed, Heol-Y-Bryn and Heol Wen.*

1. No child shall be taken from the church premises for any activity either on a Sunday morning or weekday evening without the knowledge and written consent of a parent.
2. Written consent must be obtained for all day trips, and residential trips involving overnight stays, the parents having been provided with complete details of all proposed activities. Parents must also complete a health information form for their child where it pertains to residential trips or day trips that are high risk.
3. Whenever children are transported during the course of church activities, whether by minibus or car, a number of conditions relating to both the vehicle and driver must be met:
 - a) All drivers must have a valid driving licence, be over 21 years of age (25 years of age for a minibus) and have been driving for at least 2 years.
 - b) An enhanced DBS must be obtained for all potential drivers prior to any trips.
 - c) The driver is responsible for ensuring that seat belts are worn during all journeys.
 - d) All transport must have comprehensive insurance cover for passengers.
 - e) All minibuses used should have a small bus permit.
 - f) All vehicles should be roadworthy with current MOT and road tax. All potential drivers must sign the 'Transporting Children' form.
 - g) Parents must be aware of the mode of transport.
4. An RBC church activity would include regular children's or youth group evenings and additional specific events, usually advertised in the church bulletin. Conveying children to and from these events is generally a parental responsibility. Children's/Youth Leaders using their vehicles for such designated events should meet the criteria listed in section 3 above. If parents wish to make a private transport arrangement for official RBC events, they should make it clear that this is a private arrangement.
5. The insurance cover of a proposed venue for overnight accommodation must be checked.
6. Check the safety of the building and surrounding area in relation to the age groups involved in any trip in advance. Everybody should be made aware of fire exits and a fire drill undertaken soon after arrival. Risk assessments must be carried out for all proposed residential trips. If this has already been undertaken by those in charge of the

residential venue these should be checked in advance by the senior leader in charge and copies retained.

7. Where adventurous activities are concerned, leaders should have the appropriate qualification or if the activity is provided by an outside organisation, they should be licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.
8. Sleeping arrangements should be clarified in advance of any trip.
 - a) Males and females should sleep separately.
 - b) There needs to be an appropriate mix of male and female workers.
 - c) Workers should not share a room with only one or two children unless as a parent sharing the same room as their own children.
9. Workers should know the whereabouts of every child or young person on a residential visit, at all times.
10. At least one worker on a residential trip should be qualified in first aid (St. John ambulance or similar). A first aid kit should be available, and any accidents or injuries should be documented on an incident form.
11. Those with responsibility for food should possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Procedure for responding to concerns or allegations of abuse

The nature and severity of concerns will vary and, accordingly, so will the necessary response.

- Adults must understand the importance of listening to children and respond appropriately to any disclosures.
- Never promise confidentiality, as it may be necessary to share disclosed information.
- Do not prompt the child or ask leading questions but listen and confirm what you have heard if necessary.
- A record should be kept of any incidents or disclosures and the child's words, and the circumstances should be documented accurately and as soon as possible. Incident forms should be available to all volunteers but on completion should be stored securely and made available to the persons who have a defined role in the safeguarding policy.
- The session leader for a group at any given time is responsible for deciding upon an initial course of action. In a situation which appears not to be an emergency the concerns should be passed to one of the safeguarding officers who will decide whether immediate action should be taken but difficulty in contacting one of these persons should not delay action being taken. In an emergency when there are allegations or suspicions of abuse or actual abuse has taken place and an immediate opinion or decision is required, the DPS should be contacted. If this is not possible, the leader should contact thirtyone:eight or Cardiff Social Services for advice and the case should be formally referred to Social Services if so advised. All telephone referrals should be followed up in writing within 48 hours by the leader who was the direct recipient of disclosure information or who witnessed the incident.

- If an accusation is made against a worker (volunteer or paid member of staff), a DPS will need to follow procedures and liaise with Social Services regarding suspension of the worker and consider referring to the DBS.
- The DPS should inform the church leadership of significant events and ensure that the church insurers are aware of any allegations undergoing investigation.
- It is the right of any individual to make direct contact with external agencies to voice child protection concerns although it is hoped that people will feel able to work within the church's safeguarding framework.
- The church should offer pastoral and practical support to affected families.
- Parents who may be implicated in situations of sexual abuse should not be informed of any allegations, this being an immediate task for Social Services or the Police, allowing an investigation to be unhindered. In situations of physical abuse or neglect parents may be informed of allegations where it is believed that the child will not be at risk of significant harm after parents are made aware of the allegations.

Procedure for obtaining a disclosure

As part of the church's safeguarding policy, all church workers who have contact with children need to obtain an enhanced DBS Disclosure (police check) through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Jo Oats, Sian Hopkins and Andrew Rees are the recruiters for Rhiwbina Baptist Church. DBS applications are now completed online.

You also need to provide proof of identity. There are two categories of document which can be used:

1. Passport, UK driving licence (photo card or paper), original UK birth certificate, valid photo identity card.
2. Non-original birth certificate, marriage certificate, P45 or P60 (less than 12 months old), bank statement, utility bill at your current address, TV licence, document from Benefits Agency; Employment Service; HMRC, vehicle registration document.

You must show the recruiter one category 1 document plus two other documents of any type or five documents from category 2. Jo Oats will input your ID onto your online application and send it to the DBS.

You will receive a copy of your disclosure and will need to show it to a recruiter.

Procedure for handling the disclosure of information

Disclosure information is stored securely with access limited the designated person to receive information from thirtyone:eight following a DBS check on the suitability of persons to work with children.

- Disclosure information is only revealed to those who need to know and is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested.
- Once a recruitment decision has been made, disclosure information should not be kept for more than six months.

- A record will be kept of the date of issue of the disclosure, name of subject, type of disclosure (enhanced), position for which disclosure is requested, unique reference number and details of the recruitment decision taken.

This procedure complies with data protection principles.

Policy guidelines for online safety

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the internet (Information and Communications Technology). The church has adopted this policy to reflect all communications between the church's workers and children. Codes of conduct for face-to-face interactions are translated into online and social media interactions with respectful modes of behaviour, speech and physical presentation.

- Maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly but not over-familiar.
- Be clear about information you need to share; don't abbreviate your communications.
- Be circumspect in your communications to avoid any misinterpretation of your motives or behaviour that could be construed as grooming.
- Only contact children for reasons related to the work of the church and maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals and groups including messaging and texting.
- Do not share any personal information with children or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which is appropriate as part of your role.
- Only give personal contact details to children that are in the public domain of the church, including your mobile telephone number.
- If children want you to have their mobile phone numbers, email addresses or similar and communicate with them in this way, make sure that their parents know and have agreed.
- Where possible only use equipment provided by the church to communicate with children.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.
- Ensure that Rhiwbina Baptist Church's name and logo appear with every internet post made by a church user who represents the church while conducting business on the internet.
- Email should only be used to communicate specific information (e.g. times and dates of events) and the email history should be kept and dated. It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Email communication with children should take place between 9am and 5pm. Where working with children outside normal office hours, workers should seek advice from their leader but there should be no email communication after 9pm.
- All forms of communication with children and young people such as texting or phone calls should not occur after 9pm.
- Use of video calls such as Zoom or Skype should be a group activity and not 1:1. Generally, as in normal circumstances, contact with young people should take place with appropriately vetted and checked workers present and not by a single worker on

their own. Where a 1:1 call is required, it is good practice to have an additional colleague in the room with the worker and it is also better to ask if a parent can be in the home of the young person at the same time.

Social media policy

- All social media interaction between workers and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administrated groups.
- Text and other media posted should be appropriate and acceptable in terms of the code of conduct for behaviour.
- All interaction on social media groups should be recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- Any private messages should be recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media should be dealt with in the usual way and referred to the Designated Person for Safeguarding.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit (13 for Facebook, 16 for WhatsApp).
- Workers should ensure their privacy setting is at the highest level of security in order to prevent children from seeing any more than is relevant to communication within the group.
- All social media groups should provide links to statutory authorities such as the Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) or agencies such as Childline, NSPCC etc.

Consent for photographic images and videos online

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and every endeavour to prevent children from being easily identified will be made.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Parental consent will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought. Such images should be downloaded to the church computer and stored securely. Images on mobile phones, cameras, memory sticks and other portable devices should be deleted immediately.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity, and gender of the activity.
- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved, permission should be sought in line with photographic guidelines.

PASTORAL CARE

Supporting those affected by abuse

The leadership is committed to offering pastoral care through the CLT, pastoral care worker or life groups to support those who have been affected by abuse and by working with the statutory agencies as appropriate.

Working with offenders

When someone attending the church is known to be a risk to children, the leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of everyone who may be at risk of harm, will set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep.

In practice the risk is managed by creating a policy and code of behaviour tailored to the individual. This may involve drawing up a contract giving details of the boundaries the individual is expected to keep, and the support which will be provided. Statutory agencies such as the probation service may need to be involved to inform the risk assessment.

PARTNERSHIP WORK

The church is responsible for all of the activities taking place within its facilities. If individuals, groups or other organisations are allowed to use the premises, they should be given a copy of the safeguarding policy and agree to abide by it unless they have a policy of their own.

Appendix 1

Statutory definitions of abuse (Children)

The following definitions are recommended as criteria throughout Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office in their joint document, *Working Together to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children* (2000). Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as fictitious illness by proxy.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix 2

Possible signs of abuse

The following signs may suggest that abuse has taken place.

Physical signs of abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given.
- Injuries that occur to the body in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to change for or participate in games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.

Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.

Emotional signs of abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/ aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing lying.

Other possible indicators for child abuse in parents/carers

- Drug/alcohol misuse.
- Mental health problems.
- Learning difficulties.
- Domestic abuse (verbal or physical).

Appendix 3

Guidance on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse and actions to be taken.

- Listen.
- Show acceptance of what the child says.
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- As soon as possible write down what has been shared.

Helpful resources:

- You have done the right thing in telling.
- That must have been really hard.
- I am glad you have told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

Don't say:

- 'Why didn't you tell anyone before?'
- 'I can't believe it!'
- 'Are you sure this is true?'
- 'Why? How? When? Who? Where?'

Never make:

- False promises
- Statements such as 'I am shocked, don't tell anyone else'.

In conclusion, reassure the child, show acceptance of what they have said and tell them what you are going to do next. Contact the DPS or contact an agency such as the thirtyone:eight or Social Services. Make notes as soon as possible recording exactly what the child said and what was happening immediately beforehand. Record dates and times of events. Such information should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place.

Appendix 4

Further guidance on what to do about an allegation.

Do I consult with someone outside the church?

Speak to the safeguarding officer first. Unless they are confident that other advice should not be sought, the presumption should be to consult. Care should be taken in consulting with others that the identities of the people involved are not divulged.

Do I inform parents/carers?

We are encouraged to inform parents/carers of actions that are taken or concerns that were raised that effect their child/children. The DPS would share with parents/carers their intention to consult with or refer to Social Services.

However, in situations where a parent or carer is implicated in the abuse, and when there is doubt about whether, by informing the parents or carer the child or young person might be placed at increased risk, the advice of Social Services staff should be sought about how best to proceed.

Therefore, a referral should always be made to Social Services when it is believed that a parent/carers may be physically or sexually abusing a child or young person, and the DPS should not inform the parents that such a referral has been made.

Do I refer to Social Services?

The policy of the church should include a duty to report allegations or suspicions of abuse. It will be necessary for the DPS to respond to allegations of abuse and concerns about a child's safety and protection by referring these to Social Services. If the parents/carers are not implicated in the abuse, they should be informed of the concerns and Social Services and/or the Police should be contacted. If a parent/ carer is not in agreement with Social Services being informed of the allegations and/or concerns and the information available suggest that the child/young person is at risk, it will always be necessary for the DPS to respond to the concerns and refer these to Social Services.

However, not all concerns will warrant a referral. If, for example, suspicions are raised because of a child's change in behaviour, the decision may be taken to continue monitoring the child's behaviour. If the concern is about a worker acting in an inappropriate way, it may be decided to speak to the worker and reinforce good practice guidelines.

After consulting other and/or referring to Social Services the DPS will be advised of what action to take to respond to the concerns. Social Services will advise about the appropriateness of their involvement and/or suggest alternative means of offering support to the child and their family.

Appendix 5

LEADERSHIP SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Core Leadership Team (CLT) and Trustees recognise the importance of its ministry with children, young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

Rhiwbina Baptist Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults and ensuring their wellbeing.

We recognise the fact that we all have a responsibility to help prevent abuse and report such abuse that we discover or suspect.

We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the church unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.

We are committed to following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults and good practice recommendations. We respect the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and we will implement the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.

We will support the Designated Person for Safeguarding in their work and any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.

We have adopted the safeguarding standards developed by thirtyone:eight.

We recognise the responsibility of Children's Social Services or Adult Social Care to lead investigations when there have been allegations or suspicions of abuse in children or vulnerable adults.

This 'Safeguarding policy and procedures for children' was passed for use in Rhiwbina Baptist Church in April 2025 by:

Rhiwbina Baptist Church leaders

Gareth Lloyd (Church Leader)

Anne Jones (Chair of Trustees)

This policy is reviewed and updated annually.

Date of planned review: April 2026