

# Child Safeguarding Policy



## SECTION 1

### Details of the place of worship / organisation

**Name of Place of Worship / Organisation:** Grace Church Dell Road, a charitable incorporated organisation (registered charity number 1155358) ("**Grace Church Stirchley**")

**Church Address:** Dell Road Church, Dell Road, Cotteridge, Birmingham B30 2HZ

**Church Office Address:** 55 Bournville Lane, Stirchley, B30 2LP

**Tel No:** 0121 4160316

**Email address:** [office@gcdr.org.uk](mailto:office@gcdr.org.uk)

**Membership of Denomination/Organisation:** Membership of FIEC

Registered with Charity Commission

Charity Number: 1155358

**Insurance Company:** David Edwards (broker), underwritten by Ansvar. It includes public liability insurance (up to £5,000,000), Trustee Indemnity insurance and Employers Liability Insurance.

**Safeguarding Co-ordinator:** Jenny Jackson [see **SECTION 2** for further details]

**Elder overseeing child protection:** Andy Weatherley [see **SECTION 2** for further details]

The following is a brief description of Grace Church Stirchley and the activities we undertake with children:

#### **Grace Church Stirchley**

Grace Church Stirchley is an independent evangelical church. Our mission statement is:

*"We exist to help people love Jesus more and more."*

Grace Church was a church plant from City Evangelical Church, Birmingham. It was started in April 2007 and became an independent church in 2009. Grace Church is based at Dell Road Gospel Hall. Dell Road Church have been meeting at Dell Road Gospel Hall for many years. In 2011 Grace Church joined with Dell Road Church to become one congregation, known as Grace Church Stirchley Cotteridge. In 2019 we started to have some of our Sunday meetings at Stirchley Baths (Community centre) and we have therefore changed the name by which we are known to Grace Church Stirchley

in 2019 to reflect the change of premises. Our charity name remains as Grace Church Dell Road and is registered with the Charity Commission under registered charity number 1155358.

### **Grace Church Values**

As a church, there are certain things we want to be known for being. We strive to be:

- **Welcoming** - We're a community, not a club. Being diverse and inclusive is important to us. Newcomers are always welcome – however different they are.
- **Honest** - Grace means that we can be totally honest with God – and with each another. It means that we're free to be ourselves. We want to become genuine friends, not just acquaintances who cross paths on a Sunday. We also want to live honest lives, without pretending.
- **Growing** - Churches can be guilty of getting into maintenance mode; simply existing to keep their traditions going. We want to avoid this. We want to grow and change, both as individuals and as a church.
- **Engaging** - Being a church is not about hiding away from the world but about being a positive influence in it. We want to be people who do good for our neighbourhood, our city, our country and the world.

### **Leadership**

Our leadership team consists of an eldership including 2 paid pastors (currently Andy Weatherley and Stu Ward). There are also a number of Deacons who serve and help lead the church in particular ministries. The legal governance and compliance of Grace Church Stirchley as a charity is operated by the charity trustees which include the elders as well as the church treasurer and a deacon responsible for legal/employment matters.

See **APPENDIX 1** for current church leadership

### **Meetings**

The only weekly public all-age meeting of Grace Church Stirchley is currently on a Sunday between 10.30-12.30pm for our Sunday worship. This takes place at Dell Road Gospel Hall or Stirchley Baths. During our Sunday service we offer activities for children aged 0-11 years in separate rooms. This is known as Grace Growers. Children over the age of 11 years remain in the service. Separate Bible Study Groups take place for teenage boys and girls, usually on a Sunday evening.

See **APPENDIX 2** for a full description of our Sunday meetings.

**Midweek activities** We run a number of mid week activities specifically for children, young people and their families, as well as meetings for adults:

- Noah's Ark - stay and play for pre-school children and their carers
- Monday Club – Children's club for children in school years 2-4

- Kickstart – Youth club for children in school years 5-8
- Wednesday Ladies Meeting
- Community Groups – midweek Bible study groups meeting in the homes of church members

See **APPENDIX 3** for a full description of our midweek activities.

## **Our commitment**

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We acknowledge that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. 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 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. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by the Thirty-one: Eight (Formerly the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)).

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 all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached at no greater than a 3 year interval.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children.
- file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with Thirty-one: Eight and any amendments subsequently published. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

## SECTION 2

# Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

## Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. 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 as 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.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Definitions of abuse      **[see APPENDIX 4]**

Signs and symptoms of abuse      **[see APPENDIX 5]**

How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse      **[See APPENDIX 6]**

## **Safeguarding awareness**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training for all workers and to developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will undertake safeguarding training on a regular basis. We will provide Safeguarding Training run by the Grace Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator on a yearly basis which our workers will be expected to attend. If a worker fails to attend over 24 months they will not be allowed to continue to work with children/young people. [see **APPENDIX 7** for an outline of our Safeguarding Training]

We will provide a document which summarises our child protection training, which all new workers will be expected to sign to show their agreement. [**APPENDIX 7**]

The Leadership will also ensure that children 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**

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Following procedures as below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to **Jenny Jackson** (hereafter the "**Safeguarding Co-ordinator**") tel no: **07930804990** who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to **Andy Weatherley** (hereafter the "**Elder overseeing child protection**") tel no: **0121 4599307** or **07788155885**. If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Elder overseeing child protection, then the report should be made in the first instance to Thirty-one:Eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services.
- The local Children's Social care area office telephone number (office hours) is 0121 303 1888. The out of hours emergency duty team number is 0121 675 4806.
- The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 0845 113 5000.
- If required, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company.

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Elder overseeing child protection should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirty-one:Eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Elder overseeing child protection in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirty-one:Eight, although the Leadership hope that members of Grace Church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Elder overseeing child protection has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Elder overseeing child protection is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a 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 Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Elder overseeing child protection will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or Thirty-one: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.

- Seek and follow advice given by Thirty-one:Eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Elder overseeing child protection will:

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

[see **APPENDIX 8** for flow chart for responding to allegations of abuse]

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## SECTION 3

# Prevention

## Safe recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

### For all applicants (voluntary and paid)

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post [APPENDIX 9]
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form [APPENDIX 9]
- Safeguarding has been discussed before the successful applicant starts their job and the applicant will sign a declaration form to confirm their agreement with our safeguarding principles [APPENDIX 7]
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A DBS has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy statement, informed where they can view the full safeguarding policy, and knows how to report concerns.
- The applicant has signed a copy of the Church's Code of Conduct for working with children and young people.
- Volunteers will only be recruited from within our own church membership.

### For paid staff

- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant

### Visiting Missionaries

- References will be obtained from the sending mission agency, including the missionary's suitability to work with children and young people.
- A criminal records check will be obtained from the home country.
- A UK DBS check is completed on arrival
- For short term missionaries where a DBS check is not able to be obtained, workers will be supervised at all times when working with children and young people

## **Management of Workers**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a copy of this Safeguarding Policy and the Appendices and have signed a copy of the Church's Code of Conduct for working with children and young people. [see APPENDIX 10]

The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

[see APPENDIX 11]

## SECTION 4

# Pastoral Care

## Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship / organisation. As a small locally based community church with a small staff, this pastoral care, support and advice would be provided on an ad hoc basis as the church is able.

## Working with offenders

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, or 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 children, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

See **APPENDIX 12** for details of boundaries that we may expect such a person to keep.

## SECTION 5

### Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children and young people we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached. [APPENDIX 2]

#### Key principles of good practice:

- Always work in the clear sight of another leader. DO NOT work in a room alone with a child.
- Be careful about touching.
- Confidentiality is important
  - Never promise confidentiality to a child
  - Keep any suspicions you may have about a possible abusive situation between you and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- When activities involving children/young people are taking place, only workers assigned to the group should be allowed free access to the area.
- Ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Give consideration to the number of workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both.
- Ensure that the level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required is appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised.

#### General guidelines

These are taken from Safe and Secure the Manual standard 5 and are numbered in accordance with this document: [APPENDICES 12 & 13]

#### Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children and young people. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own safeguarding policy.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Signed by:  **Trustee of Grace Church**

Date: 9th February 2021

We will review this policy every 3 years or earlier if the circumstances require. We will therefore next raise it for review in **2024**.

## Leadership Child Safeguarding Statement

The Trustees of Grace Church Stirchley (hereafter referred to as "Leadership") recognise the importance of its ministry /work with children and young people in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the leadership/organisation on:

This place of worship/organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children.

### **We are committed to:**

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children in need of protection.



# Safeguarding is a priority here

We are committed to creating safer places by following statutory guidelines on good working practice.



**Your safeguarding team:**

**Children's safeguarding lead(s):**  
(for anyone under 18 years)

---

**Contact details**

---

**Adult's safeguarding lead(s):**  
(for anyone 18 years or over)

---

**Contact Details**

---

A copy of our safeguarding policy is available upon request.

In an emergency, or for independent advice call thirtyone:eight on:

**0303 003 11 11**

With safeguarding support from:



Thirtyone:eight is an independent Christian safeguarding charity.  
Charity No: 1004490. Scottish Charity No: SC040578. Company No: 2646487