



Policy Name: Safeguarding Policy
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Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults

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Section 1

Safeguarding Policy for Forefront Community Church, Chard (hereafter 'FCC')

Church Details

Name and main address:

Forefront Community Centre, 42 Fore Street, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1QA

Tel No: 01460 66080 **Email address:** office@forefront.org.uk

The community centre is used throughout the week, but the following premises are also used on a regular basis:

- Holyrood Academy, Upper Site Hall, Zembard Lane, TA20 1JL
for Sunday services and occasional evening events
- Chard Baptist Church, Holyrood Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 2AH
for baptisms, and funerals
- Chard Methodist Church, Fore Street, Chard Somerset, TA20 1QA
for evening meetings
- The English Martyrs' Church 2 East St, Chard TA20 1EP
for evening meetings

Membership of Organisations: Partnership UK, Evangelical Alliance, Charity Commission, Chard Churches Together

Charity Number: 1139006

Insurance Company: Congregational 'Church Choice' (comprehensive cover including public liability, employer's liability, buildings and contents etc). Congregational is a trading name for Integra Insurance Solution Ltd.

The following is a brief description of our place of worship and the type of activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

Our main Sunday service is held at Holyrood Academy. All ages are welcome, and we run children's activities for those aged 0-18 years.

Other meetings are held at several different locations in the town, at Forefront Community Centre and in homes. There are no separate children's activities held at these other meetings.

The Forefront Community Centre is open each weekday morning for those in the community to drop in for a coffee and a chat. There are also other organised events e.g. a coffee morning twice each week. The centre houses and administers the Lord's Larder, an emergency food supply for those in need. Some people coming in for these services are adults who have care and support needs.

We also run a support group for young parents (under 21 years old) and their babies at this venue on a weekly basis and sometimes meet with other local youth groups for joint activities.

Rooms in Forefront Community Centre are hired to groups providing local community services, e.g. counselling, Citizen's Advice. We require all users to be responsible for their safeguarding policies and procedures.

Our work in the wider community includes working in local schools and helping to run holiday clubs. All of these are activities are subject to good safeguarding practice.

Our Commitment

As The Leadership, we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults 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 The Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy is based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight. Thirtyone:eight are the UK's only independent Christian safeguarding charity that help individuals, organisations, faith and community groups to protect vulnerable people from abuse by providing complete safeguarding solutions for organisations including training, consultancy, DBS services and a 24 hour helpline, making sure everyone is equipped and empowered with the tools they need.

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.
- 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 Safeguarding Coordinators in their work and in actions they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

- review this policy, or to nominate individuals to do so, annually.
- ensure the Leadership Safeguarding Statement is displayed at the Forefront Centre (Appendix 1.1).
- ensure posters displaying the names of the Safeguarding Coordinators are displayed at our two main venues: Holyrood Academy and Forefront Centre (Appendix 1.2).

The Appendices for this section are:

Appendix 1.1	Leadership Safeguarding Statement
Appendix 1.2	Safeguarding Coordinators Poster

Section 2:

Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults 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 or adult.

Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

- Children are those aged 0 to 18 years.
- Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Significant Harm – This relates to the degree of harm that triggers statutory action to protect a child. It is based on the individual child's health or development compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child e.g. severity of ill treatment, degree and extent of physical harm, duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, premeditation. Department of Health guidance suggests that 'significant' means 'considerable, noteworthy or important.'
- Racial and Cultural Factors – We live in multi-cultural society. We know that people live, parent and care for others differently and of course, it's important to understand the people with whom we work. However, we must never justify the inappropriate actions of someone in a caring role, particularly if we know that their cultural or traditional practices are causing harm to others.
- There are many forms of abuse. These include: physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, fabricated or induced illness, spiritual, domestic, sexual exploitation, extremism, bullying and female genital mutilation. Fuller definitions of these forms of abuse and the signs to look out for can be found in Appendix 2.1.
- Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Adults)

The following information relates to the Safeguarding of Adults as defined in the Care Act 2014, Chapter 14. Safeguarding.

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and:
- is experiencing, or 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 or neglect.

Some adults might be more at risk than others. The following factors could increase the risk of abuse:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty, especially if creates dependency on or needing help from others
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Severe illness
- Alcohol or illegal substance dependency

Abuse can include physical, domestic violence, sexual, psychological, financial or material, slavery, discriminatory, organisational, neglect and self-neglect. Fuller definitions of these forms of abuse and the signs to look out for can be found in Appendix 2.2.

How to respond to someone wishing to disclose abuse

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child (or adult) to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above everything else listen without interrupting.
- Don't ask leading questions.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality.
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc. if needed.

<p>Some helpful responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You have done the right thing in telling. ● I am glad you have told me. ● I will try to help you 	<p>Don't say</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why didn't you tell anyone before? ● I can't believe it! ● Are you sure this is true? ● Why? How? When? Who? Where? ● I am shocked, don't tell anyone else
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Responding to allegations of abuse

Record and Report

- Following the conversation make notes as detailed as you can. Include descriptions of any injuries, exactly what was said, dates and times of events, surrounding circumstances if these have been shared with you (Appendices 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5).
- The allegations or suspicions should be reported as soon as possible (and the notes given) to a Safeguarding Co-ordinator:
 - **Laura Dimon** (the Safeguarding Co-ordinator for Children)
tel: **07952 425822**.
 - **Dave Sutcliffe** (the Safeguarding Co-ordinator for Adults)
tel: **07890 074794**.
 - Both have been 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-ordinators or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, then the report should be made to:
 - **Rachel Basso** (the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator for Children)
tel: **07861 379581**
 - **Christine Smith** (the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator for Adults)
tel: **07724 557539**.
- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:
 - Thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ, tel: **0303 003 1111**.
 - Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
 - Also, whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Appendices for this section are:

- Appendix 2.1 Definitions of Abuse – Children and young people
- Appendix 2.2 Forms of Abuse - Adults
- Appendix 2.3 Safeguarding Record Sheet
- Appendix 2.4 Procedure for responding to allegation of abuse.
- Appendix 2.5 Managing allegations made against a worker.

Section 3

Prevention

Safeguarding training and awareness

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers and volunteers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. The Leadership will ensure all workers are appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- Written references have been obtained and followed up where appropriate.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)

All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training provided in-house on a regular basis. The expectation is that an individual renews their training at least once every three years.

The Leadership will also ensure that children, and adults 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 (Appendix 1.2).

Procedures for safer recruitment are detailed in our Safer Recruitment (paid workers and volunteers) Policy 2023

Section 4:

Separate policy - Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse.

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care; our Pastoral Care Policy is available at Forefront Community Centre. We work with statutory agencies as appropriate and support all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with FCC. We also acknowledge the impact of spiritual abuse.

Effort will be made to provide support to all those involved in a safeguarding situation including the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, person to whom the concern has been reported and the safeguarding officers. It is recognised that, where possible, this should be a different person for each one involved.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending FCC is known to have abused children, is under investigation or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs, the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. In its safeguarding commitment to the protection of everyone who may be at risk of harm, boundaries will be set for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

A contract will be written up which will include the set boundaries and consequences if they are broken (Appendix 4.1). If the individual is known to be working with the Parole Service, where possible, advice will be sought in drafting the contract so that it doesn't go against the terms of their parole.

The appendix for this section is:

Appendix 4.1

Working with offenders: Procedure and Contract

Section 5

Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship working with children, young people, and adults with care and support needs FCC 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 or unfounded accusation.

As well as a General Code of Conduct (Appendix 5.0) for all workers and volunteers, we have A Safer Recruitment Policy, good practice guidelines, consent forms and record sheets for the activities we are involved in (Appendices 5.1 - 5.6 and 5.9 - 5.10)

Working in Partnership

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

We will apply clear guidelines with 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 form an agreement.

It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own policy.

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

Safeguarding posters with appropriate phone numbers and the Procedure flow diagram (Appendices 1.2 and 2.4) are on display in the Forefront Community Centre and at Holyrood Academy on Sundays. The Leadership Safeguarding Statement (Appendix 1.1) is available on our website and is displayed in Forefront Centre.

The Appendices for this section are:

Appendix 5.0	Code of Conduct
Appendix 5.1	Guidelines for Children's and Youth workers
Appendix 5.2	Guidelines for working with under 5s
Appendix 5.3	Guidelines for discipline
Appendix 5.4	Guidelines for teachers, children and parents
Appendix 5.5	Guidelines for people working with adults at risk
Appendix 5.6	Guidelines for trips, camps and residential holidays
Appendix 5.9	Consent form – child
Appendix 5.10	Consent form – youth
Appendix 5.11	Consent form – camps and residential holidays
Appendix 5.14	Risk Assessment Form
Appendix 5.15	Accident and Incident Form

Additional Policies relating to Safeguarding Issues:

Forefront Church Safer Recruitment Policy 2023

Forefront Church Online Safety Policy for Working with Young People 2023