

Central Baptist Association Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

POLICY STATEMENT

The Central Baptist Association, its leaders and trustees, have oversight of member churches within their region. Although they do not have direct responsibility for safeguarding practice within the churches, they have a support and challenge role, seeking to train, equip and support those with oversight of safeguarding. Every church is expected to have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures reflecting the needs of their own congregation. The Association strongly recommends that this is based on the Baptist Union of Great Britain model policy.

https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/512218/Model_Safeguarding_Policy.aspx

Our Vision

The vision statement of Central Baptist Association is 'Walking together in Ministry and Mission'. In fulfilling this vision, we will:

- Have a named Association Safeguarding Contact with suitable training and experience to support churches with safeguarding matters
- Have a named safeguarding trustee responsible, along with the Association Safeguarding Contact, for promoting safeguarding practice across the life of the Association
- Promote Excellence in Safeguarding within the churches of the Association
- Offer support and advice to churches with safeguarding concerns or incidents
- Provide Excellence in Safeguarding training (Level 2 and 3) in line with the recommendations of the Baptist Union of Great Britain

OUR SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk associated with it, both directly and by supporting member churches.

We commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all those in our church communities, especially children, young people and adults at risk. In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to this policy and the development of sound procedures to implement our policy well.

Prevention and Reporting of Abuse

It is the duty of every member of the association team, including trustees to help prevent the abuse of children, young people and adults at risk and to respond to concerns about the well-being of those within our churches. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. We will also support our churches to enable them to respond to concerns about the well-being of children, young people and adults at risk in line with our procedures.

Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of Workers

The Association will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of all workers, particularly those in a position of trust or working directly with children, young people or adults at risk. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk.

Supporting Churches

The Association has a named person responsible for supporting churches managing safeguarding concerns (the Association Safeguarding Contact). They have completed Level 2 and 3 in Excellence in Safeguarding and understand the procedures for escalating safeguarding concerns. Where they are unsure about the best course of action, they will work with the National Safeguarding Team to ensure that the situation is managed well and those at risk are properly safeguarded.

Promoting Best Safeguarding Practice

All Association staff, trustees and volunteers are responsible for promoting best safeguarding practice amongst the churches they support. This includes seeking support from the Association Safeguarding Contact when necessary and following the advice that has been given.

Providing Training

The Association will facilitate safeguarding training for churches in our area using the Baptist Union Level 2 and 3 Excellence in Safeguarding material. We will ensure that we have knowledgeable and experienced trainers to facilitate the course who have completed the BUGB Train the Trainer course for each level. The Association will ensure that Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training is available to churches throughout the Region and widely promoted by all Association team members.

Working with national and statutory bodies

To ensure that children, young people and adults at risk within our churches are properly safeguarded, we will work closely with the Baptist Union of Great Britain National Safeguarding Team, statutory authorities, other denominations and uniformed organisations, sharing information where necessary.

Part of this commitment to working together to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk will include the Association Safeguarding Contact participating in the work of the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, which serves as a coordinating body for improvements in safeguarding policy and practice.

SAFEGUARDING CONTACT POINTS WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION

Association Safeguarding Contact: Gillian Jones

They will support other Association team members and churches, providing advice and guidance on how to manage safeguarding concerns. This includes supporting churches to put Safeguarding Contracts in place, assisting with safeguarding risk assessments and promoting excellence in safeguarding in all Baptist churches in their region.

Contact Details: **Mobile:** [07729 688791](tel:07729688791) **Email:** safeguarding@centralba.org.uk

Alternative Safeguarding Contact:

If the Association Safeguarding Contact is on leave or unavailable, the local Regional Minister should be contacted about urgent safeguarding matters.

Contact Details:

Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes - Rev Lisa Kerry on 07821 659620

Northamptonshire - Rev Nathan Toseland on 07355 093187

Hertfordshire - Rev Mary Moody on 07562 690276

South Buckinghamshire - Rev Andrew Openshaw on 07427 162410

Association Safeguarding Trustee: Barbara Griffiths

They will raise the profile of safeguarding amongst the trustees of the Association and oversee the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the trustees.

Contact Details: Email: barbara.griffiths@centralba.org.uk

POLICE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTACTS

The Association spans county boundaries. This means that we are likely to be liaising with police and social services from a number of authorities.

The Police Forces working within the Central Baptist Association area are:

| Force Name | Areas covered |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Bedfordshire Police | Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton |
| 2. Hertfordshire Constabulary | Hertfordshire |
| 3. Northamptonshire Police | North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire |
| 4. Thames Valley Police | Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes |

The Local Authorities working within our Association boundaries are:

| Local Authority (i.e. Oxfordshire) | LADO or Designated Officer contact details | Children's Services (MASH, Assessment and Intake team) Contact Details | Adult Services (MASH, Assessment and Intake Team) Contact Details |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Central Bedfordshire | 0300 300 8142 | 01296 383962 or Out of hours 0800 999 7677 | 01296 387146 |
| Hertfordshire | LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk 03000 411111 | 0300 123 4043 | 0300 123 4042 |
| North Northamptonshire | 07831 123193 | 0300 126 3000 | 0300 126 3000 or complete online https://northamptonshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Make_a_safeguarding_referral_to_North_Northamptonshire_Council |
| West Northamptonshire | 07850 854309 | 0300 126 7000 | adultcarenc@northamptonshire.gcsx.gov.uk |
| Thames Valley | 01296 382070 lado@bucksc.gov.uk | 01296 383962 cypfirstresponses@bucksc.gov.uk | 0800 137915 LASM@bucksc.gov.uk safeguardingadults@buckcc.gov.uk |

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNs AND ALLEGATIONS

The Association Safeguarding Contact is responsible for ensuring that churches within the association have access to support and guidance when managing safeguarding issues within their congregation. In addition, the role of the Association Safeguarding Contact is to both support and challenge church leaders where there are concerns about their approach to safeguarding, working with them to attain best safeguarding practice.

There may be occasions when the Association will take the lead in investigating a situation and these will be set out within these procedures. The Association Safeguarding Contact will seek additional support and advice from the Baptist Union of Great Britain Safeguarding Team and other professionals when necessary. They will maintain a record of all concerns brought to their attention using a Case Record Sheet (Appendix B) and a Case Spreadsheet (Appendix C). All information collected and processed in this way will be held for at least 75 years in line with the [BUGB Guide to Safeguarding Recording Keeping](#).

Safeguarding concerns raised about a member of staff or a volunteer working directly for the Association

Regional Ministers

In the case of a Regional Minister the procedures below relating to BUGB Accredited Ministers will be followed.

Other staff, trustees and volunteers

If a safeguarding concern is raised about a member of staff, a volunteer or trustee working directly for the Association then the Association Safeguarding Contact will contact statutory services for advice on next steps, as well as seeking advice from the National Safeguarding Team. If the concern relates to a child or young person, the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. *In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police will be contacted in the first instance.*

Additional actions

When a member of the Association Team is advised of a safeguarding concern involving an Accredited Baptist Minister, they will contact the BUGB Safeguarding Team or the BUGB Ministries Team Leader within one working day, passing over all information they have received about the case.

The BUGB Safeguarding Team and Ministries Team Leader will agree a strategy for investigation, this will include decisions about who will make the referral to statutory agencies, whether suspension is required and when the person of concern can be informed of the issues that have been raised.

The Regional Minister will work with the national specialist teams (Safeguarding and Ministries) to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner to enable the investigation to progress. They will be led by the national team and will not disclose information to the person of concern or a third party without their agreement.

Pastoral Support

The Association will offer pastoral support to the person of concern. This will not be provided by the Association Safeguarding Contact but by another member of the Association Team or an experienced minister from another church within the Association.

Safeguarding concerns raised about a Regionally Recognised Pastor/Worker

When a member of the Regional Team is advised of a safeguarding concern involving someone who is Regionally recognised, the responsibility for local or professional investigation lies with the Association Safeguarding Contact, with support from the National Safeguarding Team if needed. On occasions the Association may decide to subcontract the investigation to a third party such as 31:8 or an independent safeguarding consultant. However, the Association remains responsible for ensuring that the outcome of the investigation is acted upon and the advice given is followed.

The Association Safeguarding Contact will work closely with the statutory authorities. If the concern related to a child or young person the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk, then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. *In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police will be contacted in the first instance.*

Safeguarding concerns raised about an Unaccredited Minister or Pastor

If safeguarding concerns are raised about an unaccredited minister or pastor these should be managed by the trustees of the church in the first instance. The Association's role in this situation will be to support the church with the investigation. They will involve the National Safeguarding Team if necessary.

Although the Association will offer support, the church are expected to take the lead in contacting statutory services. If the concern related to a child or young person the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. *In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police need to be contacted by the church in the first instance.*

The Association will not be directly able to offer pastoral support to the person under investigation, however they may be able to recommend someone else to the church who can perform this role during the investigation.

Safeguarding concerns raised by a church about the behaviour or well-being of someone who attends the church.

The Association recognises that at times churches need additional support and advice when they have concerns about someone within their care. The Association Safeguarding Contact, or appointed Safeguarding Officers will offer this support and work with the church Designated Person for Safeguarding, consulting with the National Safeguarding Team when necessary. As with unaccredited ministers, the church will take the lead in contacting statutory agencies and undertaking the investigation.

To ensure that the correct advice is given to the church the Association Safeguarding Contact will check whether the individual is in a position of leadership or trust within the church. If they are, the church will be asked to contact the LADO or Adult Safeguarding Team to seek their advice before the Association issues further advice.

Safeguarding Contracts

A Safeguarding Contract should be put in place by a church when they are aware that someone is either under investigations for, or has convictions for offences against, children or adults at risk. The Association will hold the template Safeguarding Contract and work with the church to ensure that the final agreement is robust and in line with the recommendations made by the National Safeguarding Team. The Association will hold a copy of the initial contract and work with the church to ensure that they will review it regularly. The Association Safeguarding Contact will take an active role in facilitating an initial contract meeting between the church and the subject of the contract. This is in line with the guidelines published by the National Safeguarding Team in the guide [Safeguarding Contracts: Frequently Asked Questions](#), which is downloadable from the BUGB website.

If a church is reluctant to follow the safeguarding advice given by the Association, then the Safeguarding Contact will consult with the National Safeguarding Team and a decision made together about the best way to ensure effective safeguards are in place within the church.

Pastoral Care in safeguarding situations

When safeguarding situations occur within a church all those involved will inevitably need additional support and care. This includes the person making an allegation and the person subject to it. The Association will support the church in identifying people who can take on this pastoral role and on occasions may be able to seek support from a different church if they consider that this would be the most appropriate way forward.

DBS CHECKS

The Association will initiate all DBS checks for Accredited Ministers and Regionally Recognised Ministers / Pastors using the Baptist Union account with DDC. Any blemished disclosures will be assessed by the National Safeguarding Team and recommendations will be passed to the Ministries Team in relation to BU Accredited Ministers and Nationally Recognised leaders. When the disclosure relates to a Regionally Recognised Minister the outcome of the risk assessment will be shared with the Association Safeguarding Contact in the first instance.

DBS checks for Unaccredited Ministers are the responsibility of the local church. The Association has no legal right to know the information included in the check. However, the Association will request the date and number of the DBS check from the church and record this on the national database. This ensures consistency with the recording of information about ministers regardless of their accreditation status.

When an Unaccredited Minister has a blemished disclosure, the National Safeguarding Team will share any recommendations from the risk assessment directly with the church in the first instance. If they consider that the church needs support in implementing the recommendations from the risk assessment, then the Association will be advised of the situation.

TRAINING

The Association will provide a timetable for safeguarding training throughout the region, using the BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 materials, and will promote the courses to churches in their area.

The Association will work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify and train specialist Excellence in Safeguarding trainers with a high standard of safeguarding knowledge and experience.

All Association trustees, regional ministers, youth and children's specialists and other pastoral staff are expected to complete Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 and work in accordance with the principles and teaching they have received through the courses.

SUPPORTING AND EQUIPPING THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS) WITHIN MEMBER CHURCHES

It is the responsibility of each church to appoint at least one Designated Person for Safeguarding for their church. The Association will seek to offer specific support to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, particularly when safeguarding concerns arise. Where a church does not yet have anyone in this role, the Association Safeguarding Contact will work with the leadership of the church to help them to identify, train and support someone to take on this role.

The Association will aim to provide opportunities for DPSs to access peer support and, through the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify additional online and written resources for people taking on this role.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be agreed by the Association Trustees and distributed amongst all members of the Association staff team. It will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis.

DATE POLICY AGREED: February 2024

DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW: June 2026

APPENDIX A

THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION SAFEGUARDING CONTACT (ASC)

- To provide a first point of contact for advice when a safeguarding issue arises in a church
- To offer advice and guidance on the application of safeguarding policy and procedures at church level, including the involvement of statutory authorities as appropriate
- To offer on-going support to churches managing a safeguarding issue
- To challenge church leaders and trustees when good safeguarding practice is not in place
- To work collaboratively with the National Safeguarding Team to support our churches with complex safeguarding matters
- To promote excellence in safeguarding amongst Association colleagues and member churches
- To work collaboratively with other ASCs as part of the National Safeguarding Contacts Group and contribute to the development, implementation and review of safeguarding policies, procedures and projects at a national level.

APPENDIX B
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
Safeguarding Case Contact Sheet

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Referrer Name | | | |
| Referrer Position | | | |
| Referrer Phone No. | | Email: | |
| Church Name | | | |
| Association | | | |
| Person of Concern Details | Name | | DOB |
| | Address | Phone No. | Email |
| Alleged Victim / Victim Details | Name | | DOB |
| | Address | Phone No. | Email |
| Situation | | | |
| Action taken | | | |
| Next steps needed | | | |
| People to inform | | | |
| Name | | | |
| Date | | | |
| Date for File Destruction | | | |

Additional Contact Notes

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Details of Additional Contact / Action taken</u> | <u>Initials</u> |
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