

CHRIST PARADISE CHURCH

Maximising your God Given Potential

RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATION

There are many situations whereby a member of the church may have concerns, or be made aware of concerns, regarding a child, young person and adult, For example:

- A child, young person or adult discloses abuse.
- Someone discloses concern for a child, young person or adult.
- Someone notices signs of potential abuse of a child, young person or adult.
- A child, young person or adult makes a disclosure about their own behaviour towards another child, young person or adult.
- Someone witnesses concerning behaviour during a church activity or during home visit.

The concern or allegation might relate to someone at church or to someone elsewhere (e. g. at home, work or school). It might be a current situation, or something that happened in the past.

1. This procedure must be followed by all church leaders, and it is strongly recommended for all other church members.
2. This procedure and any updates must be sent by the senior safeguarding officer to everyone.
3. If the safeguarding officer is not available, concerns should be taken to the Asst. safeguarding officer.

PAYING ATTENTION:

If anyone reports that they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or are causing harm to others, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully. If someone makes a disclosure this might be the only time, they will tell someone about what is happening.

Leaders/workers must:

Listen attentively

Take what is said seriously

Remain calm

Consider the person's age and level of understanding

Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do

Explain that information will need to be shared with the appropriate people

Only use open questions

Open questions begin with *who, what, where, when, and how*. They cannot be responded to as a 'yes' or 'no'.

Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to report what is believed to have happened, when and where

At the end, check that you have understood everything correctly

Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure

Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

WHAT NOT TO DO:

Do not make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you will not share the information)

Do not make assumptions offer alternative explanations

Do not investigate

Do not contact the person about whom allegations have been made

Do not carry out a physical or medical examination

Do not share with anyone other than the safeguarding team

RECORD KEEPING:

Make brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail properly as soon as possible

Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by senior safeguarding officer or the authorities

Record the date, time, place and how you see the person state, physically & mentally. If possible, try to record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang

Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions

Don't speculate or jump to conclusions

Report Promptly

Never do nothing. Ensure you follow the procedure as stated.

