

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This document sets out the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults of CPC – Christ Paradise Church. In accordance with our Trusted Committee's meeting of Elders (2024).

Safeguarding and Church Discipline Measure 2024, (by Trusted Committee).

Young people/person - means any individual(s) aged 14 to 17 years old.

Vulnerable adult - defines as a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired.

Church members - includes Pastors/Evangelists/Deacons/Deaconesses - both ordained and ordinands in waiting, leaders, church workers, and church management.

Church Worker - anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

Church Management – Senior Pastors.

The Safeguarding policy and Church Discipline Measure 2024 applies to CPC worldwide.

ENSURING A SAFER CHURCH

- I. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to
- II. children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church.
- III. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- IV. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- V. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of
- VI. abuse and other affected persons.
- VII. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.
- VIII. The church has a duty to have due regard to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it, unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. (Cogent for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing).
- IX. Failure by the church to comply with the duty imposed by the 2024 Measure may result in disciplinary action.
- X. Building on this, Church management may provide additional local procedures and guidance in line with the practice guidance.

1. Gospel

The Church is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Our Lord Jesus Christ. The life of our communities and institutions is integral to how we address this task. The good news speaks of welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Being faithful to our call to share

the gospel therefore compels us to take with us, the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has.

2. Human Rights and the Law

The Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults, as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Safeguarding work is undertaken within a legislative framework supported by government guidance which sets out a range of safeguarding duties, responsibilities and best practice.

3. Core Principles

The following core principles underpin the Church's approach to safeguarding practice.

1. The welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult is paramount.
2. Integrity, respect and listening to all.
3. Transparency and openness.
4. Accountability.
5. Collaboration with key statutory authorities and other partners.
6. Use of professional safeguarding advice and support both inside and outside the Church.
7. A commitment to the prevention of abuse.
8. The active management of risk.
9. Promoting a culture of informed vigilance.
10. Regular evaluation to ensure best practice.

4. Good Safeguarding Practice

The following key features will help Church bodies promote and maintain a safer culture that protects and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

These features are:

1. A leadership commitment, at all levels, to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. A safeguarding policy available to Church Workers.
3. A clear line of accountability within the Church for work on safeguarding.
4. Clear reporting procedures to deal with safeguarding concerns and allegations.
5. Clear roles for Church Workers.
6. Safer recruitment procedures in place.
7. Clear arrangements for support and/or supervision.
8. Safeguarding training for all Church Workers working with or in contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
9. Effective working with statutory and voluntary sector partners.
10. Publicly advertised arrangements for children, young people and vulnerable adults to be able to speak to an independent person, as required.
11. Effective information sharing.
12. Good record keeping.

Policy Commitments

Based on the foundations outlined above Christ Paradise Church commits to the following:

1. Promoting a safer environment and culture

All Church Officers will respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their wellbeing.

The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It will work to continue to strengthen and review these environments.

This will be done by training, support, communication, learning, governance and quality assurance processes.

The Church will strive to support all Church Workers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power. It will ensure that processes are in place that listen to and advocate on behalf of children, young people and vulnerable adults within the knowledge that they will be cared for.

2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church

The Church will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, in accordance with the safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

It will train and equip Church Workers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse.

This will be done by supporting the roll-out of consistent and accessible safeguarding training in accordance with safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the Church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and practice guidance.

All safeguarding work will be recorded in line with the safeguarding practice guidance.

All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations, that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities, will be reported via the designated safeguarding officer to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person.

All Church Workers will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

In responding to concerns or allegations of abuse relating to Church Workers/Pastors, the Church will act in accordance with the requirements of criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the victim/survivor and the subject of concerns or allegations.

4. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

The Church will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.

The Church is committed to continuing to learn how to respond in a supportive and healing way to the needs of those who have suffered abuse.

Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. The Church will respond to any disclosure of abuse in accordance with safeguarding policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law. They will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support - according to the agreed need.

An appropriate pastoral response to the family, congregation or order will be considered, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice

5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

The Church in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of an accused Church Worker/Pastor. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the process progresses additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered.

The Church will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any Church Worker is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will be done by working to mitigate any identified risks according to a safeguarding agreement.

Church Workers/Pastors who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse belong to families, congregations and church communities. The Church will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families, and congregations affected by the Church Workers/Pastors in such situations.

6. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Church, based on the message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. It will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community who may present a known risk.

The Church will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with safeguarding policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law.

CODE OF SAFER WORKING PRACTICE:

Treat all members with respect and dignity.

Respect people's rights to personal privacy

Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.

Obtain written consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

Administered any First Aid with others around.

Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet.

Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.

Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before activity takes place.

CHURCH MEMBERS MUST NOT:

Use any form of physical punishment.

Be sexually suggestive about or to a member.

Permit abusive peer activities e.g. ridiculing or bullying.

Allow any member to involve you in any form of gossip.

Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable, visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.

Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

Give lifts to children you are supervising on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child, and no other arrangements can be made to take children home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).

ACCEPTABLE TOUCH:

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. Conclusively, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should not be initiated by the person in position of power or responsibility and kept to a minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

Ask permission before you touch someone.

Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention).

Avoid any physical contact that is or could be constructed as sexual, abusive or offensive.

Keep everything public. Do not invite a member to your home without your spouse or family members' knowledge.

Home Visits:

Must be approved by the senior Pastors. No home visits are allowed unless where members are blood related.

To assure the person you are visiting, if possible, take a risk assessment before an initial visit. Visiting in pairs is advisable, especially if the adult is perceived to be vulnerable.

Do not call unannounced, call by appointment if appropriate telephone the person just before visiting to confirm your arrival.

Putting the policy into action –

The Policy Statement must actively underpin all safeguarding work within the Church and

the drive to improve safeguarding practice.

The Church will ensure that:

All Church Workers have access to this Policy Statement.

The Policy Statement is promoted and publicised.

The Church's safeguarding message is communicated as reflected in the policy.

The policy is being put into action and is reviewed regularly.