

THORNBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

VULNERABLE PERSONS SAFEGUARDING
POLICY

NOVEMBER 2020

INTRODUCTION

1.1. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.1.1. This document is the Thornbury Baptist Church (TBC) Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Policy (The Policy). It replaces all previous versions of The Policy.
- 1.1.2. The Policy is modelled on the Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Standards.
- 1.1.3. The Policy applies to all activities involving Vulnerable Persons that are organised or overseen or managed in any way by any member of TBC, whether on church premises or otherwise, or which are conducted as a joint activity with other organisations. For the avoidance of doubt, it should be noted that “TBC premises” and “TBC activities” both include the Oasis (Thornbury) supported living project.
- 1.1.4. The Policy is to be read by all those who are in a position of Leadership within TBC, whether that be the overall Leadership of the Church (Elders) or those who Lead or play a significant role in a Group or Activity involving Vulnerable Persons (for example Pastoral Workers, Children and Youth Team Leaders).
- 1.1.5. Specific guidance for defined Groups of, or Activities involving, Vulnerable Persons will be created in the form of Safeguarding Quick Guides (Guide(s)). The Guides will have the same status as The Policy and are to be applied by all those who work with the Group or Activity covered by the appropriate Guide. It is the responsibility of those who lead the Group or Activity to ensure that the Guide is applied by the Workers for that Group or Activity. A list of Guides is at Annex A, this will be amended as Guides are created or deleted. For Oasis (Thornbury) the Guide is a Policy in accordance with their governance procedures.
- 1.1.6. Responsibility for maintaining and publishing The Policy and the Guides rests with the TBC Safeguarding Coordinator who will review The Policy once a year or more frequently if circumstances warrant.

1.2. CHURCH STATEMENT

- 1.2.1. TBC is registered as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee called “Thornbury Baptist Church” and was “registered “at Companies House on the 14th January 2015 with a Company Number 09388657. It was then registered on 5th February 2015 with the Charity Commission with Charity registration number of 1160363. As such TBC, will comply with the Safeguarding requirements of the Charity Commission.
- 1.2.2. The purpose of TBC is enshrined in the statement “Following the way of Jesus: Loving God, one another and the world”, in demonstrating of this TBC abides by a Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy Statement (Annex B).
- 1.2.3. TBC maintains appropriate Insurance, public liability and legal protection for all activities covered by The Policy.

1.3. DEFINITION OF “VULNERABLE PERSON”

- 1.3.1. A “Child” is anyone below the age of 18 years, because of their age all Children are classed as a “Vulnerable Person”.
- 1.3.2. An “Adult” is anyone aged 18 or over (unless specific legislation states otherwise). Any adult who, due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation is classed as a “Vulnerable Person.” Within the setting of a Church community otherwise capable adults may be “Vulnerable” within the setting of pastoral home visiting, pastoral counselling, prayer for guidance and healing and spiritual dependency and Biblical Church authority. TBC recognises that the newly accepted phrase for a “Vulnerable Adult” is “adults with care and support needs” but for the sake of clarity in reading

this document and applying it to both Children and Adults the old terminology is used throughout.

1.4. DEFINITION OF “SAFEGUARDING”

1.4.1. At its simplest the term “Safeguarding” means to protect Vulnerable Persons from abuse or neglect, of any sort.

1.4.2. In relation to Children the UK Government defines “Safeguarding” as action taken to promote the welfare of Children and protecting them from harm:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s health and development
- Ensuring children grow up in a way consistent with provision of safe, effective care
- Acting to enable all children to have the best life chance.

1.5. DEFINITION OF “ABUSE”

1.5.1. “Abuse” is any form of maltreatment of a Vulnerable Person either by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Within England “Abuse” is normally defined as one of four categories:

- Physical abuse, for example shaking, burning, hitting, poisoning etc.
- Emotional abuse, for example hostility, undermining, threatening, rejecting etc.
- Sexual abuse, for example sexual acts, watching pornography etc.
- Neglect, for example failure to provide food, access to medical care etc.

1.5.2. Other forms of “Abuse” to be aware of are:

- Abuse of trust, where someone in a position of power manipulates, coerces, or otherwise wrongly influences a Vulnerable Person to do, say or believe things that are not per their own choice or in their best interest.
- Spiritual abuse is a form of Abuse of Trust, where the abuser of power is in the name of God.
- Bullying is repeated acts over time that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. Bullying can be verbal, physical, and/or emotional.
- Discrimination is where values, beliefs, or culture result in the misuse of power that denies opportunity to groups or individuals.
- Domestic violence is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been, intimate partners or family members.
- Financial abuse is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property, or possessions.

1.6. SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

1.6.1. TBC appoint a named individual to the role of Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The role includes:

- Preparing, maintaining, and communicating The Policy and Guides.
- Providing a source of expertise on all matters of Safeguarding.
- Acting as an advocate on behalf of children and adults in need of protection.
- Ensuring Safeguarding is dealt with appropriately in recruitment.
- Ensuring that initial DBS checks are carried out and renewed in line with Charity Commission requirements.
- Arranging and ensuring appropriate training opportunities.
- Dealing with concerns and allegations of abuse.
- Liaison with the Thirtyone:eight.
- Working in partnership with statutory and other agencies.

- Delegating responsibilities to those who lead groups and activities as appropriate.
- Keeping accurate records relating to Safeguarding concerns.
- Engaging Church Leadership as appropriate.

1.6.2. TBC also appoint named individuals as Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinators to assist the Co-ordinator and to provide cover in the absence of the Co-ordinator.

1.6.3. The named individuals are shown in Annex C.

2. **TRAINING AND AWARENESS**

- 2.1. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will provide training for all those who work with Vulnerable Persons. This training will take the form of:
 - 2.1.1. Formal, general, training resulting in an NVQ Level 1 certificate.
 - 2.1.2. Bespoke training for the needs of groups or activities.
 - 2.1.3. The Guides.
 - 2.1.4. Training for individuals in the specifics of their role.
- 2.2. Those who lead a Group or Activity are responsible for training those that work with them where further training is appropriate, this will most usually be concerned with how to apply The Guide or in reaction to an event or incident that has been foreseen, or has occurred during a Group or Activity.
- 2.3. Awareness will be maintained through such means as:
 - 2.3.1. Visits by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator to all groups of Vulnerable Persons.
 - 2.3.2. Publication of Safeguarding Policy Statement and other appropriate information on the TBC Website and notice boards around the premises.
 - 2.3.3. Consent forms etc. when advertising events.
 - 2.3.4. Publicising how to contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

3. RECRUITEMENT

3.1. DEFINITION OF “RECRUITMENT”

3.1.1. The term “Recruitment” refers to the process of the appointment of any individual to a position of working with, or potentially working with, Vulnerable Persons. There is no difference between paid or voluntary roles or full-time and part-time roles. The purpose of the process is to minimise the risk of the abuse of Vulnerable Persons and to enable individuals to be placed in a role that is suitable for them.

3.2. ROLE OF THE SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

3.2.1. Under no circumstances should anyone be confirmed in a role without the appropriate recruitment processes being fully completed and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should be consulted as early in the process as possible, and before recruitment completion in order that best practice Safeguarding procedures can be applied in accordance with The Policy.

3.3. REFERENCES, CONSENTS AND ASSENTS

3.3.1. In all cases where an individual is being considered for appointment to a role working with Vulnerable Persons that individual must:

- Read the appropriate Guide for the role and confirm, in writing, that they have done so and are content to work within it.
- Confirm, in writing, that (a) they are not barred from working with children/vulnerable adults (as appropriate) (b) if they have any unspent convictions they must give details of the court where the conviction was heard, the type of offence and the sentence received and the circumstances that led to the offence and (c) if they have been the subject of a police investigation that did not lead to a criminal conviction they will provide details.
- Undertake a DBS check of the type considered appropriate by TBC.

3.3.2. In cases where an individual is being considered for appointment to a role working with Children that individual must:

- Read the Vision document for Children and Youth Work and confirm, in writing, that they have done so and are content to work within it.

3.3.3. In cases where an individual is being considered for appointment to a role as Team or Activity Leader working with, or potentially working with, Vulnerable Persons that individual must:

- Read The Policy and confirm, in writing, that they have done so and are content to work within it.

3.3.4. For all Full-Time and/or contracted positions at least two references will be sought in respect of:

- Suitability to perform the duties of the role.
- Attitude towards Safeguarding.
- Information that would raise concerns over attitudes, values, and known practices.

3.3.5. Such references will also be required for anyone working with, or potentially working with, Vulnerable Persons in the capacity of Team or Activity Leaders where such an individual is not known sufficiently well by TBC to make a judgement on suitability, Safeguarding, attitudes and past practice. Furthermore, TBC reserves the right to seek references for any individual who may work with Vulnerable Persons should it wish to do so.

3.3.6. All references must be in written form and addressed to the person seeking the reference, a general reference “to whom it may concern” is not acceptable. Written references can be followed up verbally with the referee.

3.4. RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

3.4.1. The recruitment process will contain the following elements, as appropriate to the specific role, for example a full-time contracted role will contain much more detail than an occasional voluntary role. It is important that a written record is kept of each element:

- Job Description and Person Specification. This is the ideal place to first explain the commitment to Safeguarding and should also explain the recruitment process.
- Application Form. This should be tailored to suit the requirement of the role and should include the requirement to provide information for a competency-based assessment, how applications are to be assessed should be borne in mind when setting out the application form. It should seek affirmation from the applicant that they are willing to supply the necessary references, consents, and assents.
- Self-Declaration Form. This is a statement by applicants which gives details of any criminal record, allegations of abuse or current investigations.
- An assessment matrix with a scoring system against which to assess applicants.
- Short-listing. This allows an initial selection of the candidates based on an assessment of their application.
- Interviews and selection tests. Interviews should use open questions and drill down techniques to allow the applicant to have a conversation that answers all the criteria for the role. Hypotheticals should be avoided. Questions must be fair and asked of all applicants though follow up questions will vary. In some cases, tests may be advantageous, for example a spreadsheet test, to confirm competence in a skill required for the role.
- Qualifications are checked.
- Identity is checked.
- Conduct references, consents, assents, and DBS checks.
- Provisional appointments can be made subject to satisfactory completion of the above checks.
- Firm job offers can be made once all checks have been completed.
- Contracts should be signed. It is recommended that all contracts should contain a probationary period of a suitable length to confirm that, with appropriate supervision and training, the applicant can perform the role to a satisfactory level.
- Any applicant not appointed should be informed and offered the opportunity to receive feedback.

3.5. DEALING WITH BLEMISHED DISCLOSURES

3.5.1. To comply with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 TBC will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly. This means that having a criminal record will not necessarily mean that an individual cannot work for TBC and TBC will consider what safeguards may be put in place to allow such an individual to be appointed. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator must be consulted in all such cases.

3.6. WORKERS FROM ABROAD

3.6.1. DBS checks will only provide information on individuals' resident in the UK and so will be of limited use unless a worker from abroad has been resident in the UK for a while. Other countries do not always have a system that is like or as robust as DBS, although certificates of good conduct can sometimes be obtained from Police or other agencies. In addition, some countries do not operate the same Safeguarding standards as the UK.

- 3.6.2. The Policy in this section on Recruitment should be followed in all other respects.
- 3.6.3. If it is not possible to obtain a check as meaningful and robust as a DBS check then the individual will not be allowed unsupervised access to Vulnerable Persons.

3.7. YOUNG AND OCASSIONAL WORKERS

- 3.7.1. Young Workers are defined as anyone under the age of 18. Young Workers will not require a DBS check.
- 3.7.2. Occasional Workers are defined as those who work with Vulnerable Persons every once in a while, for example for an annual holiday club or called in to provide cover in an emergency. Occasional Workers will not require a DBS check.
- 3.7.3. Neither a Young Worker nor an Occasional Worker will be allowed unsupervised access to Vulnerable Persons and will not be put into roles of Group or Activity Leadership.
- 3.7.4. Young Workers will be expected to read and confirm assent to the appropriate documents referred to in section 3.3 of The Policy before beginning work.
- 3.7.5. The provisions of this section of The Policy should not be used to avoid application of other sections of The Policy, if in doubt consult the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

4. MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS

4.1. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 4.1.1. TBC operates a Code of Conduct towards Vulnerable Persons which all those working with Vulnerable Persons must follow so that there is a culture of dignity and respect for all people. Trust and transparency are the cornerstones of the culture required by TBC and with that in mind should anyone working with Vulnerable Persons feel that they have not fully complied with the Code of Conduct or may be put in a situation where they may not be able to comply then they should take the situation to their Group Leader, Activity Leader or Line Manager for help, advice and training and that Leader or Manager may consult with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- 4.1.2. The Guides act as specific detailed Codes of Conduct and since the recruitment process involves confirmation that the appropriate Guide has been read and assent to work within the Guide then all Workers are deemed to have signed up to working within the TBC Code of Conduct.
- 4.1.3. There may be cases where a Guide does not exist for the Group or Activity, where this is the case then the Worker will be made aware of the following general summary Code of Conduct:
- Minimum recommended ratios of adult Workers to Young People will be maintained.
 - There should be more than one adult present with a Vulnerable Person or there should be another adult within sight and hearing of other adults wherever practicable.
 - Be aware of anyone who may be present in the space in which you are meeting, watch for any unusual behaviours and how their presence may impact on the Vulnerable Person.
 - Treat all Vulnerable Persons the same, do not have favourites.
 - Every Vulnerable Person is entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity and has the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention:
 - Touch should be related to the needs of the Vulnerable Person not the needs of the Worker.
 - Keep everything public, a hug in the context of a group is different to a hug behind closed doors.
 - Touch should be limited, and age appropriate.
 - Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the Worker or the Vulnerable Person.
 - When giving First Aid encourage the Vulnerable Person to do what they can to manage themselves but consider the Vulnerable Person's best interest and give appropriate help where necessary.
 - Workers should monitor one another and help each other by constructively challenging anything that could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
 - If a Vulnerable Person begins describing an abusive situation:
 - Don't panic, explain confidentiality if you can.
 - Listen, take care to listen well and get the facts clear.
 - Reassure, let them know they were right to tell you and that you believe them.
 - Do not press them for information and never promise to keep secrets.
 - Explain what happens next and why.
 - Record the details as soon as you can.
 - Refer to the Group or Activity Leader who will follow the reporting procedures shown in Annex C or, if appropriate, refer direct to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

4.2. SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

4.2.1. All those who work with Vulnerable Persons will be supervised. Group and Activity Leaders will be the supervisors for all those who work in the Team for that Group or Activity. Group and Activity Leaders will be supervised by the Elder who oversees the Group or Activity in the life of the Church. Contracted workers will have a named Line Manager. Elders who are non-contracted Workers will be supervised by the Eldership Team Leader. Supervisors will meet those whom they supervise on a one to one basis as well as in Teams. Team meetings are important to share and learn best practice and to support and care for each other.

4.3. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WORKERS

4.3.1. Any allegation against any Worker must be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator immediately. If the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is not available or if the allegation is against the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then it must be reported to one of the Deputies.

4.3.2. As soon as possible the person reporting the allegation must make detailed, factual, notes of the allegation:

- About the allegation:
 - When did the event occur?
 - What is the timeline of the event and post event reaction?
 - Who was involved?
 - How did each person react?
 - What is the exact nature of the allegation?
- About the disclosure:
 - When did the disclosure occur?
 - What prompted the disclosure?
 - What were the circumstances in which the disclosure was made?
 - Who was involved?
 - How did each person react?
 - What is the exact nature of the disclosure?

4.3.3. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator, or Deputy, will respond to the allegation in an appropriate manner and will, themselves, keep written records of every action taken as part of this response. The nature of the allegation will dictate the response. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Social Services, the Police and Thirtyone:eight.

4.3.4. Where an allegation of abuse is made against a Worker, depending on the nature of the allegation and any advice from the Local Authority and/or the Police, consideration will be given to suspending the worker without passing judgement on the validity of the allegation. This action protects the Worker from further allegations of abuse and protects TBC from allegations of not dealing with the situation appropriately and, most importantly, protects the Vulnerable Person from further abuse or intimidation.

4.3.5. In some cases, it may be appropriate to allow the Worker to continue in their role but under revised arrangements for supervision, but in many cases, it will be appropriate to suspend the Worker until the investigation is concluded. Appointed persons acting on behalf of the Elders will retain contact with the Worker as far as they can to provide support at what will be a difficult time and will encourage the Worker to seek legal help if this is required, and accompany them to court hearings. Both the Worker and the abused person will be supported.

4.3.6. During the period of an investigation into alleged abuse TBC will appoint someone to support the Worker and their interests.

- 4.3.7. If it turns out that the allegation is concerned with irregularities in conduct or relationships rather than abuse TBC will ensure that the Worker and the person(s) are supported and issues resolved through generally accepted Christian principles.
- 4.3.8. TBC will operate a disciplinary and grievance procedure that fully complies with the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) code of conduct.
- 4.3.9. If any Worker has doubts or concerns about another Worker, then they should make their concerns known so that they can be dealt with. If the Worker does not feel comfortable speaking to their Supervisor, then they should contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or one of the Deputies.

4.4. **DISMISSAL OF A WORKER**

- 4.4.1. Where allegations have been substantiated or there is sufficient cause for concern over the ongoing conduct of a Worker in respect of Vulnerable Persons then TBC will dismiss the Worker. For those employed under Contract then the Contract will be terminated, for others working with Vulnerable Persons they will be removed from that work and arrangements put in place to ensure that they do not work with Vulnerable Persons.
- 4.4.2. In all cases where allegations have been substantiated or there is sufficient cause for concern, even if the Worker has resigned, TBC will abide by its statutory duty to consult with the LADO to decide whether to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Charity Commission.

5. WORKING SAFELY

5.1. DUTY OF CARE

5.1.1. TBC recognises that as an organisation and as individuals holding roles within the Church it has a "Duty of Care" towards others. This Duty of Care is placed on TBC through the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (1974) whereby TBC must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees and to protect non-employees from risks arising out of their work activities and through the Children Act (2004) where there is a duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of young people by treating young people with respect and dignity whilst demonstrating competence and integrity.

5.2. POSITION OF TRUST, GIFTS, REWARDS AND FAVOURITISM

5.2.1. All adults working with Vulnerable Persons are in positions of trust and all Workers must ensure that they do not use their position of power and authority inappropriately. Workers should never:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage.
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce, or undermine.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child is never acceptable

5.2.2. Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour that may be misinterpreted.

5.2.3. The giving of gifts and rewards is often common practice when working with Vulnerable Persons.

- If a Worker wishes to give a gift to a Vulnerable Person, it must be given openly and without favouritism and must never be capable of being perceived as a bribe or grooming.
- If a Worker is offered a gift, then this too must never be capable of being perceived as a bribe. Occasional gifts of appreciation may be accepted but should be of small value, regular gifts from the same person are not acceptable. Any gift received that is of an estimated value of £25 or greater must be declared to the Safeguarding Coordinator who will keep a register of gifts.

5.3. GENERAL SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

5.3.1. TBC adopts the Thirtyone:eight general Safeguarding principles as follows:

- Ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language, and actions.
- Consideration for the numbers of Workers needed to run the Group/Activity and whether they should be male, female or both. To supervise Children's activity safely TBC will adopt Thirtyone:eight advice on adult to child ratios. These will be published in the Guides. It should be noted that these will be minimum ratios and a Group/Activity may require higher ratios to operate safely depending on the nature of the Group/Activity.
- A clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a Worker is working alone.
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- Clear guidelines on personal privacy.
- Not allowing anyone under the age of 16 to be left in charge of any Vulnerable Person or those attending the Group/Activity being left unsupervised.

- Only Workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Access by other adults should be supervised, for example a guest speaker or needing emergency access.
- Making a note of other people in the building during the activity or any other events taking place at the same time.

5.4. DATA PROTECTION, CONFIDENTIALTY, RECORD KEEPING, FILMING AND TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

- 5.4.1. TBC will abide by the Data Protection Act (1998) by providing privacy protection for individuals about whom certain personal information is kept.
- 5.4.2. TBC will display an appropriate notice on the premises regarding CCTV.
- 5.4.3. In certain circumstances the Data Protection Act allows for disclosure of information without consent of the person involved, including for the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.
- 5.4.4. Where disclosing information might place a Vulnerable Person at risk then Safeguarding considerations take precedence over data protection. Vulnerable Persons have a right to be protected from harm and so information relating to concerns that they may be of risk of significant harm should not be withheld on the basis that it might be unlawful.
- 5.4.5. Workers should never promise total confidentiality to any Vulnerable Person who shares information with them, Workers should:
 - Be honest from the outset about why, what, how and with whom you will or could share information.
 - Seek consent to share information, but this is not always necessary.
 - Share with the appropriate people if you think that the Vulnerable Person, or others, will be in harm because of the situation.
 - Make a written record of the situation.
 - Pass the information onto the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- 5.4.6. Information about allegations or concerns of abuse should not be shown to a parent or carer. Advice should always be sought from Social Services or the Police.
- 5.4.7. Records that are proportionate and fit for purpose will be kept for reasons of management and accountability and to assist in Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons. Other parts of this Policy deal with specific instances where records will be kept but some, general, information will also be kept for Groups/Activities:
 - Registers of who attended which Group/Activity when (both Workers and members).
 - Activity Logs for each meeting containing:
 - Date and time of Group/Activity.
 - Summary of activities undertaken.
 - Which people were present (if not on a separate register).
 - Which Workers were present (if not on a separate register).
 - Names of anyone else present and why they were there.
 - A note of any incidents and action taken.
 - Consent forms, where required.
- 5.4.8. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will produce and maintain model Activity Logs and Consent forms.
- 5.4.9. Other records may be required from time to time to aid the smooth operation of a Group/Activity.
- 5.4.10. Filming and photographs will only be undertaken by consent. It must be clear why it is being undertaken and how the images will be used. When using an image of a Child the image must

never identify them by name or other personal details including e-mail address, postal address, and phone number. Specific consent from parents/carers and/or Vulnerable adults must be obtained before using an image on a website.

5.5. BULLYING

- 5.5.1. TBC operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying of any kind. Common types of bullying are: verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, racial, gender and cyber. The person being bullied must be protected and the bully must address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in a more positive manner.
- 5.5.2. If a Worker considers they are being bullied then they should raise the issue with their Supervisor, the Elders or through the TBC grievance procedures as appropriate.
- 5.5.3. If a Vulnerable Person feels they are being bullied they should raise the issue with the Supervisor or the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as appropriate.
- 5.5.4. If a Vulnerable Person is being bullied by peers then the behaviour must be addressed through the operational procedures of that Group/Activity, which may include exclusion for a time

5.6. E-SAFETY

- 5.6.1. TBC will maintain controls over the Information Technology on its premises to ensure that those who access information through it cannot access inappropriate material.
- 5.6.2. Incidents of cyber-bullying will be treated as bullying.
- 5.6.3. TBC will not accept sexual communications such as sexting in any of its Groups/Activities.
- 5.6.4. TBC supports the appropriate use of electronic communication and has clear expectations of how such communication should be conducted. The need to conduct electronic communication is driven by the role of the Worker and, just as with any other form of communication, should be professional and public (wherever possible).
- 5.6.5. Technology changes rapidly and there are always emerging means of communication, so it is not possible, in general, to give technology specific guidance in this document so, before you establish a means of communication on a platform contact the Safeguarding Coordinator for specific advice.
- 5.6.6. The general principle on e-communication is that it is a valuable and useful tool of communicating with vulnerable people, but it should be used in an appropriate and professional manner just as face to face and other verbal communication:
 - Treat e-communications in the same way as you would face to face, for example if you have an on-line session for a group keep an Activity Log, if you have a 1-2-1 session then keep a record of the conversation.
 - Do not use any media, such as Snapchat, that has been deliberately designed to keep communication a secret by not keeping a record of activity anywhere.
 - Do not use any media below the age limits that have been set.
 - Do not contact a vulnerable person via electronic media after 9pm, unless it is an emergency. General posts can be made after this time.
 - In some circumstances, such as with a platform like Facebook, it is acceptable have young people as “friends” on such an account and if you abide by the remainder of the Policy, rather than separate professional from personal, as this demonstrates whole life integrity in a public space.
 - Be yourself – your e-persona should be who you are in real life, do not pretend but do take precautions considering your audience.
 - Be aware of how the method and content of any communication may be perceived by others.
 - Be warm and friendly but do not offer or suggest a special relationship.

- Be aware of the purpose of any e-communication.
 - Why do you need to communicate in this way?
 - What are you trying to achieve?
 - Is the communication for the good of the person you are communicating with?
- Be circumspect about using abbreviations, emojis or other short cut communications to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or behaviour and do not use at all when you are not sure what they mean.
- Do not say anything in e-communication that you would not be prepared to say face to face.
- When posting in public – such as on Facebook – remember that others can see what you are saying and think carefully about how your posts may be perceived by others and what it says about you.
- If you become aware of manipulative behaviour by others – such a cyber-bullying or grooming treat this as a Safeguarding issue and respond appropriately.
- Be thoughtful in responding – for example in response to an e-mail or a Facebook post – it is often best to wait a while and weigh up a response than to respond in the moment when emotions may be running high.
- Set the security settings on the media in such a way that protects the vulnerable person from accessing information and images that are inappropriate under Data Protection Legislation.
- Do not share personal information with a vulnerable person, or request or respond to any personal information from a vulnerable person, other than that which would be appropriate for your role.

5.6.7. The following applies to group chats, group video calls and the like:

- To minimise risk, consider if group communications can be achieved rather than 1-2-1, where a 1-2-1 video call is required it is good practice, where possible, to have an additional Worker and (dependant on the age of the young person) also better to ask if a parent can be in the home of the young person at the same time.
- Unless unavoidable, contact with young people should take place with appropriately vetted and checked Workers present and not by any single Worker on their own.
- Recordings of group calls should not be made unless there is a compelling reason to do so.
- Ensure that the call organiser can mute/block participants in the event they are displaying anything unsuitable or illegal.
- Avoid using personal accounts to enable video chats. Use organisational profiles and devices wherever available.
- Make sure that names and personal details of vulnerable people are never shared publicly. For example, through a live chat function. If you are making a video available publicly, do not share any specific information about vulnerable people in what you say. Use an account that is accessible to several members of your team, in case private messages are received.

5.6.8. When you cease to be a Worker, or a vulnerable person leaves the group, delete all contacts with a vulnerable person (but you can maintain contact with someone once they become 18)

5.7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 5.7.1. TBC will fully comply with Health and Safety legislation and, as far as is reasonably practical, Approved Codes of Practice.
- 5.7.2. Health and Safety is overseen by a competent appointed person who delegates responsibilities appropriately.
- 5.7.3. TBC operates a system of risk assessments based on a common standard. Risk assessments are premises based or specific to certain equipment or risks. Group/Activity Leaders are responsible

for undertaking risk assessments for any activity not covered by TBC risk assessments. A list of TBC risk assessments is at Annex D.

5.7.4. TBC has an appropriate number of appropriately trained First Aiders and will provide supplementary First Aid training to Workers where required.

5.7.5. All accidents will be recorded in the TBC accident book, whether they occur on or off-site.

5.7.6. All potential hazards must be reported to the Church Office.

5.8. PEER-LED ACTIVITIES (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE) AND BABY-SITTING

5.8.1. Peer-led activities can be a good way to develop children and young people. When setting up a peer-lead activity the following will be taken into consideration:

- Peer groups should only be led by those aged 16+
- Appropriateness of the venue.
- How medical issues, dietary needs and allergies will be managed.
- Emergency contact numbers are to hand for all persons under the age of 18.
- Any food is prepared in accordance with basic hygiene standards.
- Adult Workers should always be in the vicinity, contribute the planning and reviews.
- Peer group leaders must be trained and supported by at least one adult Worker.
- If there are people under 16 adult Workers should be present or within earshot.
- No person under the age of 16 will be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising Vulnerable Persons.
- Young people over 16 who assist with caring for Vulnerable Persons will be subject to the recruitment process.
- Peer group leaders will be aware of Safeguarding procedures including reporting to their supervising adult.
- Parents and carers must always be kept informed about what peer group activities are for, who the leaders are, where and when they meet and what they can do to support them.

5.8.2. There is nothing to prevent Vulnerable Persons meeting each other in a context other than that arranged by TBC and TBC accepts no responsibility under these circumstances.

5.8.3. Baby-sitting is not an activity provided by TBC, it is a private arrangement and the duty of parents/carers to ensure that Vulnerable Persons in their care are looked after responsibly. If a Worker suspects that a Vulnerable Person in a Church group is at risk of abuse by baby-sitters, then they should report the matter to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

5.9. DROP-IN CENTRES

5.9.1. Where TBC operates a Drop-In centre, it will:

- Ensure users only have specific access to specific areas of the building.
- Have sufficient Workers to supervise those who visit.

5.10. UNEXPECTED ATTENDANCE

5.10.1. A Vulnerable Person may want to join in church activities without the knowledge or consent of their parent/carer. If this should occur, then the Person will not be turned away, but the following actions will be taken:

- Establish (as far as possible) their age (for children) and emergency telephone number and record this, with their visit, in the activity register.
- Ask if their parent/carer is aware of where they are and what time they are expected home. If this is before the activity ends, then encourage them to return home on time

unless their parent/carer can be contacted, and consent obtained for them to stay to the end.

- In the case of a child explain that they must obtain their parent/carer's consent to attend future activities.
- Link them with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain the current activity.
- Provide written information about the group and the activities that take place together with contact details of the leader and an invitation for the parent/carer to contact the leader.

5.10.2. Establish any special needs so that Workers can respond appropriately.

5.11. PARENTS/CARERS STAYING WITH CHILDREN'S GROUPS

5.11.1. Except where a Group/Activity is specifically aimed at parents/carers and children together the expectation is that parents will not stay with their child in the Group/Activity. In some cases, it may be a reasonable request on behalf of the parent/carer but caution will be exercised because they may not be known to the group, may not be DBS checked and their presence may upset group dynamics. TBC operates the following policy:

- Parents/carers should observe but not take part.
- After a settling in period for a child a parent/carer should become a Worker if they wish to stay and so be subject to the Recruitment process.
- In cases where a child has special needs a parent/carer may need to stay for an extended period. This will be considered on a case by case basis to help the child integrate.

5.12. SPECIAL NEEDS, DISABILITIES, AND INTIMATE CARE

5.12.1. TBC are committed to welcoming those with Special Needs and Disabilities and will:

- Ask the Vulnerable Person and parents or carers how their needs may best be met.
- Consider if these needs can be met and if they cannot then explain the reasons why.
- Ideally ensure that a Worker of the same gender assists if help is needed with toileting but if this is not always possible discuss with the Vulnerable Person, parent, or carer.
- Make buildings accessible as far as reasonably practicable.
- Maintain appropriate disability awareness.

5.12.2. Workers involved with intimate care will be sensitive to the individual needs of each person and that some tasks could be open to misinterpretation. Expectations and methods of working will be clear and, as far as possible, consistent.

- Avoid doing things that a Vulnerable Person can do for themselves.
- Talk about what you are doing and keep asking "is it all right to do this".
- If anyone requiring intimate care dislikes you then tell the Supervisor about this.
- Make sure that all Workers follow the same process and do things in the same way.
- A Worker should never start to do something if they are not sure how to do it or requires special skills and you have not been trained.
- Immediately report incidents where a person has been accidentally hurt.
- Encourage all people to have a positive attitude to their body.
- Respect every person's right to say 'No'.

5.13. CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- 5.13.1. There will be times when children and young people become angry, upset, and disruptive and if this behaviour is not contained and dealt with then disruptive people could endanger themselves and other group members. Supervisors will have procedures in place to deal with challenging behaviour and all Workers in that Group/Activity will know what these are and operate them consistently.
- 5.13.2. In all cases those being disruptive will be asked to stop, spoken with to establish the cause of the behaviour, and warned of the consequences which may include exclusion from the Group/Activity.
- 5.13.3. If the person begins to harm themselves, another person or property then the rest of the Group should be taken to a safe place leaving two adult Workers with that person. As a last resort, in cases of continued harm, physical restraint may be used if safe to do so.
- 5.13.4. If the person continues to harm another person or property then the Police will be called, if the person, or any other person affected by them, is in need of urgent medical attention then an Ambulance will be called.
- 5.13.5. All cases of challenging behaviour will be recorded in the Activity Log.

5.14. TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, DRUGS, LEGAL HIGHS, AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

- 5.14.1. Drugs, legal highs, and illegal substances will not be supplied at or consumed on TBC premises or at any off-site activity.
- 5.14.2. Alcohol will not be supplied at or consumed on TBC premises or any off-site activity where a Vulnerable Person is present
- 5.14.3. TBC will apply the law in respect of smoking on the premises (whether TBC premises or other), in addition no-one in or working with or near anyone under 18 will be allowed to smoke in TBC grounds. Where groups are taken to other premises then the rules stipulated by the owners of those premises will be followed in addition to those of TBC. For detached work then, TBC Workers should not smoke on duty. Oasis (Thornbury) is a no-smoking/no-vaping property.
- 5.14.4. TBC accepts the reality that Vulnerable Persons may use tobacco, alcohol, drugs, legal highs and illegal substances and we aim to build supportive relationships in which risks, and consequences are discussed, and behaviours can be challenged. Where a Vulnerable Person has discussed such use, this will be raised for discussion with the Supervisor and may lead to an agreed referral an appropriate agency, such as the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service.
- 5.14.5. Workers have no right to confiscate tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal substances but anyone bring them to a Church activity will be asked to leave the items in a safe place so that they cannot be used but can be returned after the activity. Failure to comply with such a request will result in the person being removed from the activity.

5.15. TRANSPORTATION

- 5.15.1. Prior express consent should be sought for travelling in a Worker's car. As travelling in cars increases risk, the Worker should consider travelling by foot or public transport if reasonable. When transporting a Vulnerable Person, the following advice should be followed:
 - Drivers should hold a full driving licence.
 - Only transport the recommended number of people for the capacity of the vehicle.
 - Arrange pick up and drop of times and locations.
 - Ensure seatbelts are used.
 - It is reasonable to expect that drivers may be alone with the Vulnerable Person:
 - If transporting a group, plan routes so that the least vulnerable is dropped off last.

- Do not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle, for example if the Vulnerable Person has waited until being dropped off to talk about something consider making an appointment to meet them to discuss at another time and more appropriate place.
- Vulnerable Persons should sit in the back of the car where possible.
- At collection or dropping off points no young person should be on their own and the driver should make sure that they are collected by an appropriate adult.
- Be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular individual, for example where there has been a disagreement, or they have romantic feelings for the driver.
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice that those being transported stay in the same groups on the outgoing and return journey. This will avoid anyone, at worst, being left behind.
- If parents/carers do some transporting, ensure they are made aware that such arrangements are their own responsibility and not those of TBC.
- When using the TBC Mini-Bus comply with all TBC terms of use.

5.15.2. Where transport to and from a TBC activity is not part of an arrangement put in place by TBC, whether it be transport by parent/carer or peer to peer then it is a private arrangement for which TBC takes no responsibility.

5.16 HOME VISITS

5.16.1. When making a home visit to a Vulnerable Person:

- In the case of a Child never go into a home if the parent/carer is absent unless the child is at risk of significant harm unless you do so.
- Keep a written record of the visit (time arrived/left, purpose, who was there. What was discussed)
- If the parent/carer is absent when the visit is made leave some identification and explanation of the visit for them.

5.16.2. Visits by a Vulnerable Person to a Worker's home should never take place if the Worker is the only adult present, except in cases of emergency.

5.17 ONE TO ONE ACTIVITY

5.17.1. One-to-one work is likely to occur, either through circumstance or by design and is an opportunity to work closely with Vulnerable Persons, but its nature gives increased risk and vulnerability to the Person and the Worker. Workers should give care with regard the nature of conversations they raise and be aware of the position of power and influence they hold over a Vulnerable Person.

5.17.2. Workers should aim to carry out one-to-one work in a private space within a public place, e.g. a coffee shop, where activities are observable and the Worker less likely to be able to be falsely accused. It is recognised that this may not always be possible and where, exceptionally, this occurs the Worker should ensure the activity is in as open a space as possible and kept to the minimum amount of time reasonable.

5.17.3 After one-to-one sessions, a record of the session should be made

5.18 PRAYING

5.18.1. Prayer is part of the life of TBC and this will be understood by Vulnerable Persons. General prayers as part of a group may be part group life but there are some key aspects of best practice when praying with an individual:

- Obtain the Person's permission.
- Pray in an-area where others are around.
- Ask the person if there is anything specific, they would like prayer for, and listen to their answer.
- Speak quietly and calmly.
- Do not laugh or dismiss out of hand if the person wants prayer for something you may think is irrelevant.
- If they do not have specific needs, ask God to bless them
- Be alert to any Safeguarding issues that may arise in prayer – do not delay action by being caught up in praying
- If you have prayed about a specific issue it may be helpful to write it down and give it to the person so that, if they want, they can let their parent/carer know and remember it themselves
- If the person becomes distressed stop praying and ask them calmly what has caused their distress.
- If unsure or the person remains distressed stop praying and remain with them until they are calm, then talk to the parent/carer as long as you do not have Safeguarding concerns
- Be aware of your body language – you may be much larger than the person so consider how your body language may come across to them
- Consider the policy on touch – do not push or man-handle a person, an arm round the shoulder, or a hand just above the head or on a non-sexual part of the body (e.g.: on the shoulder or the back) would all be appropriate
- Use clear uncomplicated language
- Avoid giving specific advice about problems involving decisions a person must make their own decisions
- Never promise total confidentiality

5.19 COMPLAINTS BY PARENTS/CARERS

5.19.1. Any complaint by a parent/carer should be dealt with by the Supervisor who will ensure a full response is given and a note of the complaint recorded. If the complaint is against the Supervisor, then it should be made to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

5.20. SPECIFIC ISSUES

5.20.1. This Policy covers the most common issues when working with Vulnerable Persons, other issues may be appropriate to a Group/Activity. In such cases advice will be sought from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator in advance and TBC will operate in the light of Thirtyone:eight guidance where an activity is common will incorporate Policy in the Guide for that Group/Activity. Such issues include, but are not limited to:

- Trips.
- Sleepovers.
- Swimming trips.
- Residentials.
- Detached work.

- Handling money, goods, and services on behalf of others.

6. COMMUNICATING SAFELY

6.1. COMMUNICATING POLICY AND BEST PRACTICE

6.1.1. TBC will communicate policy and best practice in respect of Safeguarding by:

- Ensuring that Workers are aware of Safeguarding policy and practice appropriate to their Group/Activity.
- Ensuring that Supervisors are aware of The Policy in addition to the above and their responsibility for Safeguarding as Group/Activity Leaders.
- Ensuring that the Elders of the Church are aware of The Policy.
- Offering training to those working with Vulnerable Persons.
- Placing appropriate notices in respect of Safeguarding policy and procedures on physical noticeboards.
- Placing appropriate notices in respect of Safeguarding on the TBC website and other electronic communications.
- Making The Policy available to all.
- Publishing the name of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and how to contact them so that everyone who connects with TBC can know who they are.
- Publishing details of how and when to contact the Police and Social Services.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator visiting Vulnerable groups/activities.

6.2. COMMUNICATING WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS

6.2.1. Vulnerable Persons will, as far as reasonably practicable, be consulted and involved in the planning of the activities of a Group/Activity and be given opportunities to provide feedback on them.

6.2.2. Conversations with Vulnerable Persons will:

- Take place at an appropriate time in an appropriate place as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Have due regard to confidentiality and its limits.
- Involve good listening skills.
- Use clear language understood by the parties.
- Be open allowing the Vulnerable Person able to say what they want to say and not led by the Worker into saying things they do not want to say or are untrue.
- Respect personal boundaries.
- Leave the Vulnerable Person fully informed of what will happen next.

6.2.3. If a Vulnerable Person begins describing an abusive situation Workers will:

- Not panic but will explain confidentiality if they can.
- Listen and get the facts clear.
- Reassure, let the Person know they were right to disclose and that they are believed.
- Not press a Vulnerable Person for information and never promise to keep secrets
- Explain what happens next and why
- Record the details as soon as you can, by hand
- Refer as described in The Policy.

7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

7.1. INITIAL RESPONSE TO A CONCERN OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

7.1.1. If a Worker has concerns that a Vulnerable Person has been abused or if an allegation is made, then they have a responsibility, in accordance with the procedures in Annex C to take the following actions to prevent further harm.

- Ensure that the Vulnerable Person is protected from any immediate risk of harm.
- Make notes about the cause for concern. If there is any injury describe it give dimensions and location on the body using a drawing. Do this as soon as it is reasonably possible, preferably within an hour of the event.
- Write down what was said, who said what and when. Describe what was happening beforehand and any other relevant information. It is better to write down lots of notes than not enough.
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action that was taken and then sign and date the notes.
- Keep all hand-written notes even if they are typed up later and pass them to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

7.1.2. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will deal with the matter from the point that they are notified.

7.1.3. There is a requirement to report certain allegations of abuse to the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Charities Commission; this will be the responsibility of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

7.1.4. If the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and deputies are not available or if they are a subject of the concerns, then the social services and/or police are to be contacted and the Elders informed that this has been done.

7.2. PHYSICAL INJURY OR SYMPTOMS OF NEGLECT

7.2.1. If there is evidence of physical injury or neglect, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will do the following:

- Contact Social Services if there is concern that the Vulnerable Person may have been deliberately hurt, is at risk of significant harm or is afraid to return home. Parents/carers will not be told. In cases where there is an immediate risk of harm whoever is best placed to deal with the immediate issue should do what they can to protect the Vulnerable Person by calling Social Services or the Police, and report to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as reasonably practicable.
- If urgent medical treatment is required an ambulance will be called or the Vulnerable Person will be taken to a hospital, hospital staff will be informed of any Safeguarding concerns. Parents/carers will be notified after this action has been taken.
- If concerns for a child centre around poor parenting TBC will offer what help they can provide and help the parents/carers find help through social and health services.
- If this kind of concern involves an older child (16 +) then it is important to talk things through with them and to take their wishes into account when deciding whether to talk to their parents/carers.

7.3. CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

7.3.1. Where the concern or allegation of abuse is sexual the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact Social Services and the Police so that they can carry out an investigation and decide what action need to be taken. TBC will not try to investigate sexual abuse.
- In the case of a severe sexual assault (such as rape) contact the police immediately. Make a note of everything the Vulnerable Person says the surrounding circumstances and make careful note of the age of the person. Do not tamper with anything that may be required as evidence (clothing for example) and dissuade the person from cleansing themselves.
- All information will be kept confidential and parents/carers or anyone else who could be potentially involved will not be informed as this could lead to the perpetrator being alerted and either the person 'silenced' or evidence destroyed.
- The right to privacy will be respected as far as possible.
- Where the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is not available the Supervisor or Worker should take the action instead.

7.3.2. If the allegation is made against someone who has responsibility for implementing The Policy advice should be sought from Thirtyone:eight.

7.4. REASONS FOR NOT CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS OR ALLEGED ABUSERS

7.4.1. If an allegation of abuse is made it is important that any suspected perpetrator is not made aware of the allegation because they may attempt to silence the abused person or any witnesses and tamper with evidence. If informing parents/carers is likely to make a suspected perpetrator aware of an allegation, then they should not be contacted. Similarly, if the parents/carers of an abused person may know the suspected perpetrator they may take the law into their own hands and inadvertently prejudice any subsequent investigation.

7.5. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.5.1. Children and young people are curious about sex and often experiment sexually. Where a child is in a position of power or has responsibility over another child and abuses that trust through engaging in sexual activity this is regarded as abusive. The same applies where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves on another child. Such situations will be treated the same as if an adult were involved.

7.6. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

7.6.1. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact the LADO within 24 hours when an allegation is made against a Worker with children or young people.
- Contact Adult Social Care when an allegation is made against a Worker with Vulnerable adults.
- Contact the Charity Commission and DBS if the allegations have been confirmed.
- Contact the Insurance Company where an allegation is made against someone in TBC.
- Follow up all contacts with third parties in writing, either by E-mail or letter or using the systems in place by that third party.
- Seek advice from Thirtyone:eight if unsure about what to do.

8. PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING

8.1. BASIS OF PASTORAL CARE

8.1.1. Pastoral Care is at the heart of loving others and so a core part of being Church at TBC.

8.1.2. It is recognised that Pastoral Care may take many forms and many levels, from the simple greeting/acknowledgment/listening to a more ongoing and intensive relationship.

8.1.3. TBC acknowledges that the key elements of Pastoral Care best practice are as follows and expects those who provide Pastoral Care as part of their role, to abide by them:

- Care is based on the needs of the person being cared for.
- Agree at the outset what will be offered, the conduct expected and explain confidentiality and boundaries.
- Avoid offering care to people in a close relationship to you.
- Sensitivity on behalf of the Pastoral Carer.
- Effective use of questioning and listening skills.
- An awareness of when a Pastoral Carer is getting out of depth and an ability to refer onwards and the need to refer to their Supervisor if in any doubt.
- An ability to signpost to appropriate sources of help.
- Communicating safely (Section 6).
- Praying safely (Section 5.18).
- Ability to know what abuse is, recognise possible signs and symptoms and know what to do in cases of abuse or expected abuse (Section 7).
- When to refer to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- Awareness that Pastoral Care is often a One to One activity (5.17).
- An awareness that Pastoral Care should not cause greater suffering.
- The need to follow the Code of Conduct (Section 4).
- Understanding of confidentiality, trust, and data protection (Section 5.4).
- Not to create a relationship of over-dependency or romantic attachment.
- Be adequately supervised.
- Operate The Policy in respect of Gifts (Section 5.2).
- If handling money on behalf of another person, e.g.: shopping, maintain full transparency always, e.g.: by keeping receipts.

8.2. COUNSELLING

8.2.1. TBC acknowledges that there is a difference between Pastoral Care and Counselling and accepts that Counselling will only be provided by appropriately trained and qualified persons who belong to professional institutions and submit themselves to the discipline of supervision. Such persons will also abide by the key elements of Pastoral Care (8.1.3).

8.2.2. When children and young people seek, or are asked to consider, counselling complex issues about confidentiality and the parent/carers right to know may arise. It is good practice to encourage the young person to talk to their parents/carers about problems but if the young person does not want their parent/carer to know then their wishes should, ordinarily, be respected. Young persons aged between 16 and 18 are generally regarded as competent to be able to consent to their own medical treatment (including counselling) but parent/carer consent is regarded as good practice for anyone under the age of 16.

8.3. GENDER

8.3.1. The person being cared for or counselled may wish to talk to a person of the same sex or the opposite sex or request two people are present, particularly if they are being visited at home. Such requests must be taken seriously, and the choice should be theirs unless there are strong grounds to do otherwise.

8.4. MULTI-PARTY SUPPORT

8.4.1. Situations may arise where an issue gives rise to the need for multi-party support, e.g.: if a person alleging abuse and the suspected perpetrator are in the same family or Church. In such cases the Elders of TBC will identify different people to support each party and maintain a separation of duties to show equity of care and not to pre-empt any inquiry initiated by the statutory authorities.

8.5. EFFECTS OF ABUSE

8.5.1. The effects of abuse can be many and long lasting and this needs to be recognised by those providing Pastoral Care and Counselling:

- Those abused may struggle from guilt and shame, often originating from accusations of the abuser who use them to silence their victims. Those abused often feel dirty, despoiled, second-rate and generally unlovable. It is important to treat that victims are innocent and not to blame for what happened and have no responsibility for it.
- It may be difficult for victims to appreciate and accept that God loves them just as they are, and they will never be rejected.
- Emotional and spiritual abuse can take place in a Church setting where the wrong use of power occurs in the name of God. TBC abhors such wrong use of power and welcomes a variety of religious expression and questioning.
- TBC accepts the view of the Bible that Church is a Family built on relationships of love and trust and accepts that this image may not be an easy one for those who have had negative experience of family.
- It is understood that those with low self-esteem and issues such as anger and guilt may self-harm in several ways. Where self-harm is encountered, it will be handled with sympathy, patience, and care. The primary concern is the safety of the person who is self-harming and TBC understands that it may be a while before the reasons behind self-harm are resolved. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should be informed of any case of self-harm.

8.6. FORGIVENESS

8.6.1. Forgiveness is at the heart of the Christian faith, but TBC acknowledge that it is complex and often laced with strong emotions that can span decades of a person's life. Thus, the issue will not be pressed unhelpfully upon anyone when they are not ready for it.

8.6.2. It is not appropriate to expect a child to forgive an abuser, they will not be able to appreciate the effects that the abuse has had on them until they are much older.

8.6.3. In general, the issue of forgiveness should not be dealt with by the pastoral carer due to the emotional and psychological complexities that may be experienced when receiving pastoral care.

8.6.4. The other side of forgiveness is for the abuser to acknowledge the effects and extent of their actions on the person they have abused. They may lessen the harmful effects by a full apology. It is important to remember that just because someone has apologised does not mean the abuse has been forgotten or that the victim will automatically forgive the abuser.

8.7. RECONCILIATION

8.7.1. Reconciliation is different to forgiveness. It may not be safe for the abuser and victim to renew contact because the abuser may continue to abuse. Reconciliation must only be attempted very carefully by someone who understands Safeguarding issues, it could be a Counsellor an Elder or someone at Thirtyone:eight.

8.8. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

8.8.1. TBC believes that the Bible teaches that everyone is a spiritual being, that there is a spiritual dimension to life and that God gives gifts to those who follow him, including spiritual gifts. We accept that spiritual beliefs can vary from person to person and this needs to be taken into consideration, we do not wish to cause harm. We accept that care needs to be taken when praying with others and especially when talking about spiritual matters and use of spiritual gifts and so we will operate within the following guidance when offering Pastoral Care and Counselling:

- Try to establish and understand the spiritual beliefs of the other party.
- Work within the context of what is acceptable to the person and their parents/carers.
- If a Worker believes that there are unresolved spiritual issues, then these must be checked out with their Supervisor or the Safeguarding Co-ordinator to formulate the best approach in dealing with them.
- If a Worker believes they have a directive prophecy or word of knowledge for a Vulnerable Person, then this must be checked out with their Supervisor or the Safeguarding Co-ordinator before acting upon it.
- Praying for healing is a good thing but avoid making promises on behalf of God because if the promise does not come to pass then this could be harmful to the Vulnerable Person.

9. MANAGING THOSE WHO POSE A RISK.

9.1. PRIORITIES AND PROTECTION

- 9.1.1. It is TBC policy to have strategies in place to supervise and manage individuals who pose a risk to others and have been committed, or have been accused of, sexual or other crimes or abuse against anyone. Whilst, as a Church, TBC welcomes all who wish to connect with us and look to support those wishing to address their offending behaviour the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Persons takes precedence.
- 9.1.2. TBC recognises that even though an individual may have regretted and accepted responsibility for what they have done, the possibility of succumbing to opportunity or habit remains, so in terms of Safeguarding seeks to protect offenders as well as potential victims.
- 9.1.3. As soon as TBC become aware of an offender or suspected offender, they will draw up an agreement which will stipulate what the person can and cannot do, this agreement will be signed by the person and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. The key to the agreement is that it will:
- Be clear and unambiguous.
 - Be comprehensive.
 - Be reviewed regularly and amended where necessary.
 - Stipulate what support will be provided by TBC.
 - Define boundaries.
 - Define who the person (category of persons) can be in contact with.
 - Include the conditions under which the person will be barred from connecting with TBC.
- 9.1.4. As well as restricting the movement of the person TBC will ensure that they are not placed in a position of trust or any other position that may indicate that they are trusted by becoming a children or youth worker, a door welcome, pastoral visitor etc. In accommodating the person into church life beyond worship meetings, for example small groups, thought will be given to which group/activity is most appropriate as the person should not be placed in any group containing Vulnerable Persons.
- 9.1.5. The agreement will be monitored, and support to the person given, by a small group of people set up for the purpose – known as a Support and Accountability Group. The group will consist of at least four members plus the person and consideration will be given to including someone independent of the church and may include a police/probation officer. The group will agree Terms of Reference for themselves that will include how often they will meet and who has what responsibilities, for example who will arrange the meetings.
- 9.1.6. Knowledge of the full extent of a person's details will be restricted on a need to know basis.

9.2. RESPONDING TO ALLEGED/SUSPECTED PERPETRATORS OF ABUSE

- 9.2.1. If an allegation is made or a concern raised about a Worker or TBC members then they will be dealt with in accordance with Section 4 of This Policy, as appropriate.

9.3. INVOLVMENT OF THIRD PARTIES

- 9.3.1. The Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) have been established so that Police, the probation Service and Social Services can share information to prevent abuse and they will approach the Safeguarding Co-ordinator if they are aware of a person who poses a risk to Vulnerable Persons encountering TBC. TBC will abide by the advice provided by MAPPA.
- 9.3.2. TBC acknowledges its duty to share information appropriately with Social Services and Pastoral workers in Schools and other Safeguarding Co-ordinators (for example if a person who poses a risk moves to another Church.)

- 9.3.3. If an offender has a supervising probation officer TBC will contact that officer so they can work together in protecting Vulnerable Persons and rehabilitating the offender.
- 9.3.4. If the person is no longer under probationary supervision TBC will contact the Police child protection team to evaluate the level of risk and how best to manage the risk.

10. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

10.1. COLLABORATING WITH UK THIRD PARTIES

10.1.1. TBC will work collaboratively with UK third parties to ensure the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Persons, in particular Social Services, Police, Schools, and the Medical profession. We will share information appropriately in the best interests of the Person and in accordance with Statute and best practice.

10.1.2. Where TBC Workers carry out their activity under the authority of a third party, for example Schools, they will abide by the Safeguarding Policy and procedures of that organisation and where they appear to be of a lower standard than, or appear to conflict with, TBC Policy will draw that to their attention and seek agreement. In addition, there should be a clear agreement between the parties as to what TBC Workers are providing.

10.2. CHILD SPONSORSHIP

10.2.1. TBC will operate 'Child Sponsorship' with best practice Safeguarding in mind. Should there be any Safeguarding concerns about an individual sponsoring, or seeking to sponsor, a Child that person will be denied the opportunity to sponsor.

10.3. USE OF CHURCH PREMISES BY EXTERNAL AGENCIES

10.3.1. TBC accepts that where its premises are used by an individual or organisation that is not part of TBC there is a joint responsibility to ensure that Vulnerable Persons are safeguarded. It may be that an individual or organisation has its own Safeguarding Policy and procedures, but they will be given a copy of The (TBC) Policy and expected to operate in accordance with it. This will be part of any letting/hire agreement.

10.4. UK HOST FAMILIES

10.4.1. Where TBC seeks to place a Vulnerable Person with a host family in the UK, whether that family is connected to TBC or not it will ensure that:

- All adult members of the host family have been DBS checked.
- All adult members of the host family have read The Policy and agreed to operate within it.
- Where a host family is being provided by or through a third-party organisation then that organisation has a Safeguarding Policy and set of Safeguarding procedures equivalent to the TBC Policy and procedures and resolve any apparent discrepancies.
- The names and ages of all members of the host family are known to TBC.
- It has a record of the home address, phone number and e-mail address of the host family.
- Sleeping and personal and hygiene arrangements are appropriate.
- Details of any medical conditions and special needs are given to the host family.
- It has details of the activities planned by the host family.
- The Vulnerable Person has details of a responsible person in TBC who they can contact if they have any concerns.
- If there are Safeguarding concerns over any member of the family, then the Vulnerable Person will not be placed with them.

10.5. **WORKING OUTSIDE THE UK**

- 10.5.1. There will be occasions when Vulnerable Persons from within TBC or connected to TBC will work outside of the UK, for example on mission. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is universally recognised as the foundation on which safeguarding policies across the globe must be based. The Thirtyone:eight standards used to construct The (TBC) Policy are consistent with the UNCRS and so it is reasonable to expect equivalent policies across the globe. However, TBC recognise that other countries may have different attitudes towards what is acceptable and what is not according to their culture, and may not have a process equivalent to DBS and so will seek to apply The Policy overseas as far as reasonably practicable.
- 10.5.2. Attention will be paid to hosting arrangements, in addition to seeking to comply with the arrangement for UK hosting as far as reasonably practicable a Vulnerable Person will never be hosted alone.

11. QUERIES ETC

11.1. Any queries, clarifications, issues about The Policy should be raised with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

LIST OF SAFEGUARDING QUICK GUIDES

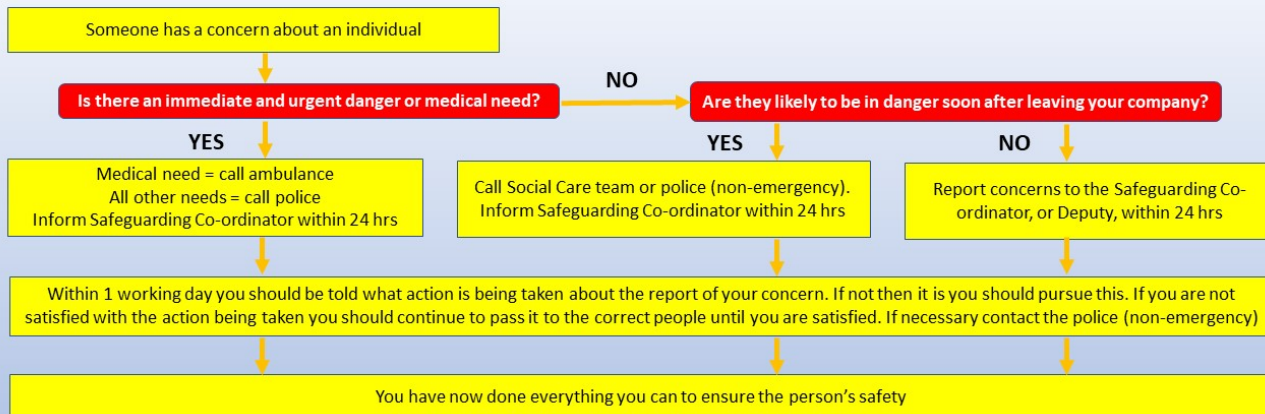
Basement and Attic Café
Bible Society – Open the Book
Crèche and Bubbles
Families Ministry
Ignite and Impact
Ignite Club
Oasis (Thornbury) – An Oasis (Thornbury) Policy
SNG, Soul Survivor
Splash and X Stream
TBC Does ... (Holiday Club)
X Stream Club

VULNERABLE PERSON SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

**Thornbury Baptist Church :
Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy Statement**

- All people are welcome within our church community
- We are committed to expressing the love of God to all people regardless of any social distinctions and divisions just as God loves all people without conditions
- We recognise that some people are vulnerable to abuse and so we have developed working methods to prevent abuse and safeguard all people who interact with the church.
- These working methods are also designed to safeguard all church workers, whether paid or voluntary, from false allegations of abusive practices
- We are committed to following the guidelines set out in our Safeguarding Policy which is available from the church office or at: www.thornburybaptistchurch.org.uk
- We are committed to providing regular training and support for those who work with vulnerable people.

THORNBURY BAPTIST CHURCH (TBC) SAFEGUARDING REPORTING PROCEDURE



Person/Organisation	Number	Person/Organisation	Number
Emergency services	999	Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Mike Levy)	07933 240551/01454 419118
Non-emergency police	101	Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Paul Ferguson)	01454 419118
South Gloucs Social Care Children (9am -5pm)	01454 866000	Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator (Sally Heath)	01454 419574
South Gloucs Social Care Adults (9am – 5pm)	01454 868007	South Gloucs Social Care (emergency duty team)	01454 615165

TBC RISK ASSESSMENTS

TBC Generic 1 - Main Worship Area

TBC 1.1 – Lunch Club

TBC 1.2 – Soft Play

TBC 1.3 – Baptismal Pool Use

TBC Generic 2 – Lower Lounge

TBC 2.1 – 2x2 Group

TBC Generic 3 – Youth Block

TBC Risk Assessment for the Garden

Use of Youth Block by TBC Internal Groups

Safe use of ladders and access equipment

Fire Risk Assessment of TBC Buildings

First Aid Risk Assessment

Use of Bouncy Castle

COVID 19 Risk Assessments

~~~~~ END OF DOCUMENT ~~~~~