

## **HAZEL GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **CHURCH DETAILS**

Name: Hazel Grove Baptist Church, (hereafter, "The Church")

Address: Station Street, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire. SK7 4EX

Tel No: 0161 487 3708 Email address: admin@hgbc.org.uk

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Church and its leadership recognise the importance of its ministry to children, young people and adults at risk of harm and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of people entrusted to the church's care.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting people and their diversity as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the children's/youth workers and those working with adults at risk of harm within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the church.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities and other organisations.

### **CHURCH POLICY**

The Church Leadership recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults at risk of harm. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Church Leadership has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter "the policy"). It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The Church works closely with Thirtyone:eight. Thirtyone:eight refers to their biblical mandate to 'Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable' Proverbs 31:8(CEB) The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on a model published by Thirtyone:eight and prepared in consultation with The Baptist Union and Stockport MBC Guidelines. The Church Leadership undertakes to file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with Thirtyone:eight and social services, and any amendments subsequently published. The Church Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

The Church Leadership is committed to on-going child and adults at risk training for all volunteers and workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines that accompany this policy.

The Church Leadership also undertakes to follow the principles found within the Abuse of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office. It is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

Under no circumstances should a church worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to Janet Fisher (hereafter the Designated Person for Safeguarding, DPS) tel. no: 0790 505 7599 who is nominated by the Church Leadership to act on its behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities. The DPS will share all such concerns with the Senior Minister or in his absence a member of the Church Eldership.
- The DPS may also be required by conditions of the Church Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company. They may also be required as part of their denominational policy to inform strategic personnel within the denomination, namely North West Baptist Association, tel. no: 01942 221 595.
- In the absence of the DPS, or if the suspicions in any way involve the DPS then the report should be made to Cathy Mackay (hereafter the "Deputy DPS") tel. no: 0161 476 2504. If the suspicions implicate both the DPS and the Deputy DPS, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Senior Minister and Thirtyone:eight (PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Helpline 0303 003 1111 [info@thirtyoneeight.org](mailto:info@thirtyoneeight.org)) or alternatively Stockport Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub 0161 217 6028. The out of hours emergency telephone number is 0161 718 2118. The Police Child Protection Team can also be contacted via the Police Switch board tel. 0161 872 5050.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with church procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the DPS, the absence of the DPS or Deputy DPS should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.
- The Church Leadership will support the DPS and their Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child and adult protection agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Church Leadership hopes that members of the church will use the procedure above. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the DPS /Deputy DPS has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the DPS(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Church Leadership demonstrates the commitment of the church to effective child and adult protection.

The role of the DPS/ deputy DPS is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Social Services Department. It is Social Services task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY OR NEGLECT**

If a child or adult at risk has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the DPS /Deputy DPS will:

- Contact Social Services (or Thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's or adult at risks safety or if a child or adult at risk is afraid to return home.
- Will not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so having contacted Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carers to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of injury.
- Where the parent/carers is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Social Services directly for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Social Services.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DPS /Deputy DPS will:

- Contact the Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team directly. They will NOT speak to the parent/carers or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

## **ACCUSATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST HGBC STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS**

If anyone who attends HGBC (including members of staff or volunteer) is accused of abuse then HGBC will co-operate with other agencies in the enquiry.

During the course of the enquiry it is recommended that the person concerned is not involved in face to face youth and children's work. Salaried staff and full time volunteers will take a period of special leave during which they will continued to be paid. If the enquiry is not concluded within two months this action may need to be reassessed.

HGBC staff and volunteers must report any allegation made about themselves or others to their supervisor or his/her delegated representative. The same would apply to allegations about anyone in the church, whether involved in children's work or not.

## **ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM**

Workers with concerns regarding adults at risk of harm should report these to the DPS who will refer to Social Services and share with the Senior Minister or in his absence a member of the Church Eldership.

## APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF LEADERS & WORKERS

The Church Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines "Safe from Harm" (HMSO 1993), the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)/ Scottish Criminal Records Office / PECS Codes of Practice, Thirtyone:eight guidance and Church practice guidelines . The same principles will be applied to those appointed to work with adults at risk of harm.

All volunteers and staff members must attend Safeguarding training biannually. In addition any new volunteers or staff will receive training in the policy and guidelines during induction. The guidelines will be read through and questions raised within each group in September. This will allow everyone to refresh their knowledge and update on developments. DBS Checks will be carried out every 5 years.

## SUPERVISION OF GROUP/CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

The Church Leadership will provide details of the supervision for each specific activity in the church practice guidelines.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

All activities and events away from church premises need to be risk assessed by the event's leader. This assessment should be signed by the event's leader and countersigned by one of the following: DPS, Deputy DPS or their delegated person. This should be submitted to the relevant person for insurance purposes.

## SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The Church Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with and support to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse.

## WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, young people or adults at risk of harm, the Church Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its commitment to the protection of children, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep in partnership with the statutory sector. The Church Leadership will not allow persons convicted of offences against children to have any position which involves contact with children, young people and adults at risk of harm. Where allegations have been made but no conviction has followed, the Church Leadership will take advice from the Statutory Sector regarding contact with children.



This policy will be reviewed annually on (date) <u>JANUARY 2023</u>	
Signed _____	Date _____
Print Name _____	Appointment <b>Designated Person for Safeguarding</b>
Signed <u></u>	Date <u>11-01-22</u>
Print Name <u>MARK PADDEN</u>	Appointment <b>HGBC Senior Minister</b>

## PRACTICE GUIDELINES

These include details of:

1. Procedures for recruitment, training and supporting of workers (HGBC Policy).
2. Good practice for working with children and young people (Health and Safety – Thirtyone:eight *Guidance*).
3. Guidelines specific to each group/activity (see grid below).

It is stressed that the interests of the child are paramount at all times. If it is necessary to depart from general guidelines in particular circumstances, this should only be done with the knowledge of the Group Leader or responsible Deacon in an emergency reported in writing after the event.

PEOPLE WORKING IN THESE AREAS  SHOULD HAVE REGARD TO			Sunday School	Childrens Clubs	Play Groups / Seedlings	Camps/ Resentials	Groups in Homes	Youth Club/Rock Solid/TXT	Detached Youth Work	Cyber Cafes	Transporting Children	Drop-In Centres	Children/Adults with Special Needs	Videos & Photos of Children	Baby Sitting Service	Peer-led Cells	Counselling Centres	Overseas Projects
Essential Practice Guidelines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Definitions of abuse (In Focus 1)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognising possible signs of abuse (In Focus 3)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responding to a child (In Focus 4)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Action following disclosure (In Focus 5 & Chapter 1 Sections 3 & 4)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Handling of disclosure information (In Focus 12)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Equal opportunities policy (In Focus 13)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Data protection act principles (Chapter 9 Sections 1 –4)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Discipline (In Focus 18)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Practice Guidelines As Applicable																		
Policy on Working with Vulnerable Adults (In Focus 14)																	✓	
Visiting children at home (Chapter 6 Section 6)	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓					✓					
Children from the street (Chapter 6 Section 7)	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓					
Church babysitting circle (Chapter 6 Section17)	✓	✓											✓		✓			
Peer group activities (Chapter 6 Section 4)						✓	✓						✓			✓		
Working with disruptive children (Chapter 6 Section 8)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓		
Talking and listening to children (Chapter 6 Section 5)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Young helpers and those from abroad (Chapter 4 Sections 8 & 9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Transporting children (Chapter 6 Section 13)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		
Children with Special Needs (Chapter 6 Section 11)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Swimming Trips (Chapter 7 Section 15 & Form 17)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓		
Using the internet : churches and organisations (Chapter 8)	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
Internet safety : children and young people (In Focus 20)	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
Complaints about social services (Chapter 1 Section 9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓		
Children placed with host families (Chap. 6 Section 15 & Form 14)						✓	✓						✓					✓
Video & Photographs of Children (Chapter 9 Section 4 & Form 18)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓		
Parents/Carers in Children's Groups (Chapter 6 Section 16)	✓	✓				✓							✓					
Drop-in Centres (Chapter 6 Section 12)							✓					✓	✓					
Counselling (Chapter 2 Sections 2 - 4, In Focus 6 & Form 5)	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓					✓				✓	
Overseas Missions (Chapter 1 Section 17)													✓					✓