



# GATEWAY TO LEVEL 2 EXCELLENCE IN SAFEGUARDING

An introduction to Safeguarding for Local Church Volunteers/Workers

The Baptist Union of Great Britain

*Name* .....

*Role* .....

## Welcome and thank you

This guide is for anyone wanting to work with children, young people or adults at risk in the local church, whether as a volunteer or in a paid role. Thank you for your willingness to get involved and for giving your time and energy to such important work.

In the same way that sports have rules and boundaries to enable everyone to enjoy them, safeguarding policies exist to enable everyone involved in church life to have the opportunity to grow and flourish.

You will have seen a lot on the news and in the press about the consequences of not having adequate safeguards in place. This guide will help you to understand the basics of safeguarding in a church context before you attend the *Baptist Union of Great Britain Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding training*.

## Before you get started



We are sure that you are keen to begin your new role! There are several safeguarding requirements which need to be met before you start, which are outlined below. There is a handy checklist summarising these requirements at the back of this guide. Please make sure that this is completed and returned to your church's Designated Person for Safeguarding (please refer to the key contacts section on page 8).

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Before you can start working in your chosen role, your church will arrange for you to have a criminal records check (known as a DBS check) to help make sure that you are not unsuitable to work with children and/or adults at risk.

Your church DBS verifier (see page 8 for details) will be in contact with you to start this process and will talk you through all of the information you need to provide. You cannot start working without supervision in your role until your DBS check has been completed and you have been given clearance to proceed. Your DBS verifier will let you know as soon as this happens. In the meantime, you should complete a Self-Disclosure Form now and give it to your church DBS verifier. Alongside your DBS check, you will need to attend the *Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding training* before you can work without supervision.

## Policy and procedures



Your church's safeguarding policy and procedures are key documents and will teach you about best practice in your specific church context. Make sure that you have read through them carefully before starting in your role and speak to your church Designated Person for Safeguarding if you have any questions or concerns.

If your church has a Code of Behaviour for workers, it is important that you read and understand it, and that you follow it at all times whilst working in your chosen role.

## Safeguarding training

It is crucial that you receive adequate training for your role, as this will help to give you confidence in all areas of safeguarding and in knowing how to respond to any concerns.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain provides a half day training session, called *Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding*, which is delivered by your local association. The course helps volunteers and workers to understand safeguarding specifically within the church context. The Designated Person for Safeguarding at your church will give you more details and arrange for you to attend the training at the earliest opportunity.



If it is not possible to complete this training before you start in your role, reading through this guide will provide a basic introduction to safeguarding until you have been able to complete the *Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding* course. However, you will not be able to work without supervision until you have attended the Level 2 training; this is not a reflection on you personally but is an important part of making sure that you understand the responsibilities and risks of working with children, young people and adults at risk.

The Level 2 course is full of useful information and is engaging and interactive. We hope you will really benefit from the course you attend!

## Introduction to safeguarding

What is safeguarding?

**Safeguarding is the protection of children and adults from harm, abuse or neglect**

Safeguarding involves a range of activities aimed at promoting every person's fundamental right to be safe. These include:

- making and maintaining safe environments for all,
- having processes to follow should something go wrong, and
- providing support for everyone involved.

Safeguarding is a positive and proactive process that allows everyone to feel safe and maintains standards of best practice for the benefit of everyone in the church.

Why is safeguarding important?

We all have the same rights and expectations to independence, respect, choice, fulfilment of our ambitions, to be heard, included, and to have privacy and confidentiality.

These expectations are central to the way in which we interact with each other in our life together.



Safeguarding ensures that these rights are protected, and that people of all ages are safe to attend church. Safeguarding policies, procedures and training should make us more prepared for dealing with any concerns and more confident in the responsibilities we have in our roles. However, simply having a policy is of no use unless it is put into practice.

## The language of safeguarding

Some people reading this booklet will already have a good knowledge of basic safeguarding requirements – if so, that’s great!

However, if you are learning about safeguarding for the first time, there are some terms you need to know:



### Child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, regardless of where they live or their circumstances.



### Adult at risk

“Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age or 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.”  
(CCPAS)



### Designated Person for Safeguarding

Every church should have at least one Designated Person for Safeguarding. This person receives all reports of safeguarding concerns and listens, observes and acts on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice. They are the link person between the church and other agencies.



### DBS Verifier

Church DBS Verifiers are responsible for processing DBS checks for all church workers, with the exception of accredited ministers. They check applicant’s identity documents, help complete the form and are involved in every stage of the DBS process.



### Church safeguarding policies and procedures

Your church should have comprehensive policy and procedures in place, which includes guidance on how to respond to concerns. Most Baptist churches have based their policy on *Safe to Grow* and *Safe to Belong*, the Baptist Union of Great Britain policies for children and adults at risk. These can be found at [www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding).

## Safeguarding in the church context

One of the things that all Baptist churches have in common is the belief that family is important. The church is not so much a particular place or building, but rather a family of believers, committed to Christ, to one another and to the service of God.

The church is one of the few places where all are welcome, including:

- Children and young people
- Adults at risk
- Survivors of abuse
- Those who are accused of abusing others
- Those who have been convicted of abusing others

This is why it is so important that we understand and follow best practice at all times.

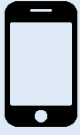


Take a moment to list all of the activities you can think of where your church works with or comes into contact with children, young people and adults at risk:

Children and Young People	Adults at Risk
eg Sunday School, youth clubs	eg Lunch club, Food Bank

There are probably many different ways in which your church has contact with vulnerable people. Although your church minister and Leadership Team have overall responsibility for safeguarding at your church, every one of us plays our part in making the church safer for all.

## Best practice guidance

Here are some general guidelines around best practice within a church context. Please check your own church's policies for details of the specific procedures you should be following.

<p><b>Mobile phones</b></p>  <p>Consent should be sought from parents/carers for any electronic communication between workers and children. This should generally be for information-sharing purposes only and not for general chatter.</p>	<p><b>Social Media and online communication</b></p> <p>It's important to keep clear boundaries when using social media and to think carefully before you type or post anything online. Once something is on the internet, it cannot be taken back. Workers are advised to use public pages for any communication they may have with children, rather than private accounts.</p>
<p><b>Physical contact</b></p> <p>We don't want to discourage you from being a caring worker. Physical contact is sometimes appropriate, for example, in order to comfort someone. It is worth remembering that the contact should be for the benefit of the child or adult at risk, rather than the worker.</p>	<p><b>Photography</b></p>  <p>Signed consent should be obtained from parents/carers for any photography taking place at church or church-related activities. The individual being photographed should also be happy for their photo to be taken. All photography should be conducted with sensitivity and courtesy. Workers shouldn't keep photographs of children on their personal phones.</p>
<p><b>Adult : Child ratios</b></p> <p>It is important to have appropriate ratios of staff to children at church activities. Make sure that you know your church's policy for minimum ratios and what to do if ratios fall below the required level.</p>	<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>Transporting children and adults should always be in keeping with your church's safeguarding policy if it is done as part of a church role, rather than as a private arrangement between friends or family.</p> 

For more information about best practice, please see your church's safeguarding policy. The safeguarding section of the Baptist Union of Great Britain's website is also a helpful resource: [www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding)

## Responding to concerns

If you are concerned about the wellbeing of a child or adult, or if you spot something that worries you, use 'the 4 Rs' to help you know what to do next:

1. Recognise

2. Respond

3. Record

4. Report

### 1) Recognise

Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it feel right? Trust your gut instinct; if it feels wrong, then it probably is wrong.

Remember that abuse can take many forms and sometimes it's hard to know what to look out for. In the press we often hear about physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect, but there are also other ways that abuse can happen, too. *You will learn more about this on the Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding training course.*

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do be prepared to act if you have a concern or if someone speaks to you about a concern they have</li><li>• Do listen and acknowledge what is being said</li><li>• Try to be reassuring &amp; remain calm</li><li>• Take action – don't ignore the situation</li><li>• Be supportive</li><li>• Tell them that:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They were right to tell you;</li><li>• You are taking what they have said seriously;</li><li>• It was not their fault;</li><li>• That you would like to pass this information on to the appropriate people, with their permission (and in some circumstances, you will have to pass it on even without their permission, in order to protect them and/or others);</li></ul></li><li>• Be open and honest</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not promise confidentiality</li><li>• Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval</li><li>• Do not minimise what is being said</li><li>• Do not ask probing or leading questions, or push for more information</li><li>• Do not offer false reassurance</li></ul>



Always pass on any concerns you have to the Designated Person for Safeguarding at your church. It is their job to listen and decide whether or not further action is needed. They are best placed to decide how the situation needs to proceed and whether or not anyone else needs to be involved.

## 2) Respond

If you have recognised something that causes you concern, or if a concern is disclosed to you, please don't ignore it - RESPOND. Share your concerns with the Designated Person for Safeguarding at your church. It is not your job to investigate or to tell anyone apart from the Designated Person for Safeguarding, but you need to speak to them quickly and promptly.

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next</li> <li>• Give contact details for them to report any further details or ask any questions that may arise</li> <li>• Try to give them a timescale for when and how you / the Designated Person for Safeguarding will contact them again</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not delay in contacting the Designated Person for Safeguarding</li> <li>• Do not contact the alleged abuser</li> <li>• Do not investigate the situation any further</li> <li>• Never leave a child or adult at risk to wait to hear from someone without any idea of when or where that may be</li> </ul>

## 3) Record

Write down what concerns you have or what was disclosed to you without delay, using the person's own words where possible. The four W's are a useful tool:

### What? When? Where? Who?

- Who was involved? – names of the key people
- What happened? – facts not opinions
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen – date and time



*To help make sure you record everything clearly, a safeguarding incident form is available from your Designated Person for Safeguarding.*

When writing your notes remember to:

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write down what you have heard, or the things that you have seen, as soon as possible</li><li>• Do record what you have heard or seen rather than your opinion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not pass on information to those who don't need to know; not even for prayer ministry</li></ul>

#### 4) Report

Report any concerns or disclosures to your church's Designated Person for Safeguarding without delay. The next steps will vary depending on whether a child or adult is involved, as well as the individual circumstances. The Designated Person for Safeguarding will know what to do next, or who best to contact for advice and support.

## Key contacts at your church

Make sure you know who these people are by filling in the boxes below. If there are any gaps or you are not certain who is who, make sure that you find out!

### Designated Person/s for Safeguarding

Name 1		Name 2	
Phone		Phone	
Email		Email	

### DBS Verifier(s)

Name 1		Name 2	
Phone		Phone	
Email		Email	

## Worker Checklist

Attached to the back of this booklet is a handy checklist to help remind you what needs to be done before you can start working in your role. Once you've completed it, sign it at the bottom of the page and pass it on to your Designated Person for Safeguarding.

## More Information

If you would like to know more before you attend the *Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding* course, please speak to your Designated Person for Safeguarding. You can also find more detailed information in the Safeguarding section of the Baptist Union of Great Britain website:

[www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.baptist.org.uk/safeguarding)

## Thank you!

Thank you for offering your time and your service to work with children, young people and/or adults at risk who attend your church or participate in the activities offered. We hope that you enjoy the work you do, and that God will bless you as you serve Him in this important way.



**These guidelines are part of the suite of safeguarding resources produced by the Baptist Union of Great Britain National Safeguarding Team. You can contact them at by email at [safeguarding@baptist.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@baptist.org.uk).**

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## Worker checklist



Here is a handy checklist to help remind you what needs to be done before you can start working in your role. Once you've completed it, please sign it at the bottom of the page and pass it on to your Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Safeguarding requirement	Date completed
I have read and understood my church's safeguarding policy and procedures and sought any clarification needed	
<i>If applicable:</i> I have read and understood my church's Code of Behaviour and agree to follow it at all times	
I have completed a Self-Disclosure form and have completed my DBS application	
My DBS disclosure certificate has been issued and I have been cleared by the church DBS Verifier to start working in the role	
I have spoken to the Designated Person for Safeguarding about booking onto the <i>Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding</i> training course	
I have raised any questions or concerns with the Designated Person for Safeguarding	
I have read and understood this <i>Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding</i> guide	

Worker signature..... Date.....

Designated Person for Safeguarding ..... Date.....

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