



Safeguarding Policy 2024

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Policy statement

The aim of this document is to provide a clear policy on the protection of children and vulnerable adults within Elland Christian Centre and sets out the course of action to be taken should allegations of child abuse occur within the church framework, or concerns be raised regarding any child and/or vulnerable adult attending any of the groups or activities in the church. It also sets out guidelines on our expectations regarding leaders and support leaders and how to behave appropriately with children and young people to ensure their safety and well-being within the context of Every Child Matters.

This document sets out the safeguarding policy for Elland Christian Centre and reflects the responsibility we have to safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care, regardless of gender, race and disability. This policy relates to all children and young people under the age of 18 years and also to vulnerable adults over the age of 18. By following the procedures set out in this document, we aim to protect them from physical, emotional, racial, mental and sexual abuse (please see Appendix 1 for definitions).

The aim is to be practical and this document contains information which will be used for training and supporting every adult who is involved in work with children or young people at Elland Christian Centre.

Safeguarding Process

Named person

In the first instance of any suspicions or allegations of abuse pertaining to the church and church context, **please do not contact the pastors**. The designated person who will deal with any concerns is:

Viv Neville (evenings) tel: 07452 963722

If the allegation in any way involves the designated person, please contact the MAST (Multiagency Screening Team) directly for advice. It is not the responsibility or role of Elland Christian Centre to ascertain whether a child has been abused or not, but to respond in a responsible way to any information given to us. **NB: Where there are concerns regarding the immediate safety and well-being of a child, the police should be directly contacted.**

If there are concerns about the well-being of a child/young person relating to the home context, contact Viv Neville or Andrea Freeman for advice.

Other Useful Contacts:

MAST telephone number:	01422 393336
MAST emergency out of office number:	01422 288000
NSPCC 24 hour helpline number:	0800 800500
Churches Child Protection Advisory Service:	0303 003 1111

Dealing with an allegation / concern

Whilst recognising that confidentiality and trust are of great importance, there are times when the welfare of the child becomes of paramount concern and therefore information has to be passed on to the relevant authorities.

Allegations should be made/concerns expressed to Viv Neville, the designated person. If you are not the designated person and a child makes an allegation, you follow the guidelines given below and then speak to the named person who will decide what action to take.

If a child makes an allegation:

- stay calm and listen carefully to what is said; don't over react.
- do not promise to keep secrets; explain that such information will need to be shared but offer reassurance that they have done the right thing.
- allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- avoid any questions which may suggest a particular answer and try to avoid questions altogether so that you don't bias the answers.
- tell them what you are going to do next and who you are going to share the information with.
- record in writing as soon as possible what was said:
 - use the child's own words if possible and include what has been said by anyone involved in the discussion
 - note the time, date and any names mentioned
 - sign and date the record
 - keep original copies of notes even if you write them up again in a more legible form
 - please avoid giving your opinions or subjective judgements; simply record the information given to you (refer to Appendix 3).
 - inform the designated person unless it is inappropriate to do so or the designated person is not available, in this case make contact initially with Andrea Freeman and then with MAST. If there is an immediate danger to the well-being of the child/young person, contact Andrea Freeman immediately and if not available, ring Social Services and/or the police directly.

Recognising the signs of abuse

Please refer to Appendix 2 which gives guidance on recognising when abuse may have taken place. Children's workers will be expected to attend training to highlight issues relating to abuse on an annual basis.

Working with offenders/ex-offenders

If there is someone attending the church with a known previous offence against children or someone who is known to have harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult in the past, the pastors will put in place conditions on the behaviour of a person which will safeguard children and young people. A person with this known background will not be allowed to have unsupervised access to children, young people or vulnerable adults within the church. In the case of mixed age activities, for example family services, clear boundaries/guidelines will be given with regard to attendance and participation to the person in question. Whilst we recognise that people may attend the church for whom the background is unknown, we ensure that all children's workers are DBS checked and alert to potential risks for children and young people.

Disclosure Barring Service checks

All children and young people's workers will be checked before starting to work with the groups in the church. Enhanced disclosures will be required for:

- Trustees
- Elders in the church
- The ABC & Collide group
- Senior group leaders
- Anyone working with vulnerable adults

Training of workers

We expect every church worker with children, young people or vulnerable adults to be able to know the definitions of different types of abuse (as set out in Appendix 1), to recognise signs of potential abuse (as set out in Appendix 2) and to be able to follow the procedure as set out. A training programme at church will address these issues regularly.

Practical guidelines for ensuring the health and well-being of children and young people at Elland Christian Centre:

- a. The church is warm, well lit and properly ventilated for use with young people and children.
- b. The guidelines in relation to space for 5-8 year olds (2.3 square metres per child) will be adhered to.
- c. Health and Safety requirements are adhered to as regards provision of facilities.
- d. Any accidents or incidents occurring during a session will be recorded in an Accident Book.
- e. Emergency procedures are clear for the building.
- f. A mobile phone is available.

g. A first aid kit is easily accessible and a member of the team has a working knowledge of First Aid. Please **ONLY** contact Viv Neville, Lauren Smith or Georgina Coenen if an adult requires first aid or Lauren Smith or Georgina Coenen if a child requires first aid.

h. The church is covered by liability insurance.

i. Child/adult ratios are kept as follows (NSPCC recommendations for voluntary organisations):

- 0-2 year olds: 1 adult to 3 children
- 2-3 year olds: 1 adult to 4 children
- 4-8 year olds: 1 adult to 6 children
- 9-12 year olds: 1 adult to 8 children
- 13-18 year olds: 1 adult to 10 children

There will always be a female adult present with each group run and where possible mixed genders leading.

j. Only authorised team members will have unsupervised access to working with the children. All team members are DBS checked and approached by the pastors to join any leadership team. People may be invited to work with children for a specified event if appropriate, but will not have unsupervised access to any children.

k. All children's workers will receive training in Child Protection Procedures, recognising signs of abuse, planning and preparing to keep safe, communication skills and working with children with attachment needs.

l. Space:

- Children under 2 years: 3.5m squared per child
- 2 year olds: 2.5m squared per child
- 3-5 year olds: 2.3m squared per child

Practical Guidelines for working with children and young people will be implemented

These guidelines are based on how to respond to children and young people as regarding **touch, talk, teaching** and **behaviour** within the locational context of the church building as well as out in the community or at residential opportunities. Another important consideration as regards safeguarding young people is the area of the use the audio-visual and technology.

GUIDELINES FOR TOUCH:

1. Physical contact is acceptable where used to save a child from harm or to give first aid. If first-aid is needed, where possible, men should attend to boys and women attend to girls. If this isn't possible, another team member should also be present.
2. Touch should be age appropriate and initiated by the child, not the worker, relating to the child's needs and not the workers.
3. If someone is upset, an arm around the shoulder to the side may be appropriate, but in no instance should there be any hugs from the front.

4. Do not accompany children to the toilet unless a parent advises that this is necessary. If 2 – 5 year olds are taken to the toilet, leave the door open a little whilst with them.
5. Parents who have children with special needs will be consulted as to the most appropriate way of dealing with their needs.
6. Try not to counsel on your own; ensure that a colleague is within reach and if practicable leave doors open.
7. Don't ever drive a child home in your car alone.
8. Be aware that there are instances of children touching other children inappropriately. Report any instances of this to the Child Protection Co-ordinator.
9. When praying with a child, pray in a corner within sight; never touch the child/young person.
10. Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical touch.

GUIDELINES FOR TALKING:

1. Always address children with respect.
2. Use names where possible.
3. If a child makes an allegation never dispute what they say. Affirm them by saying something such as 'I understand what you are saying and believe you'. You could also say 'Don't blame yourself'. Don't ever promise confidentiality, but make it clear to a child that there are some issues which have to be passed on to people better qualified to help.
4. Do not shout at children; with clear boundaries, varying the tone of your voice should be enough to give clear messages.
5. Use age-appropriate language.
6. Always be positive about their achievements, focusing on them rather than weaknesses.
7. Look at a child directly when talking to them.
8. Do not allow adult conversation to take preference to discussion with a child during groups run for children.
9. Learn to let a child talk without interrupting them or trying to finish their sentences for them.
10. Reflect what the child has said back to them so that you and they are clear that you understand them.
11. If a question is asked that you don't know the answer to, don't try to waffle your way through it. Agree to go away and research the answer.
12. Use different children to 'do' and participate; don't always choose the ones you are confident will give the answer you want.

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING:

1. As a church, we aim to use appropriate teaching materials which are suitable for the age group.
2. In teaching, show respect in all situations.
3. In some situations when teaching about God the Father, be aware that some children have very negative associations with the concept of father.
4. Learning styles need to be considered when planning work.
5. Each group needs both men and women involved in leadership.
6. We need to be sensitive to family situations; knowing the children we work with is essential to our witness.
7. All our teaching needs to be clearly based in Biblical concepts and not in our own interpretations. This means that teaching needs careful planning and that, if in doubt, ideas should be referred to the pastor.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIOUR:

1. Each group needs to have clearly set boundaries which are age-appropriate and are based on love and respect for others.
2. All children should be quiet when an adult is talking to them or when another child is offering an opinion.
3. No language is tolerated which belittles a child such as 'stupid' or 'naughty'; identify the behaviour which is not acceptable and comment on that.
4. Treat all children equally.
5. Each group must be encouraged to participate in setting their own expectations for behaviour.
6. There are clear guidelines throughout all the groups in church of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
7. Children are not to be smacked or hit in any circumstances.
8. Parents must be included in helping to ensure positive behaviour.
9. Children need treating as individuals and their individual needs must be considered when planning a programme for them.
10. Do not humiliate children in front of their peers; do not use sarcasm to embarrass children.
11. Keep teaching focused and to the point – plan different short and sharp activities to focus children and accommodate different learning styles and interests. A bored child is often a disruptive child.
12. Anticipate misbehaviour and deal with it early.

GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL TRIPS ORGANISED BY CHURCH

Prior to any visit

1. Risk assessment must be carried out prior to any residential stay, including all activities.
2. Make sure all the consent forms are completed by parents.
3. Ensure that ratios of adults to children are within guidelines.
4. Have a list of equipment needed.
5. Make sure there is a first-aider in the team and that the catering is done by a member of the team who has a Food Hygiene certificate.
6. Structured programmes are needed, accounting for all of the children's 'awake' time.
7. Be aware in advance of emergency services locally and agreed fire procedure.

During residential stays

1. Regular checks that all children are present, especially if in transit.
2. Sleeping arrangements separate for males and females and no access allowed.
3. Each activity should have an appointed person in charge.
4. Night patrols are necessary.
5. Keep an incident book of any issues.
6. Keep an accident book.
7. Ensure activities are appropriate and that any professional coaches etc have the correct training and are DBS checked.
8. Leaders all to be DBS checked.

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGY:

1. Any photographs taken of young people must be with their express permission.
2. Any pictures to be used for the website or as displays in the church building must be general in nature and non-compromising. In order to use photographs in this way, we need written permission from the parents.
3. Church workers must not use private channels on Facebook or any other social media to communicate with children/young people within the church. Ensure that any contact is transparent and appropriate. Remember that the age restriction for Facebook is 13+.
4. Due regard needs to be taken of GDPR and the church privacy policy for which express permission needs to be agreed to maintain any personal information, including photos, on a secure Dropbox folder.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Careful organisation and planning are essential in protecting and safeguarding children. The way in which we behave with children and young people should reflect the fact that we are role-models to them and that we treat them in the way in which we would like to be treated. We need to be alert and willing to get to know children. This includes listening carefully to them and taking them seriously. Finally, when children are in our care, we are responsible for the needs of the whole child – spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical.

Children and toilets

For ABC, the child's parent should be alerted and informed that they will be required to change their child's nappy/take them to the toilet, if assistance is needed for the child.

Taking photos/recording and publishing images

All children need to have a permissions form completed by parents/carers explicitly stating the level of recording that is acceptable for their child. This list is maintained in a secure Dropbox folder which can only be accessed by the necessary leaders.

Completing registers

Registers will be completed for all children & young people groups. The registers are maintained in a secure Dropbox folder which can only be accessed by the necessary leaders.

Publishing images

Permission should be sought from both the parents/carers and the child before any image is used for publicity purposes. If images are to be used on a website, we need to be aware that the images might be downloaded and, as such, images should be vetted for suitability prior to use.

Use of mobile phones, tablets and other technology

We recognise the significant dangers that are presented by children and young people having unsupervised access to mobile phones and/or other devices on the church premises. These include the potential for bullying from other children and young people as well as CSE and other abuse. Within this context:

1. Parents/carers are responsible for supervising and monitoring their children at all times. However, there is a corporate responsibility to bring to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead any issues within the context of technology which may lead to the safety of a child or young person being compromised.
2. If a child is seen with a mobile phone, it will be brought to the attention of the adult and a request made to take the phone away from the child.
3. Parents are requested to ensure that their children do not have unsupervised access to social media and the internet at home and that all sensible precautions are taken to ensure that children who attend church are kept safe from harm.
4. If a child attends church and has access to social media which is inappropriate to their age, the parents will be alerted.

5. Where there is suspicion that a child is accessing inappropriate material via the internet or on a social media site, a referral will be made to Social Services for investigation.
6. The children who attend Collide on a Wednesday night will be asked to put their phones away or in a bucket to ensure that no photographs can be taken and to ensure that children/young people are not on any inappropriate sites during the youth evenings.
7. Teaching about internet safety will be incorporated into sessions for the youth groups.
8. Safeguarding training is recommended on e-safety for all church leaders. Parents are also encouraged to complete this.
9. Approaches to safeguarding will be monitored, evaluated and further developed in order to maintain relevance to the rapid developments in technology.

Appendix 1: Definitions of child abuse

The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria by the Government in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) are as follows:

Abuse

“A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.”

Physical Abuse

“A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.”

Emotional Abuse

“The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.”

Sexual Abuse

“Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.”

Child Sexual Exploitation

“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”

Neglect

“The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs”

Domestic Abuse

“Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Domestic abuse continues to be a prevalent risk factor identified through children social care assessments for children in need. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent”including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

**In addition please be aware there are other forms of abuse such as cyber abuse.*

Appendix 2 – Signs of abuse

Recognition of signs with might indicate child abuse

There are many indicators /factors that abuse of some form is taking place. Some of these factors may not be worrying in isolation but in combination can give serious cause for concern.

Identification of abuse is often difficult. It is useful to consider:

- Is there a pattern of unexplained injury or illness?
- Note explanations that are inconsistent
- What has the child said spontaneously?
- A sudden change in behaviour

<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of Physical Abuse</p> <p>Bruises: To the eyes, mouth or ears Fingertip bruising (grasp mark) Bruises of different ages in the same place Outline bruises (ie of a shoe, belt) Bruises without obvious explanations Bruises to non mobile babies</p> <p>Burns, bites and scars: Clear impressions of teeth Burns or scalds with clear outlines Small round burns (cigarettes) Large number of different aged scars Scars that indicate a child did not get medical treatment Unusually shaped scars</p> <p>Fractures: Fractures in children under 1 year Alleged unnoticed fractures</p> <p>Other injuries: Poisoning, injections, ingestion or other applications of damaging substances including drugs and alcohol Signs of shaking including any bruising to a young baby Facial petichiae (small blood spots)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of Neglect</p> <p>Children who are: Not receiving adequate food Exposed through lack of supervision to injuries Exposed to inadequate, dirty and/or cold environments Abandoned or left in circumstances without appropriate adult supervision Prevented by their carers from receiving appropriate medical advice/treatment</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of Emotional Abuse</p> <p>Abnormally passive, lethargic or attention seeking behaviour Specific habit disorders e.g. faecal smearing Severely delayed social and speech development Excessively nervous behaviour such as rocking Low self esteem</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Indicators of sexual abuse</p> <p>Sexual transmitted disease Recurrent urinary infections Genital and rectal itching and soreness Bruising in the genital region Sexual play / masturbation that is inappropriate to a child's age, development and circumstances Sexually explicit behaviour Young children with an inappropriate level of sexual knowledge Sexual abusive behaviour to other children, especially younger children</p> <p style="text-align: center;">General Indicators</p> <p>Onset of enuresis (day or night) Sleeping and eating disturbance Recurrent abdominal pains Social withdrawal Restlessness and aimlessness Poor trust and secretiveness Running away Self harm Hysterical fits, faints etc.</p>

The general indicators may occur in any child being abused but are particularly important in cases of sexual and emotional abuse where outward signs may not be present.

When symptoms are recognised: responding to concerns

- Speak to the designated person and follow the procedure set out in this document.
- Parents should normally be contacted and their agreement should be given prior to Social Services being contacted.
- Parents need not be contacted if to do so would put a child at increased risk of harm or would interfere with criminal enquiries.
- Parents also need not be contacted if to do so would place a member of the team at risk.
- If there is any doubts about whether a referral should be made, speak to Social Services for advice.
- Any notes made should be signed and dated. Do not destroy original notes even if a subsequent write up is made.

Appendix 3: ECC Recording Information

This form must be completed in the event of a disclosure, allegation or where there is suspicion of harm. The form must be given to the designated Safeguarding Lead unless it is inappropriate to do so or the designated person is not available. In this case, speak to either a Senior Leader or contact Social Services.

Name of Child:

Age:

Parent/Carer(s) Name:

Address/Telephone Number:

Any Special Needs?

Is it your concern or someone else's?

What has prompted the concern?

Physical signs?

Behavioural signs?

Other signs?

Has the child been spoken to? (describe what was said)

Have the parents been contacted?

Has anyone been alleged to be the person causing harm/the abuser? Who?

Has anyone else been consulted?

Any other information?

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4: Supporting children with attachment disorder

Strategies:

- Key person to meet and touch base with.
- Support in unstructured time.
- Use of restorative justice.
- Consistency of approach from all leaders.
- Reflect back and empathise: “I think you are feeling...”
- Having a safe space.
- Have clear expectations and boundaries.
- Predictability: warn of changes in advance where possible.
- Remind that you are keeping them in mind until you catch up again.
- Give them your full attention.
- Brief touch on shoulders occasionally.
- Put previous issues behind you and stress that with child/ren; they see any misdemeanour as an unforgivable offence that will result in rejection from you.
- If have to let them down, let them know as soon as possible, acknowledge the disappointment, tell them what is happening instead, do some wondering of why and explore the positives in the changes.
- Allow children to stand/sit with backs to wall and/or being able to see the door.
- Don't come up behind a child and shock/surprise them; for children who have been abused often the fear has come from behind.
- Don't insist on children participating in games which might cause anxiety (eg blindfolding if frightened of the dark; again this might be a scenario where abuse has taken place).

Not a good idea to be involved if you:

- Take things personally.
- Lose your temper easily.
- Are impatient.
- Take yourself too seriously.
- Have issues of unresolved trauma and loss.
- Don't work as a team player.
- Don't like the child/ren.
- Can't express care in a tangible way.
- Can't demonstrate understanding.
- Can't respond to needs before they are expressed.
- Can't respond to wishes that have been shared.

Avoid:

- Sarcastic comments.
- Public reprimands.
- Aggressive behaviours.
- Humiliating the child/ren.
- Staring at the child/ren.
- Criticising the child/ren rather than the action.
- Derogatory comments.

Appendix 5: Elland Christian Centre Vulnerable Adults statement

Elland Christian Centre is committed to encouraging an environment where all people and, especially those who may be at risk for any reason, are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety. We recognise that there are different levels of vulnerability and that everyone may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in their lives. Within the context of this policy a vulnerable adult will have the following characteristics:

- Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is not able to protect himself/ herself from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Our aim is to:

1. Promote the inclusion, empowerment and wellbeing of all adults.
2. Provide respectful pastoral ministry to all, recognising the power imbalance in such a relationship.
3. Safeguard all adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.
4. Equip church workers and members to be alert to abuse of adults and aware of their duty regarding any suspected abuse or neglect.
5. Promote safe practice by those in positions of trust.
6. Be careful with recruitment of all church workers in any pastoral role.
7. Support and train those who work amongst people who may be at risk.
8. Recognise our duty to work together with the local authority, police and Gateway to Care and to seek their advice when necessary.

Safeguarding adults

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

An adult with care and support needs who may be at risk may be:

- An elderly person;
- A person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment;
- Someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder;
- A person with a long-term health condition;
- Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.

This policy should be used in conjunction with Elland Christian Centre's overall Safeguarding Policy. Please refer to that document for more detail.

Types of Abuse:

- *Physical abuse* – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions;
- *Domestic violence* – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence;
- *Sexual abuse* – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting;
- *Psychological abuse* – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks;
- *Financial or material abuse* – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- *Modern slavery* – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment;
- *Discriminatory abuse* – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;
- *Organisational abuse* – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation;
- *Neglect and acts of omission* – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating;
- *Self-neglect* – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding;
- **Spiritual Abuse:** The church should also be aware that spiritual abuse may occur within and outside faith communities and can arise from the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; the misuse of authority; intrusive healing and deliverance ministries; and the denial of the right of faith

or the opportunity to grow in the love of God. The provision of inclusive acts of worship will provide for the spiritual growth and wellbeing adults with special needs

Procedures if abuse of an adult is suspected or disclosed

If a church member or worker suspects that an adult is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected, they must take responsibility to act on their concerns.

1. Adults may find it difficult to disclose abuse and need support to tell their story. They should be listened to without leading questions or suggestions that may influence or confuse the story. The listener should not show shock or judgment.
2. If the person fulfils the criteria for being an adult at risk of abuse or neglect, or if they express suicidal thoughts, they should be informed that the information will have to be passed on as part of our duty of care, preferable with their consent (unless they lack the capacity to give this).
3. Careful notes must be kept, recording factual information and direct quotes where possible. Notes should be signed and dated and kept securely.
- 4. If the person is at immediate risk of harm or danger, please contact Viv Neville (telephone: 07452 963722) immediately for advice, or in an emergency contact the police or Adult Safeguarding Team immediately.**
5. Pastoral care and support will be offered to the person who has disclosed the abuse or is at risk of abuse and neglect.

Supporting evidence for supporting vulnerable adults statement:

Statutory principles for safeguarding adults

1) The Care Act 2014

The key principles of The Care Act which came into force on 1 April 2015 are:

- *Empowerment* – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decision and informed consent.
- *Prevention* – it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- *Proportionality* – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- *Protection* – support and representation for those in greatest need.
- *Partnership* – local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities (including the church) have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- *Accountability* – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

2) The Mental Capacity Act 2005

Some adults within the church or served by the church may have “an impairment of the mind or brain, or a disturbance affecting the way their mind or brain works”. If this means that the person is unable to make a decision at the time it needs to be made, they may be said to lack the mental capacity to do so. It must not be assumed that someone lacks mental capacity on the basis of their age, appearance, condition or an aspect of their behaviour. The five key principles of the Mental Capacity Act are:

1. *A presumption of capacity*: Every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved

otherwise. We cannot assume that someone cannot make a decision for themselves just because they have a particular medical condition or disability.

2. *Individuals being supported to make their own decisions*: Every effort must be made to encourage and support people to make the decision for themselves.

3. *Unwise decisions*: People have the right to make what others might regard as an unwise or eccentric decision. We cannot treat them as lacking capacity for that reason.

4. *Best interests*: Any action taken, or any decision made for, or on behalf of that person, must be made in his or her best interests.

5. *Least restrictive option*: Any decisions made on behalf of the person must act in a way that would interfere less with the person's rights and freedom of action, or whether there is a need to decide or act at all.

Supplementary guidance: indicators and predictors of abuse or neglect

Possible signs and indicators of abuse

All people in the Church who work with adults who may be at risk should be aware of warning signs and symptoms of abuse. Possible signs and indicators of abuse to be aware of may include (but not exclusively):

Physical abuse:

- A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries;
- Bruising or burns of unusual location or type;
- Finger marks;
- Being excessively withdrawn and/or compliant;
- Appearing frightened of or avoiding physical contact.

Emotional or psychological abuse:

- Low self-esteem;
- Person in a state of neglect;
- Difficulty in making choices because the person has never been allowed to make them for themselves;
- Derogatory statements made about a person when they are present;
- Eager to please and subservient;
- Financial or legal abuse;
- Change in living conditions;
- Lack of heating, clothing or food;
- Inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money;
- Unexplained withdrawals from an account;
- Unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents;
- Recent addition of authorised signers on a donor's signature card;
- Sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents.

Neglect:

- Excessively and inappropriately craving attention;
- A marked change in a relationship between vulnerable adult and others;
- Poor physical state of person and/or their home.

Sexual abuse:

- A change in the person's usual behaviour;
- Withdrawal, choosing to spend the majority of time alone;
- Overt sexual behaviour/language by the adult;
- Self-inflicted injury;
- Disturbed sleep patterns;
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes;
- Social isolation of the vulnerable person by the caregiver.

Domestic Abuse:

- An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexually;
- Includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so called 'honour' based violence, Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage etc.;
- The age for this is extended down to 16;
- Domestic abuse can be considered for safeguarding responses in appropriate cases.

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

- Serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse;
- Long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse;
- Opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

Factors which may lead to abuse:

Abuse and neglect are more likely to occur if a person rejects help; has a communication difficulty; displays challenging behaviour or behaves in an unusual way. They are also more likely if a carer feels lonely or isolated; is under stress due to poor income or housing conditions; has other responsibilities; has physical or mental health problems; is dependent on alcohol or drugs; has had poor long-term family relationships or where family violence is the norm; or where the person who abuses is dependent upon the person they abuse for accommodation, financial or emotional support.

People who abuse may be relatives or other family members; neighbours; friends; carers; professional staff; volunteers; other service users; care practitioners; strangers; and people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive to be vulnerable.

Within the church they may include clergy or professional church workers; church members; members of community groups and members of church visiting teams. Organisations may also abuse and cause harm by the way they conduct their day to day practice, and churches and Christian groups must be aware of this.

The church and survivors of abuse

Many survivors of abuse have problems with attending church and it can be that some of those within or on the fringes of the Church include survivors.

The following have been identified as things that can be difficult for survivors:

- Saying the Lord's Prayer (believing that they must forgive immediately or God will reject them);
- Specific words, such as 'Father', 'sin', 'let Jesus come into you' or 'overshadow' can trigger unwanted feelings or images;
- The hugging and friendly environment in church;
- The emphasis on sin can be so difficult that some survivors leave the church altogether;
- Anointing and touch during prayer ministry can be hard for people who's boundaries have been violated.

Communion can be difficult:

- The use of words such as 'blood' and 'body' can trigger memories of abuse;
- Some cannot cope with anyone behind them – queuing for drinks etc can be a challenge;
- Having to get physically close to others might lead to unwelcome smells such as deodorant, aftershave or the smell of alcohol; things that trigger memories of abuse;

For those who have been ritually or spiritually abused:

- Triggers may include ritual symbols and equipment such as the altar, candles, chalice, crosses and crucifixes, the sacrificial lamb;
- People abused by those in ministry may have been told such things as it was "ordained by God", "a special service to those who serve the Lord", "a blessing from God" or "Spirit-led", making these phrases difficult for them;
- A sense of pollution may be internalised and some survivors feel that if they go to church they will 'pollute' the service of others because of their feelings of guilt and shame.

It is important to recognise the vulnerability of survivors, especially when they are in crisis or in the early stages of healing. They may be over-compliant and easily manipulated and the power imbalance within pastoral care should be recognised. Sensitivity, care and informed support may be required to empower people to work through these issues to discover the liberating truth of the Gospel.