

Version history:

- Version number: 1
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- Approval date: 22/11/2023
- Operational date (or with immediate effect): Immediate
- Review date: 31/05/2024 (then annually after that)

Life Church are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people and to ensuring their well-being. We recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which state that everyone is entitled to '*all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status*'.¹

We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child² which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse.

Definitions

Safeguarding

The term safeguarding can be described as a continuum with 'promoting welfare' at one end and 'protecting from harm' at the other.

Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as "a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

Because "child" is not a descriptor that is generally acceptable to older children, we use the phrase "children and young people" to include anyone under 18.

Child abuse

Child abuse is defined as "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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children".

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, sexual, psychological or emotional (including spiritual), financial or material, neglect or acts of omission, discriminatory, domestic, modern slavery, organisational abuse or poor practice or self-neglect.

Response

Life Church Leadership recognises the importance of its ministry and work with children and young people and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to its care, specifically:

¹ Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

² Convention on the Rights of the Child: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent abuse of children and young people and to report any abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every individual should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children and young people we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of children and young people, and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and young people, or those who will be in positions of trust. We will promote safer practice and support, resource and train and regularly review those who undertake this work.
- We reserve the right to remove people's authorisation to work with children and young people.

We are committed to:

- following statutory and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and young people, and good practice recommendations;
- ongoing membership & learning from Thirtyone:eight – a UK independent safeguarding specialist;
- respecting the rights of children and young people as described in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*; They have a right to be protected from 'all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.';
- implementing the requirements of the Equality Act 2010³ and all other relevant legislation;
- ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed Safeguarding procedures;
- keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding;
- supporting the Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children or young people;
- ensuring that everyone acting on behalf of Life Church, agrees to abide by the Life Church policy and procedures;
- nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people;
- supporting parents, carers and families;
- supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work;
- supporting everyone who takes part in Life Church activities who may be affected by abuse;
- adopting and following the '10 safeguarding standards'⁴ developed by Thirtyone:eight.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child.
- Where the allegation suggests that the child is in immediate danger then the Police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where an allegation has been made against a worker (staff or volunteer), the Local Authority Designated Officer must be contacted, within 1 working day.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

⁴ <https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-ten-standards/>

- Where working outside the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this policy and our procedures on an annual basis, and all approved amendments will be recorded in the minutes of the Trustees' meeting.

A copy of our Safeguarding Policy will be posted on our website, together with the below form & details of how to report concerns.

Safeguarding Policy for Children & Young People

LCP21 v.1

If you have any Safeguarding concerns or observations, you can email them direct to safeguarding@wearelifechurch.uk This is the preferred way of sharing concerns or observations.

If you prefer to record them physically, you can use this form below to fill in by hand or electronically, then give to Safeguarding Coordinator: Carol Barber or Deputy: Paul Graham

This page (and additional pages) may be used to make notes as appropriate:

Once completed this form should be given to the Safeguarding Coordinator (Carol Barber) or Deputy (Paul Graham). They will date it, and sign it with you to confirm receipt.

Date:

Signature of adult completing form:

Received by Safeguarding Coordinator (Or Deputy):