



85 Southfield Road, Nailsea. BS48 1SB

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – July 2026

Section 1

Details of the place of worship / organisation

Name of Place of Worship / Organisation: Southfield Church

Address: 85 Southfield Road, Nailsea, North Somerset. BS48 1SB

Tel No: 01275 217565

General Email address: info@southfieldchurch.org

Senior Leader Name: Kin Leong

Senior Leader Contact Telephone / Email: 01275 394344 / ktsl1993@gmail.com

Safeguarding Coordinator Name: Sarah Leong

Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone / Email: as above

Membership of Denomination/Organisation: Free Evangelical

Charity Number: 1136274

Company Number: 07214725

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Insurance Company: Ansvar (Commercial Combined, Public & Employers Liability and Property)

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

Our commitment

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children / vulnerable adults:

The Church holds regular Sunday Family Services with Communion, Weekly prayer, Praise and Worship. There is a Sunday School (Olive Tree Group) and the Well Café on a Friday that runs alongside a Trussell Foodbank branch – the latter has its own safeguarding policy. The church is a member of Evangelical Alliance and Christians Together in Nailsea and District. The church is limited by guarantee and registered with the charity commission.

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states 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”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. 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.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.

- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Section 2

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form

- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all relevant workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All of these workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

Section 3

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Section 4

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- Documenting a concern

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

1. **Who** raised the concern and who was there at the time the incident occurred?
 2. **What** is the concern – what happened? What are the views of the child, adult or the adult's advocate? If there is a physical injury, detail where this is.
 3. **When** was the concern raised – the date and time?
 4. **Where** did the incident happen?
 5. **Why** was the concern raised?
- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Sarah Leong (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator")

Tel: 01275394344 or 07551 967660

Email: ktsl1993@gmail.com

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: Rachel Price (Deputy Safeguarding Officer)

Tel: 01275 857000

Email: racheljprice@gmail.com

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

Name of local authority: North Somerset Council

Children's Social Services

Tel: 01275 888808

Out of hours Tel: 01454 615165

Website Address: care.connect@n-somerset.gov.uk

Adult Social Services

Tel: As above

Police Protection Team Tel: 01934 638 281

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0800 800 5000

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern
 - Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
 - Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/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 safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct 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 Children's Social Services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

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

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspensions or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.
- **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs**

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

Section 5

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in

its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

SECTION 5

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation. As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are shown below.

Arrangements for Supervision of Group/Children's Activities

The areas which need to be considered include the following:

- Ratio of adults to children. Number of adults who should be present for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. As a guide, it might be helpful to consider the ratios required in regulations governing day care for under 8's. These are:
-

Adults : Children	
0 to 2 years	1 : 3
2 to 3 years	1 : 4
3 to 8 years	1 : 8

Circumstances when a male or female worker should be involved, or a worker of each sex, or more than one worker.

- Where possible, ensure that a worker is not alone with a child, but being realistic in acknowledging circumstances when this might be necessary or helpful. Sometimes it might be advisable to leave doors open when seeing a child.
- Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) and a young person is being seen on

their own, and then ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building.

- No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- A register of children or young people attending the club or activity should be kept, and a register of helpers. This should include times of arrival and departure if any individual is not attending the whole session, and any others in the building at the time (e.g. a maintenance person).
- Keep a log of each activity. Workers should record unusual events with each leader recording what they witnessed. This can be very helpful if leaders have to deal with a difficult young person who may subsequently make accusations of assault. A young person who constantly makes throwaway sexual comments about church workers may later make an allegation of actual abuse. Records of previous examples of this behaviour will enable any allegation to be seen in context. Of course, if a number of young people all make similar comments about one worker, this should warn the leadership that they have a problem with that person. Log books can protect both children and workers.
- It is suggested that workers also record in the log book incidents such as fights and what action was taken by the leaders. As the information in the logbook is likely to be very sensitive, the logbook should be kept separate from the accident book, which is used to record any accidents or injuries. Parents (and older children) should be asked to sign the accident book, (but they would not see what was written in the log book). You can consider using the accident incident form (Form 8) because accusations of abuse may be made many years' later, records should be kept for as long as possible. Insurance companies advise that records should be kept indefinitely. Certainly the experience of the *Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service* is that allegations can be made very many years after an event.

Arrangements for working with vulnerable adults

- The same rules apply to that of working with children, and therefore if working on a one to one basis it must not be in an enclosed area but in sight of other adults. Any concerns about abuse of any kind must not be discussed with anyone except the Safeguarding coordinator (Sarah Leong) or the deputy (Zoe Brown). If neither are available please ring Care Connect on 01275 888801 and report the incident or concerns.
- At no time should vulnerable adults be seen away from the premises unless in an open area or supported by a second trusted person, not a relative and both support people should be of the same gender as the vulnerable person.

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We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets ThirtyOne:Eight's safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually on: 1st May each year

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position

Date:

A copy of this policy is also lodged with: Sarah Leong

APPENDIX 1

For any concerns relating to Child Protection

CONTACT DETAILS FOR SOUTHFIELD CHURCH

Name: Sarah Leong (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator")

Tel: 01275394344 / 07551 967660

Email: ktsl1993@gmail.com

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: Rachel Price (deputy Safeguarding Officer)

Tel: 01275 857000

Email: racheljprice@gmail.com

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES & POLICE

Only to be used if Southfield Church Coordinators cannot be contacted The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

Name of local authority: North Somerset Council

Children's Social Services

Tel: 01275 888808

Out of hours Tel: 01454 615165

Website Address: care.connect@n-somerset.gov.uk

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Southfield Church is a company limited by guarantee. Company Reg No: 7214725

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