



Middlesbrough Community Church

Safeguarding Adults and Children Policy

Created May 2016

Reviewed January 2021

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Reviewed June 2023

Reviewed May 2025

Introduction

Church Details

Middlesbrough Community Church

St Aidans Centre

Clifton Street

Middlesbrough

TS1 4BZ

Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding Trustee – Lois Huntingdon

Safeguarding Administrator - Sheelagh Field

Safeguarding Co-ordinator - Margaret Jackson

Core Team Representative – Beth Pearson

Email: safeguarding@middlesbroughcommunitychurch.org

Adult Safeguarding Team

- Jo Stevenson
- Victoria Bassous

Children's Safeguarding Team

- Becky Worton
- Hannah Clark

Safeguarding Mission Statement

Our church is committed to creating a safe, inclusive environment where the welfare of all, both adults and children, is actively protected and prioritised.

We recognise our responsibility to safeguard everyone within our church community, especially those who may be vulnerable. This commitment is in line with national guidance and is underpinned by two key principles:

- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- **We adopt a child-centred approach**

Commitment to Adults

We are committed to:

- Listening to and supporting adults within our church community.
- Safeguarding the wellbeing of adults in all areas of church life.

- Promoting inclusion and protecting the rights of all individuals, including freedom from deprivation of liberty.
- Providing appropriate training and support for leaders and volunteers.
- Sharing the safeguarding policy with all key teams and making it available to any member upon request.

Commitment to Children and Young People

We are committed to:

- Listening to, valuing, and safeguarding children and young people in all church activities.
- Supporting and encouraging parents and carers.
- Recruiting all children's and youth workers through safer recruitment procedures, including references and DBS checks.
- Providing training and ongoing support for all volunteers working with children and young people, ensuring they understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to report concerns.

Key Teams Involved in Safeguarding:

- Elders
- Core Leaders
- Life Group Leaders
- Children's Team
- Youth Workers
- Pastoral Team
- Discipleship Team
- Outreach Workers
- Trustees

Useful Contact Details

Organisation	Website	Contact info
thirtyone:eight	https://thirtyoneeight.org/	Tel: 0303 003 1111 Email: info@thirtyoneeight.org
Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub	https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/children-families-and-safeguarding/abuse-and-safeguarding-children/child-safeguarding-concern/	Tel: 01642 726004 (or out of hours Tel no: 01642 524552) Email: MiddlesbroughMACH@middlesbrough.gov.uk
South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP)	https://stscp.co.uk/	
Adult Social Care Team	https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/adult-social-care/getting-social-care-support/contact-social-services/	Tel: 01642 065070 (Out of hours - 01642 524 552) Email: adultaccessteam@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board	https://www.tsab.org.uk/	
Age UK	ageuk.org.uk	0800 678 1602
Action on Elder Abuse	thenationalcareline.org	0800 069 9784
Livability Group (formerly Prospects for People with Learning Disabilities)	N/A	Tel: 020 7452 2000 Email: info@livability.org
Through the Roof	throughtheroof.org	Tel: 01372 737040 Email: info@throughtheroof.org
Victim Support	Victim Support – Durham and Cleveland	0303 040 1099 0808 168 9111
CAIS	cais.co.uk/voice-uk	0345 06 121 12
My Sisters Place	mysistersplace.org.uk	01642 241864 123 Borough Rd, Middlesbrough TS1 3AN
A Way Out	https://www.awayout.co.uk/	Tel: 01642 655071 Email: info@awayout.co.uk
Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC)	acc-uk.org	Tel: 024 7644 9694 Email: office@acc-uk.org
Christian Fellowship Ministry (CFM)	christianfellowshipministry.co.uk	The Lighthouse Centre, 34 Yarm Road, TS18 3NG Tel: 01642 611497
Right Therapist	righttherapist.com	Directory of qualified therapists
Middlesbrough Council – Safeguarding Info	tsab.org.uk	Local safeguarding documents & info
Ellel Ministries	ellel.org	Christian healing ministry Online brochures
SOZO (Oakwood Centre)	sozo.org	Inner healing ministries
Acorn Christian Foundation	acornchristian.org	Christian healing and pastoral care

Safeguarding Adults

We recognise that all adults can experience abuse, but vulnerable adults can be more susceptible to experience all forms of abuse: sexual, physical, neglect/ omission, financial, emotional, and psychological.

This policy, written with guidance from Thirtyone:eight, sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- What is a vulnerable adult?
- Volunteer/ Ministry Lead and Helper Recruitment
- Guidance for outreach work which involves adults with care and support needs
- Responding to allegations of abuse made towards leaders, members of the church and members of the public.

An Adult with Care and Support Needs Definition

Various pieces of legislation give different definitions of who is an adult with care and support needs. The Care Act 2014 states safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and.
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Reaching a certain age or having a particular disability does not in itself mean that a person is more susceptible to requiring safeguarding, any more than we are vulnerable in certain situations. Those that do clearly meet the criteria are those in need of community care services or who require help and support in their daily lives.

Safe Recruitment

A DBS to be completed and appropriate interview completed for any helpers of groups or events run specifically for adults with care and support needs.

Guidance for outreach work which involves adults with care and support needs

Events within MCC

Prior to starting an event a clear mission statement to be provided to the Core Leadership team.

If the event is to accommodate adults with care and support needs all leaders of the outreach work to have an awareness and understanding of the Safeguarding Adults and Child Protection Policy.

The Leader to promote a ratio of 2 leaders or helpers preferably one male and one female within a group setting or individual basis. We do not advocate lone working.

Prior to meetings assess the individuals attending the session and assess if a carer or family member is required for support.

- Attendance records and a diary of events to be recorded.
- Sensitive information forms to be available at each session.
- First aid kit and accident book available.
- All valuables to be the responsibility of the individual.
- Refer to social media guidelines in relation to communication with individuals and the group.

If leaders or helpers highlight a concern, refer to the flow chart and document all concerns.

Any information about the concern raised which requires support beyond our abilities to be made available to relevant agencies/ organisations e.g. social services, health services and counselling services.

Outreach in the Community

Prior to commencing outreach provide a clear mission statement to the Core Leadership team.

All leaders and helpers to have an ID badge and contact details for MCC.

Prior to accessing the community consider situations which could be deemed high risk :

- enclosed environments
- Reduced lighting
- Poor communication

Leaders to promote a ratio of 2 leaders or helpers preferably one male and one female within a group or on an individual basis. We do not advocate lone working.

Ensure a person separate to the team is aware of the planned outreach work.

Leaders and helpers refer to the flow chart in relation to reporting concerns.

Responding to Concerns

Who can report concerns?

Anyone can report concerns about safeguarding an adult with care and support needs within the church setting through the safeguarding coordinator.

In the event that these members are unavailable or involved within the incident, a fellow member of the team can be contacted, or advice can be sought from the local authority safeguarding vulnerable adult's team.

In serious incidents where an individual is in serious danger the police should be informed.

What concerns should be reported?

You have a general concern about someone's well-being or an isolated incident.

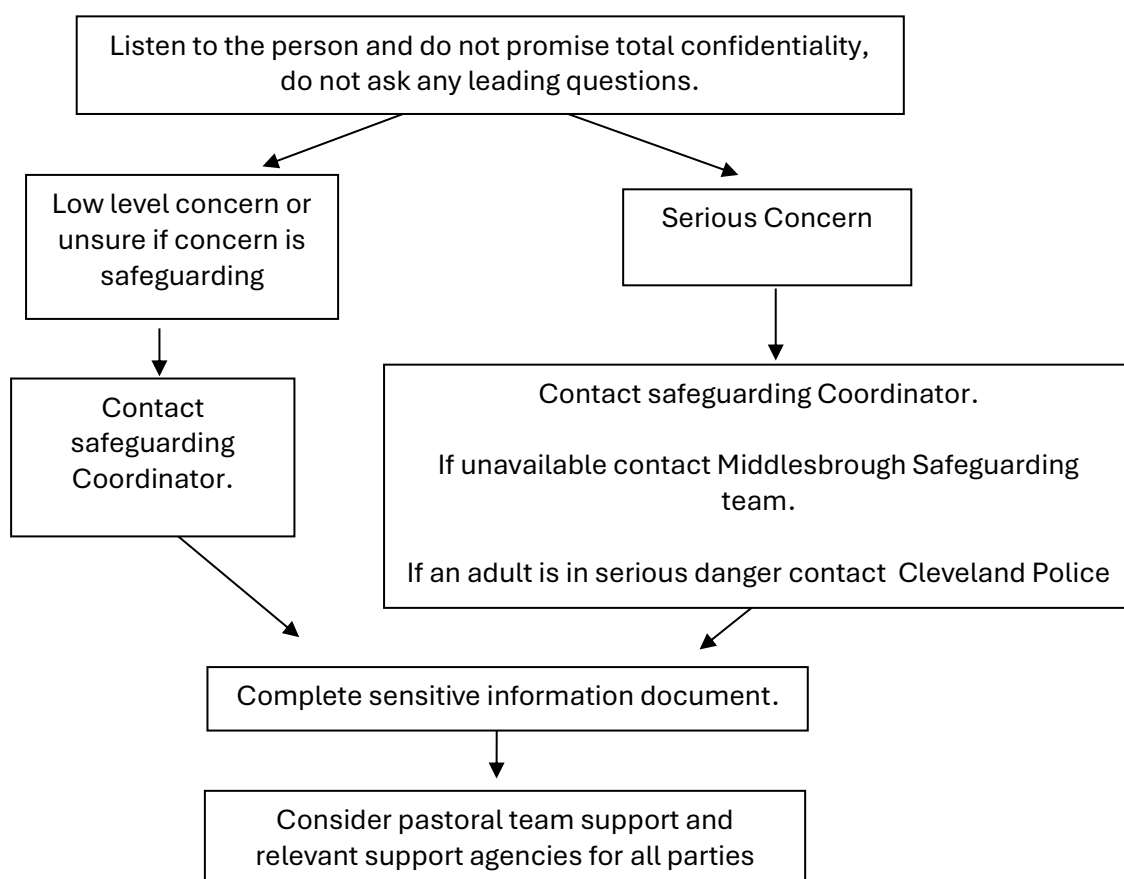
You see or hear something which could be abuse.

Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them which could be abuse.

Who the Concerns should be reported to:

- Contact Safeguarding coordinator immediately.
- The safeguarding coordinator will involve adult social care services where appropriate for advice or to report an incident.
- The primary responsibility for managing any investigation process rests with the managers of the adult social care team. When the concerns relate to hospital or community care (residential homes) the CQC (care quality commission) will also be involved.
- The adult social care teams operate an emergency duty team outside of regular office hours, at weekends and over statutory holidays. There will always be someone available to give advice.
- All information can be given confidentially without the need to disclose names and addresses, unless someone is in immediate danger.
- The police to be contacted where immediate danger is present or a crime has been committed.

Reporting Concerns Flow Chart



How the Concerns will be documented

All concerns to be documented on sensitive information report form.

Sensitive information documents are to be kept within a secure online dropbox.

All documents to be reviewed within the quarterly safeguarding meetings.

Records to be kept in line with the Church's GDPR policy.

Safeguarding Children

We recognise that many children and young people today are the victims of neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Accordingly, the church has adopted the policies and procedures contained in this document.

This policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including those made against leaders or members of the church.
- Appointing children's/youth workers
- Supervision of activities and practice issues.

The church recognises the need to build constructive links with the childcare agencies. Accordingly, these guidelines have been prepared in consultation with the Middlesbrough Borough Council and Thirtyone:eight.

The content of the policy will be communicated to all children's/youth workers in the church and with the church members.

The information contained here is formulated to help children's/youth workers to respond appropriately when abuse is disclosed or discovered.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

As a place of worship, we will follow the principles contained in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Therefore, we expect that all workers (paid or voluntary) will report improper actions and omissions of others (regardless of relationship).

Whilst all malpractice and acts of discrimination will be investigated, it is especially important that suspicions of abuse are immediately reported to the safeguarding co-ordinator.

You must report concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Coordinator who is nominated by the Church to act on its behalf in referring all allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the safeguarding coordinator the matter should be brought to the attention of another member of the safeguarding team listed at the beginning of this policy.

If the suspicions in any way involve the coordinator, then the report should be made to another member of the team listed above.

For advice or if the suspicions in any way implicate all team members, then the report should be made in the first instance to Thirtyone:eight or the Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub.

Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although we hope that members of the church will use this procedure. If, however, you feel that the Coordinator or Deputy has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation direct.

We hope by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the church to effective child protection.

Allegations of physical injury or neglect

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the coordinator will:

- Contact the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) via Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub.
- Contact Thirtyone:eight for advice if concerned about the child's safety. The parents should not be informed if you are concerned about the child's safety.
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately. The coordinator will inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
- In other circumstances (not relating to allegations) speak with the parent/guardian and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child.
- The doctor will then initiate further action if necessary. If appropriate the parent/guardian will be encouraged to seek help from the STSCP.
- Where the parent/ guardian is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, the church worker will offer to go with them. If they still fail to act, the coordinator should, in cases of real concern, contact the STSCP for advice.
- Where the Coordinator is unsure whether or not to refer a case to the STSCP, then advice from the agency will be sought and followed. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.
- Advice can be sought from Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub who can offer a consultative service on child-care and child protection issues. You can contact them if in doubt about whether or not you need to make a referral.
- Any circumstances giving cause for concern should be recorded, on the pre-printed form provided by the Team Leader at the end of the event and agreed by the team. This sheet should be kept in a locked safe on the church premises for future reference, should this be needed.

Allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the coordinator will:

- Contact Thirtyone:eight for advice/support, or the STSCP Officer or Police, asking to talk to the Child Abuse Investigation Team.
- The coordinator will not speak to the parent or anyone else.
- If for any reason the coordinator is unsure whether to follow the above, then advice from Thirtyone:eight will be sought and followed. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.
- Under no circumstances will the coordinator attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the coordinator is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the STSCP, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the coordinator, the absence of the Coordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to the STSCP.
- Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the Coordinator or Deputy as to the appropriateness of referral to the STSCP, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the STSCP, and should do so without hesitation.
- The church will support the Coordinator or 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.

Allegations of abuse against workers

Be aware that Working Together 2023 states that: “Employers, school governors, trustees and voluntary organisations should ensure that they have clear policies in place setting out the process, including timescales for investigation and what support and advice will be available to individuals against whom, allegations have been made. Any allegation against people who work with children should be reported immediately to a senior manager with the organisation or agency.”

Allegations of abuse against workers must be treated seriously and responded to immediately:

- Call the Thirtyone:eight helpline for urgent advice.
- N.B. If the worker involved has any contact with children, Middlesbrough MACH and/or the police should be contacted immediately before any action is taken.
- The safeguarding coordinator, or deputy coordinator, should be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to worker’s attention or that are made directly to the police.
- If an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) is removed from work in regulated activity with children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, a referral must be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service to consider whether to add the individual to the barred list. This applies irrespective of whether a referral has been made to local authority children’s social care and/or the designated officer or team of officers. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

- In addition, the church insurance company may need to be informed.

Appointment of Workers

In appointing workers, the Church leadership and safeguarding team will be responsible for ensuring all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- All prospective workers will be asked to complete an application form.
- The procedure for appointment will be:
 - Prospective helpers will be attached to a more experienced worker for a period (e.g. 2-3 sessions) to ensure the arrangement will work for both parties.
 - Following this the potential worker will be asked to complete a simple application form. They will be asked to declare whether they have ever been convicted, charged or cautioned in relation to any offence, and informed that children's work is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as all convictions, however old, which relate to children and young people, must be declared if requested.
 - Interviewing a potential worker and finding out about their experience and attitudes.
 - Talking to others who may know the person e.g. previous church leaders, friends, home group leaders, etc.
 - Discussing with successful candidates the details of the church's policy on safeguarding children's welfare. They will be asked to sign a code of conduct. (see Appendix 1)
 - Potential workers will be asked to complete a DBS check and online Child Protection training.

All workers will be expected to attend regular Child Protection training.

The criteria for NOT appointing children's workers are:

- Individuals who have previously abused a child or where it is known that the individual has a record of violent/inappropriate sexual behaviour. This criterion refers to an individual convicted as well as those not convicted but under investigation of abuse of a child or young person.
- If we have concerns/reservations about appointing an individual, alternatives will be found so the individual can still feel he or she is serving God and participating in the Church without having direct contact with children or young people.

All children's workers will be given supervision, time to meet with and discuss the work they undertake and any development needs or concerns they may have.

Children's workers will be expected to abide by church guidelines on discipline and touching (see Handbook).

Working with Offenders

If the church leadership is made aware someone attending has abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the Church leadership in its commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep.

Examples of these boundaries would be:

- not being alone with a child
- declining offers of hospitality from church members where there are children present in the house
- parts of the church building being out of bounds e.g. the nursery.

These boundaries are to be set individually and agreed to by formal contract. Copies of the contract will be held with the individual, Church leadership and all who hold a copy of this policy.

Helping Survivors of Abuse

As a church we are committed to supporting survivors of abuse and encouraging them in their faith.

Appendix 1

Middlesbrough Community Church Code of Conduct (for working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm)

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers). The code of conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of false or unfounded allegations.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers)

When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for Middlesbrough Community Church. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Good practice

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Listen carefully to those you are supporting
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Seek advice from someone with greater experience when necessary
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the safeguarding co-ordinator
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action

Unacceptable behaviour

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way

- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details and any contact that breaches [name of group/organisation] social media policy
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff where the line manager will consult the safeguarding coordinator as appropriate).

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Middlesbrough Community Church.

We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's or adult's social care departments or DBS.

If you become aware of a breach of this code, you should escalate your concerns to the safeguarding coordinator or line manager (in the case of a paid staff member).

Declaration

I agree to abide by the expectations outlined in this document and confirm that I have read the relevant policies that assist my work with vulnerable groups.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

Recognising and Responding to Abuse

The following behavioural signs *may* be indicators of child abuse, but they should not be taken in isolation.

Physical Signs

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cutting/slashing/drug abuse

Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- A child with an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

Emotional signs

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also, depression/aggression
- Nervousness/frozen watchfulness
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered far more than in the past.

Current Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child - includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, administering poisonous substances, suffocation/drowning and excessive force (e.g. in feeding or changing a baby).

It also includes Munchausen's syndrome by proxy (Meadow's disease) where a parent (or a carer invents symptoms of a physical disorder in the child and then seeks medical help while persisting with the abuse in order to gain attention for self.

Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activity they do not fully comprehend or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violate the social taboos of family roles (Schechter & Roberge).

Neglect

Persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Emotional Abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Note

Children and young people have always been curious about the opposite sex and/or experiment sexually. However, where a child is in a position of power and responsibility over another child and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abuse.

Where one child forces themselves on another child of a similar age, this is also abusive.

Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved and would be investigated in the same way by the child protection agencies.

This is important as the effect on the child victim may be as great, and the perpetrator could himself be a victim.

Since abuse is addictive, it is important to establish the chain and to take action. You can't assume the young person will *grow out of it*.

Appendix 3

How to react when a child wants to talk about abuse

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may be of help.

General Points

- Accept what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened
- Never push for information

Helpful things to say or show

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
- I am glad you have told me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

Avoid saying

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"

Concluding

- Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that you believe them
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- Immediately refer to someone appropriately qualified

What to do once a child has talked to you about abuse:

- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of the interview), writing down exactly what the child said and when he or she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity).
- Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record.
- Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed up, for an indefinite period. (If possible, use the Cause for Concern form below but this is not essential.)

- Report your discussions as soon as possible to the coordinator. If the latter is implicated, report to a Deputy Coordinator. If both are implicated, report to Thirtyone:eight.
- You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated in the above point.
- Once a child has talked about abuse, the worker and leader should consider whether or not it is safe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasion, it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the social services and/or police to discuss putting into effect measures for the child so that they do not return home.

Appendix 4

Part 1: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare

(For use by any staff/volunteers– This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)

Child/Adult's name (subject of concern):	Date of birth/age: Child / Adult (please highlight)	Address:
Date & time of incident:		Date & time (of writing):
Your Name (print): _____ Role/Job title: _____		
Signature: _____		
Other members of the household:		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>		
How did the concern come to light?		
What is the child/adult saying about what has happened?		
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc.		
Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Co-ordinator: _____		

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your Safeguarding Coordinator without delay

Guidance notes for Form 1 (volunteers/staff only):

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form:

1. As a registered body the church/charitable organisation is required to ensure that its duty of care towards its beneficiaries is carried out in line with the principles enshrined within the Working together to safeguard children and young people, 2018 and the Care Act, 2014. (Refer to your own church's/organisation's safeguarding policy at this point too).
2. Essential principles of recording the information received/disclosed/observed:
 - a. Remember: do not investigate or ask any leading questions
 - b. make notes within the first one hour of receiving the disclosure or observing the incident
 - c. be clear and factual in your recording of the incident or disclosure
 - d. avoid giving your opinion or feelings on the matter
 - e. aim to record using the 4 W's and 1 H: When, where, what, why and how
 - f. do not share this information with anyone else except your safeguarding co-ordinator in the first instance and they will advise on who else will need to be informed, how and when.
 - g. make use of the additional information section to add any other relevant information regarding the child/adult/ family that you may be aware of. This can include any historic concerns or observations.
3. ***What constitutes a safeguarding concern?*** – any incident that has caused or likely to cause significant harm to a child can be classed as a safeguarding concern. Abuse is classified under four different categories (with regards to children) as already stated within the safeguarding policy (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). With regards to adults there are 6 further categorisations. Whilst it may be helpful to record a specific category in the above form, if possible, this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is important to seek advice from your safeguarding co-ordinator or thirtyone:eight at this stage.
4. ***Why do you need information regarding 'other household members'?*** – It has been demonstrated as important to include information about significant adults in the household especially when concerns relate to children as this has been a recurrent risk factor in several serious case reviews.
5. ***Why is the view of the child/adult significant?*** It is important to give whatever detail is available of the child or adult's explanation (or verbatim) of the matter to help ascertain if it is plausible and to help offer a context to the concern identified.
6. ***Passing information to the Safeguarding co-ordinator*** – Your safeguarding co-ordinator holds ultimate responsibility in responding to any safeguarding concerns within the church/organisation and therefore it is important that they have oversight of the actions being taken and make relevant and appropriate contact with statutory agencies if required. They will remain the most appropriate link between the organisation and external agencies.

Appendix 5

Part 2: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare

(For use by Safeguarding Coordinator - This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)

Information received by SC	Date:	Time completed:	From whom:		
Any advice sought, if applicable	Date:	Time completed:	Source of advice (name / organisation):		
	Advice received:				
Initial Assessment of concern following advice					
Action taken with reasons recorded <i>(e.g. Referral completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, CAF etc)</i>	Date:	Time completed:	By whom:		
	Referral			To whom	
	Signposting to other community resources				
	Pastoral Care and other support from church				
	Ongoing Monitoring				
Parent/carer informed?	Y	Who spoken to:	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	N	Detail reason:			

Appendix 6

Guidelines on Touching

- Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when they need medical attention.
- Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to constructively challenge a colleague if necessary.

Appendix 7

Online Safety Policy

Thirtyone: eight Online Safety definition:

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information and Communications Technology. An online safety policy should be adopted and adapted to reflect all communications between church/organisation's workers and children (those under 18 years of age).

Policy guidelines for Church Workers/Volunteers

- Generally, maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal.
- Be warm and friendly, but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share; don't abbreviate or short-cut your communications.
- Be circumspect in your communications with children to avoid any possible misinterpretation of your motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- Do not share any personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.
- Only give personal contact details to children that are within the public domain of the church / organisation, including your mobile telephone number.
- If children want you to have their mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses or similar, and communicate with them this way, make sure that their parents know and have agreed.
- Only make contact with children for reasons related to the work of the church/organisation and maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.
- Where possible only use equipment provided by the church/organisation to communicate with children.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.
- Ensure your church/organisation domain name/logo appears with every Internet post made by a church computer user. Any user may thus be viewed as a representative of your church/organisation while conducting business on the Internet.
- Email should only be used to communicate specific information. (e.g. times and dates of events). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Email History should be kept and dated.
- When using email/internet for communication with children, it is advised that it should take place between the hours of 9am-5pm. Where working with children outside normal

office hours workers should seek advice from their leader but there should be no email communication after 9pm.

- Use of skype and any other web camera or visual communication via the internet is generally not permitted.
- Workers should refrain from using such methods on a one-to-one basis as they cannot be recorded. (It can be used for conference calls and is considered appropriate if a project or group uses a web camera/Skype in a group environment for project purposes and has clear aims and objectives for its use).

Social Media Policy

- All social media interaction between workers, paid or voluntary, and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administrated groups.
- Text and any other media posted shall be subject to the acceptable use policy
- All interaction on social media groups shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Any private messages shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media shall be referred onto the safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit i.e. 13 for Facebook
- Workers should ensure their privacy setting ensure the highest levels of security in order to restrict children being able to see any more than what is relevant to communication within the group
- All social media groups should provide links to statutory authorities such as CEOP, to enable children to report online abuse.

Consent for photographic images and videos online

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will endeavour to prevent children from being easily identified.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Permission will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and images will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought for and how the image will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated, and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.
- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved permission should be sought in line with the photographic guidelines.

Appendix 8

MCC Acceptable Use Policy

Where access to the internet is provided on our organisation devices or devices owned by an individual via Wi-Fi, we will exercise our right to monitor usage which includes access to websites, interception and deletion of inappropriate or criminal material or unlawfully copied text, video, images or sound.

Wi-Fi Access will be via a secure password that will be changed quarterly.

Social media groups must be used in compliance with our policy on social media.

Children and Workers should not:

- Search for or download pornographic, racist or hate motivated content.
- Illegally copy or play copyrighted content where permission has not been given.
- Send, request or display offensive messages or pictures.
- Harass, insult or bully others.
- Access the internet using another person's login details.
- Access, download, send or receive any data (including images), which Middlesbrough Community Church considers offensive in any way, including sexually explicit, discriminatory, defamatory or libellous material.

Sanctions for violating the acceptable use policy in the opinion of Middlesbrough Community Church may result in:

- A temporary or permanent ban on internet use.
- Additional disciplinary action in line with existing practice on inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Where applicable, police or local authorities may be involved.

Parent Carer Agreement

As the parent/guardian of _____ I declare that I have read and understood the Online Safety acceptable use policy for **Middlesbrough Community Church** and that my child will be held accountable for their own actions.

I understand that it is my responsibility to set standards for my child when selecting, sharing and exploring online information and media

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 9

Sensitive information Record Form

This information should be completed as soon as possible after the information has been shared with you. The document should then be given to the coordinator of the safeguarding team in an envelope marked confidential

Name :	Age :
Address : (if known)	
Church Attended:	
Incident Location/ Where information disclosed:	Date & Time of Disclosure
Brief Summary: (use additional sheets if necessary)	
Abuse Category: (please circle) Physical Abuse Emotional Abuse Sexual Abuse Neglect Organisational abuse Financial Abuse Discriminatory Abuse	
Team Member's Name :	Date:
Team Leader's Name :	Action Taken: Yes / No (please highlight)