



Safeguarding Policy

Last Review – 14th September 2025

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SECTION 1 - DETAILS OF THE CHURCH

1.1 CONTACT DETAILS

Name of Place of Church:	Connect Church Cornwall
Address:	Molesworth Street, Wadebridge. Cornwall. PL27 7DS
Tel No:	01208 813110
Email address:	hello@connectchurch.uk
Charity Number:	1050242
Denomination/Membership	Assemblies of God (GB)
Insurance Company	Congregational Insurance
Senior Leader:	Drew Cox
Contact Details:	drew@connectchurch.uk
Safeguarding Co-Ordinator:	Peter Ward
Contact Details:	safeguarding@connectchurch.uk 07709125425
Deputy Safeguarding Co-Ordinator:	Ruth Humphrey
Contact Details:	humphreyruth@hotmail.com 07954553228

1.2 ORGANISATION DETAILS

Connect Church is a Pentecostal church and a member of Assemblies of God GB. The church is run by its members and seeks to add value to the local community and beyond by outworking the Christian faith in diverse ways.

Our Purpose: Connecting with Jesus, Connecting with each other and Connecting with our Community.

Our Values are:

- Courageous Faith
- Transforming Hope
- Extravagant Love

The church carries out the normal functions one would expect from a church, we hold meetings for public worship, child dedications, weddings and funerals. We have weekly provision for children and young people during the Sunday morning service as well as a host of mid-week groups for all ages. We run discipleship courses/programmes, small groups, provide pastoral care and run

the Alpha Course. The church continues to help provide school assemblies and faith clubs in our local schools.

SECTION 2 - LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

The Connect Church Trustees and Leadership Team (jointly referred to throughout this policy as “the Leadership”) recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We recognise the importance of our ministry with children, young people and adults and our responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care. We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children 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. Adults in our church should be enabled to live fulfilling, autonomous lives, and should have access to every aspect of church life. The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in church is the responsibility of the whole church. As a leadership, we endeavour to make our church a safe environment for all.

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.”*

The following statement was agreed by the church Leadership:

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the abuse and neglect of children and adults and to report any such abuse or neglect that we discover or suspect.

We are committed to the safeguarding of children and adults and ensuring their well-being. We recognise that children and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, as well as financial and discriminatory abuse and other forms of harm such as exploitation and neglect.

We endorse and adopt the policy, procedures and guidance set out in this Safeguarding Policy in accordance with governments’ national legislation, statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding. We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

SECTION 3 - GOVERNANCE & CULTURE

3.1 REGULATOR REQUIREMENTS

Charities, including faith organisations and churches who work with vulnerable beneficiaries, are expected to have a current, up to date Safeguarding Policy, along with evidence that all those (including trustees) working with children or adults with additional care and support needs have been safely recruited and undertaken any relevant DBS checks. Charities also need to state on their annual returns that they have met the safeguarding requirements set by the regulator.

3.2 TRUSTEES & CHURCH LEADERSHIP (“Leadership”)

The Trustees are appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for how our church charity is managed in line with the guidance and expectations of the Charity Commission. The trustees have a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as working alongside the church's spiritual leadership to set the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

3.3 THE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING

We undertake to:

1. Promote a Safe & Healthy Church Culture

The church has appointed a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator as points of reference, to act on all allegations or suspicions of abuse in reporting to the statutory safeguarding authorities. In our commitment to openness, should anyone have a concern that our church or the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) have not dealt appropriately with a safeguarding concern we would encourage that person to make a direct referral to Social Services or the Police.

2. Work with Safeguarding authorities

We recognise the role that the statutory safeguarding authorities (Social Services and the Police) have in investigating all suspicions and allegations or discovery of child abuse and the abuse of adults. We will cooperate fully with all agencies to protect those at risk of harm or abuse:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there is a concern about a child.
- Adult Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse when concerned about the welfare of an adult.

- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

We will follow the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults and good practice recommendations; and we will liaise with local statutory safeguarding partnerships.

We shall endeavour to ensure that our premises meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 (which incorporated the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.

3. Support those in our Church who serve Children and Adults

We commit to providing safeguarding training and development for all our workers (paid and voluntary) and will regularly review the training needs, and the operational guidelines attached to this policy.

We will support, resource and monitor all those who undertake work with children or adults, and those in positions of trust.

4. Safeguarding in Practice

All safeguarding concerns should be immediately reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator or Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator in the church. No one in receipt of a disclosure of abuse, or suspicion of abuse should investigate the matter.

Where an allegation or suspicion of abuse is made against someone working with children, or adults, or is in a position of trust, then the safeguarding officer(s) will make contact with our designated professional safeguarding advisors for advice.

We shall support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults.

Our Safeguarding Policy is publicly available on our website.

SECTION 4 - POLICY STATEMENTS

4.1 POLICY STATEMENT - Safeguarding Awareness

As a Leadership, we will endeavour to ensure that children and adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter of concern. As a Leadership, we recognise that for many victims/survivors of abuse, where the abuse has taken/takes place within the context of the church or by someone professing a Christian faith, it can have a significant impact on them.

4.2 POLICY STATEMENT – Safer Recruitment

All those who work with children or adults with additional care and support needs within our church will be subject to a Safer Recruitment process. All our workers will receive appropriate safeguarding training regularly according to 'good practice' guidelines, and training should cover signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond as a minimum. This training may be provided either by our church's Safeguarding Coordinator (if confident and competent to do so) or by a professional safeguarding organisation via their training programme(s), or another recognised body, organisation or qualified individual.

4.3 POLICY STATEMENT – Code of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers. All workers and volunteers shall be issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with additional care and support needs.

4.4 POLICY STATEMENT – Responding to Allegations of Abuse

The Leadership shall ensure that detailed procedures are implemented which address the following when responding to allegations of abuse:

- Reporting a Concern
- Obtaining appropriate professional advice

Documented processes shall set out detailed procedures for when there is/are:

- Concern about a child's welfare
- Concern about the welfare of an adult (with care/support needs)
- Concern about alleged abuse committed by a person who works with children/young people
- Allegations of abuse committed by a person who works with adults (with care/support needs)

4.5 Policy Statement – Online Safety

In these days of digital and online communication, together with social media platforms and video conferencing facilities, Connect Church looks to ensure Online Safety of all users. Connect Church encourages use of these platforms in reaching out to the local community. Connect Church has adopted the thirtyone:eight Online Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidelines, with a number of Connect Church specific requirements and precautions.

4.6 Policy Statement – Mission

This Safeguarding Policy applies to all our Mission workers and volunteers overseas and any members of our church that participate in locally-driven mission activity; whether planting/establishing churches within indigenous communities, visiting on short-term mission or placed as a long-term missionary around the world.

It is recognised that the cultures within which international missions are often working may adopt different standards to the care and treatment of children and young people. Nevertheless, the standards and principles adopted within the UK will apply to those representing Connect Church during mission activity anywhere outside the UK.

4.7 POLICY STATEMENT – Pastoral Care

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate. This care will be made available primarily through the Pastoral Team, or through contact with one of the groups or services on offer. Safeguarding concerns raised in a pastoral context are subject to the procedures and values within this policy.

4.8 POLICY STATEMENT – Counselling

The Leadership is committed to ensuring that it manages all pastoral matters appropriately, however, we recognise that we are not professional counsellors. Some people will need professional help and the leadership realise it is important to recognise this and signpost those in need, being aware of the church's own resource limitations to offer specific support.

4.9 POLICY STATEMENT - Working with Offenders

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults with additional care & support needs, the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. However in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with additional care and support needs, it will set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

SECTION 5 – PRACTICE GUIDELINES

This section provides some practical guidelines that demonstrate how we will put our policy into practice.

5.1 SAFER RECRUITMENT

When recruiting volunteers or workers, we will ensure that:

- There is a written job description for the post.
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form.
- Those short listed have been interviewed and safeguarding has been discussed (workers only).
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate.
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified.
- A disclosure and barring check has been obtained in accordance with the position that the person has applied for, where necessary, and in accordance with any obligations of external agencies (e.g. AoG for those with AoG Ministerial status).
- The applicant has access to, and has read (worker only) the church Safeguarding Policy and knows how to report concerns to the Safeguarding Coordinator.
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.

5.2 TRAINING

Safeguarding training will be provided to all workers and volunteers:

- When appointed
- Annually (refresher training)
- Every 3 years (in depth training)

We will utilise the material provided by our safeguarding advisory service in our training.

5.3 COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

This Safeguarding Policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Safeguarding information will be displayed throughout the church premises which will include details of how someone can report abuse or contact the Safeguarding Coordinator and deputy. Every effort should be made to ensure that a person's right to privacy is preserved; this needs to be balanced with the need to protect a person who has been or is at risk of abuse. All workers and volunteers must be clear that it is not possible to keep information about

suspected or actual abuse confidential and at times it may be appropriate to share information with other agencies.

5.4 WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

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 will agree who is responsible for safeguarding.
- It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own Safeguarding Policy.

5.5 ATTENDING EVENTS

When attending external events, this policy applies to all those associated with Connect Church.

5.6 PASTORAL CARE/ COUNSELLING

For detailed guidance on how we provide pastoral care, please refer to The Connect Church Pastoral Care Guidelines document.

5.7 YOUTH & CHILDREN'S WORK

For detailed guidance on how we provide youth and children's work, please refer to The Connect Church Youth & Children's Guidelines document.

5.8 PRAYER MINISTRY

For detailed guidance on how we provide prayer ministry, please refer to The Connect Church Prayer Ministry Guidelines document.

5.9 WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

Liaison and direct contact should be sought with the individual's probation officer or police risk management officer if appropriate. Not all members of the Leadership need to know full details or risks posed in all cases - it may well be appropriate in most cases for only the Safeguarding Coordinator, Church Pastor and Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding to be aware of details and other members of the Church Leadership simply be notified of a concern and that it is being managed appropriately.

A written contract should be entered into between the organisation and the individual and this will be a non-generic agreement and reflect the individual risks identified. This agreement which the individual signs, should set out behavioural boundaries that they agree to abide by.

In setting out this contract the following process should be undertaken:-

1. A meeting between the individual involved, a member of the Church Leadership and the Safeguarding Coordinator will be arranged, this meeting can also include the probation officer or other agencies involved if appropriate.
2. The Church Leadership will sustain open communication with any statutory or voluntary agencies involved with the individual.
3. The Church Leadership will identify any pastoral support able to be offered to the individual.
4. The contract will be agreed and signed by the church representative and the individual.
5. This contract will be held securely by the organisation and a copy given to the individual.

In addition to the written contract the Leadership will employ the following protective management methods to promote a safe environment for all.

1. Details about the individual should only be shared with key individuals on a need to know basis.
2. The individual who poses a risk should never be on their own with children, young people or adults with additional care and support needs.
3. Seating and activities should be planned to avoid unwittingly placing the vulnerable in the vicinity of the person who poses a risk.

Should the individual not keep to the agreed contract of behaviour then the police and/or Probation Service should be contacted for advice. Should the individual leave the church then any statutory agencies involved with the individual will be informed.

SECTION 6 - RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

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

Follow procedures as below and see the flow charts in Appendix 1.

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Safeguarding Co-Ordinator	Pete Ward
Contact Details	safeguarding@connectchurch.uk 0776 9981687

This person 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 or create a conflict of interest, then the report should be made to:

Deputy Safeguarding Co-Ordinator	Ruth Humphrey
Contact Details	humphreyruth@hotmail.com 07954553228

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

Christian Safeguarding Services:
thecss.co.uk/get-in-touch/
0116 218 4420
contact@thecss.co.uk

Where the concern is about a **child** the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services.

The local Children's Social Services office telephone number is	0300 123 1116
The out of hours emergency number is	01208 251300

Where the concern is regarding an **adult** in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services or take advice from the professional support organisation listed above.

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is	0300 1234 131
The out of hours emergency number is	0300 1234 131- Option 1

Where required, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then inform senior personnel within the organisation as follows, unless the allegation involves them in any way:

Name:	Drew Cox
Position:	Pastor

Name:	Chris Holliman
Position:	Trustee responsible for Safeguarding

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- A written record of the concerns should be made and kept in a secure place.
- 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.
- The Leadership must consider and fulfil any duty regarding informing the church's insurers and the Charity Commission of offences committed by staff and volunteers.
- If the person against whom an allegation is being made is in a position of trust, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) needs to be contacted within 24 hours. It may also be necessary to inform the DBS if the person is engaged in 'regulated activity'.
- 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 a professional safeguarding organisation, although the Leadership expect that members of the church 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 directly. This would also apply

if the Safeguarding Co-ordinator /Deputy were not available. We believe by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrates 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. It is not the role of the Safeguarding Coordinator to investigate allegations and concerns.

6.1 PROCEDURE CONCERNING THE WELFARE OF A CHILD

See flow chart in Appendix 1.1

ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE

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

- Seek medical help if needed urgently via phoning 999.
- Contact Children's Social Services (or a professional safeguarding organisation) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home. If the issue is urgent, the Police and/or the Out of Hours Children's Services must be contacted without delay.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- 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 professional safeguarding support organisation 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 direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by our professional safeguarding support organisation if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. The professional safeguarding support organisation should confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

6.2 PROCEDURE CONCERNING THE WELFARE OF AN ADULT

See flow chart in Appendix 1.2

Definition of “adult”

As adult safeguarding systems have developed there has been a move away from using the term ‘vulnerable adults’, whilst recognising that certain pieces of legislation (e.g. the Police Act 1997) and different agencies use this term. The term ‘adult at risk’ is generally now replacing the previously used term ‘vulnerable adult’ (focusing on the situation rather than the characteristics of the adult themselves). The label ‘vulnerable adult’ may wrongly imply that some of the fault for any abuse lies with the abused adult. The Care Act 2014 does not use the word vulnerable, but rather an ‘adult with care and support needs’, who is, or is at risk of abuse or neglect. Other descriptions include ‘adults at risk’ (the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership, July (DHSSPS)) and ‘adults in need of protection’. ‘Adults’ is used in this policy to mean adults in need of protection.

These safeguarding policy and procedures will use the various terms interchangeably except where referring to specific legislation or government guidance.

SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

The Care Act 2014 places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults. 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.

If an adult with additional care and support needs has a physical injury or indicator of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life. Advice needs to be sought from the statutory agencies if it is felt that their choice might contradict their welfare needs.
- If the adult with additional care and support needs is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

- For advice contact the appropriate Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse.
- The Police will also provide advice and will need to be contacted where the concerns are of a serious nature. Alternatively, your professional safeguarding support organisation can be contacted for advice.

6.3 PROCEDURE CONCERNING ABUSE BY THOSE WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN

See flow chart in Appendix 1.3 & 1.4

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

- liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- The role of the LADO is set out in HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Chapter 2 Paragraph 4. and is governed by the Authorities duties under section 11 of the Children Act 2004. This guidance outlines procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children who are paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed.
- Inform the Office of General Manager at AoG National Office if the allegations concern someone with AoG ministerial status
- the LADO will be contacted within 24 hours as follows:

Phone	01872 326536
Email	lado@cornwall.gov.uk

In addition to this, whether or not there are such mechanisms in operation, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. Where we are liaising with a Designated Officer we will discuss with them

about the need to refer to the DBS. If a Designated Officer is not involved, we will contact the DBS if the situation is such that the nature of concern leads us to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have made this decision in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. They capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case.

SECTION 7 - APPROVALS

Signed by Senior Leader:



Print Name: Drew Cox

Date:

Signed by Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding:



Print Name: Chris Holliman

Date:

Signed by Safeguarding Coordinator:



Print Name: Peter Ward

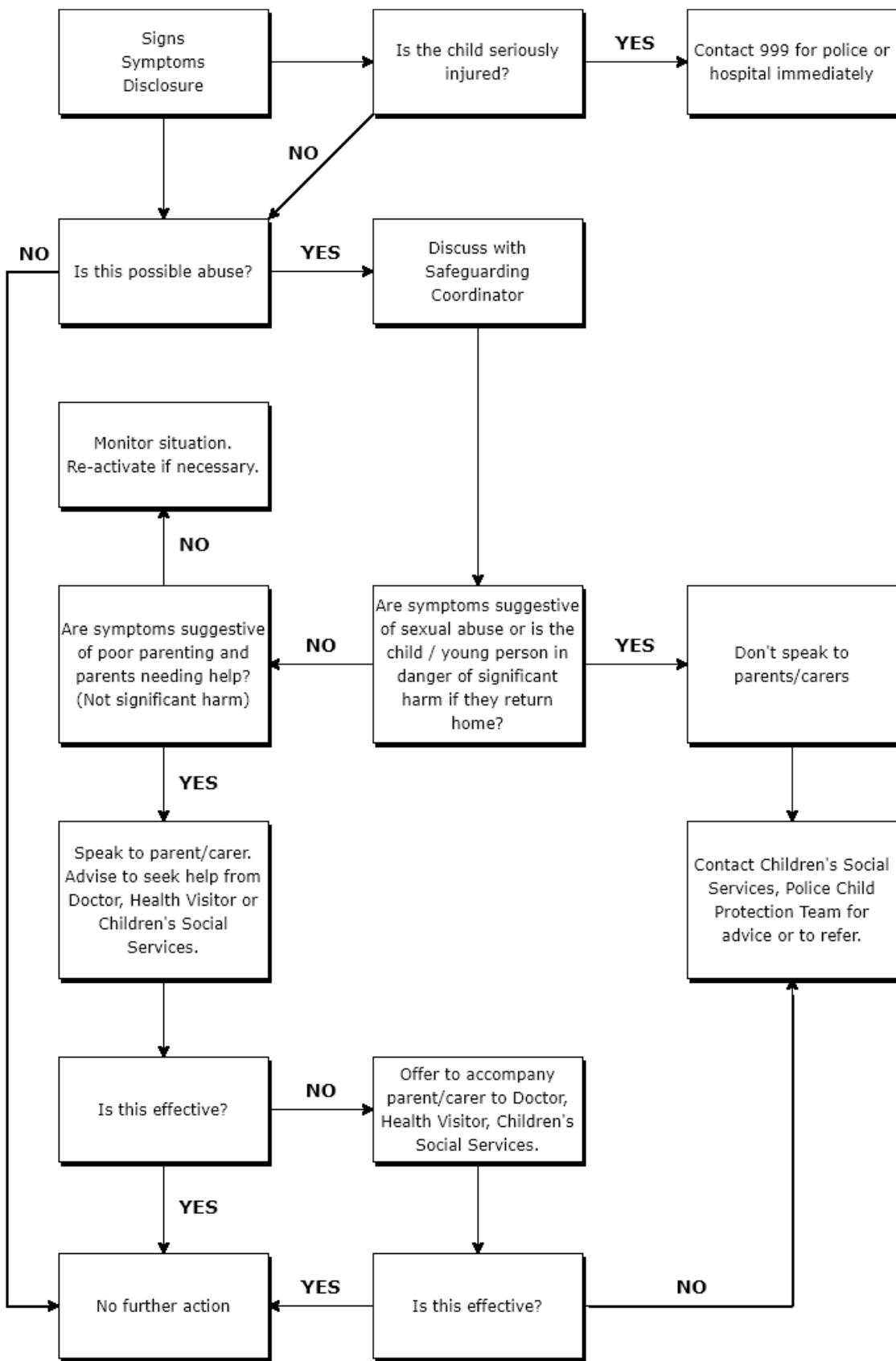
Date:

This policy is annually reviewed and amendments made as necessary or more regularly should the need arise.

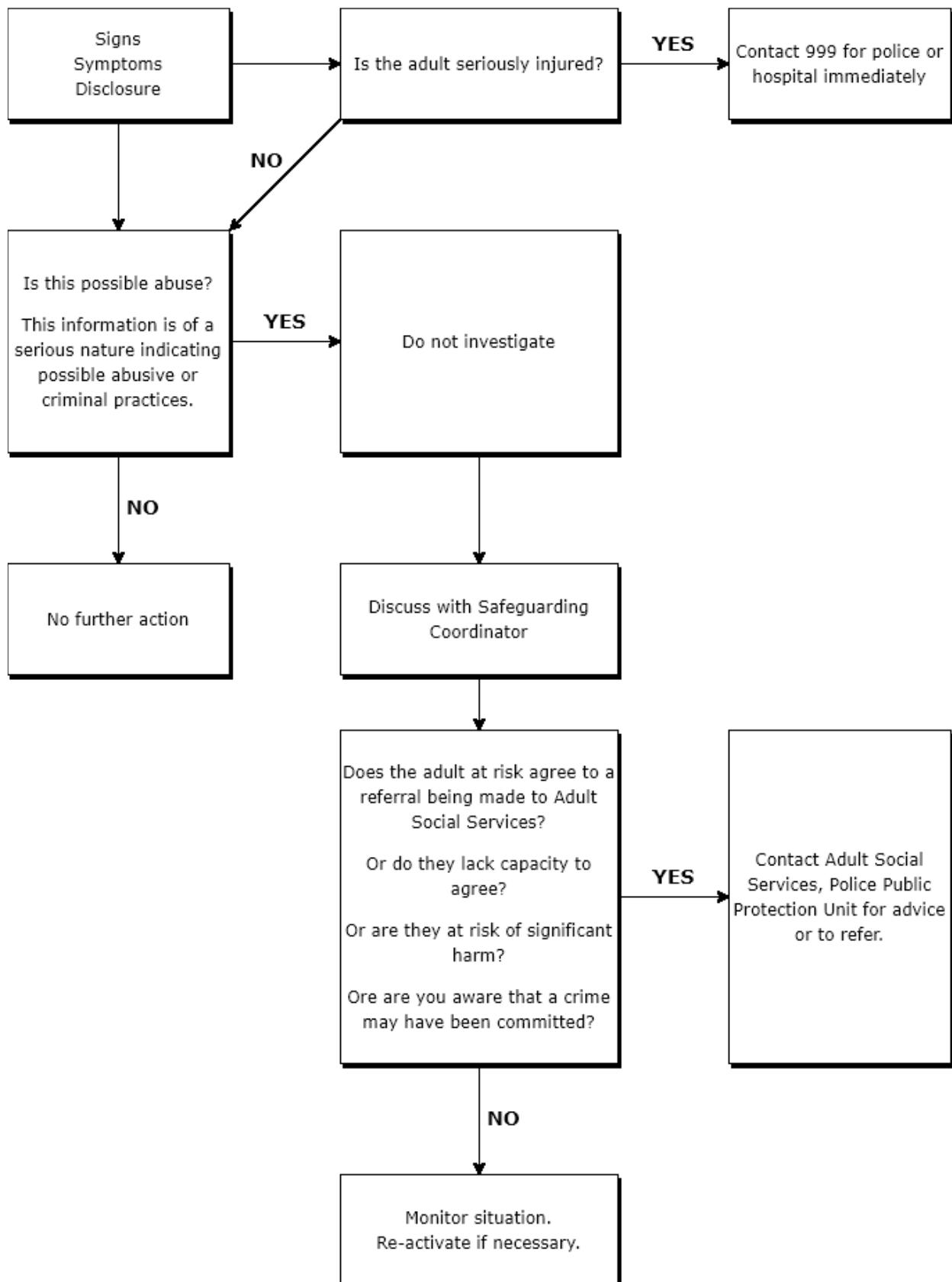
Date of Next Review: 14/09/2026

APPENDIX 1 - RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS (FLOW CHARTS)

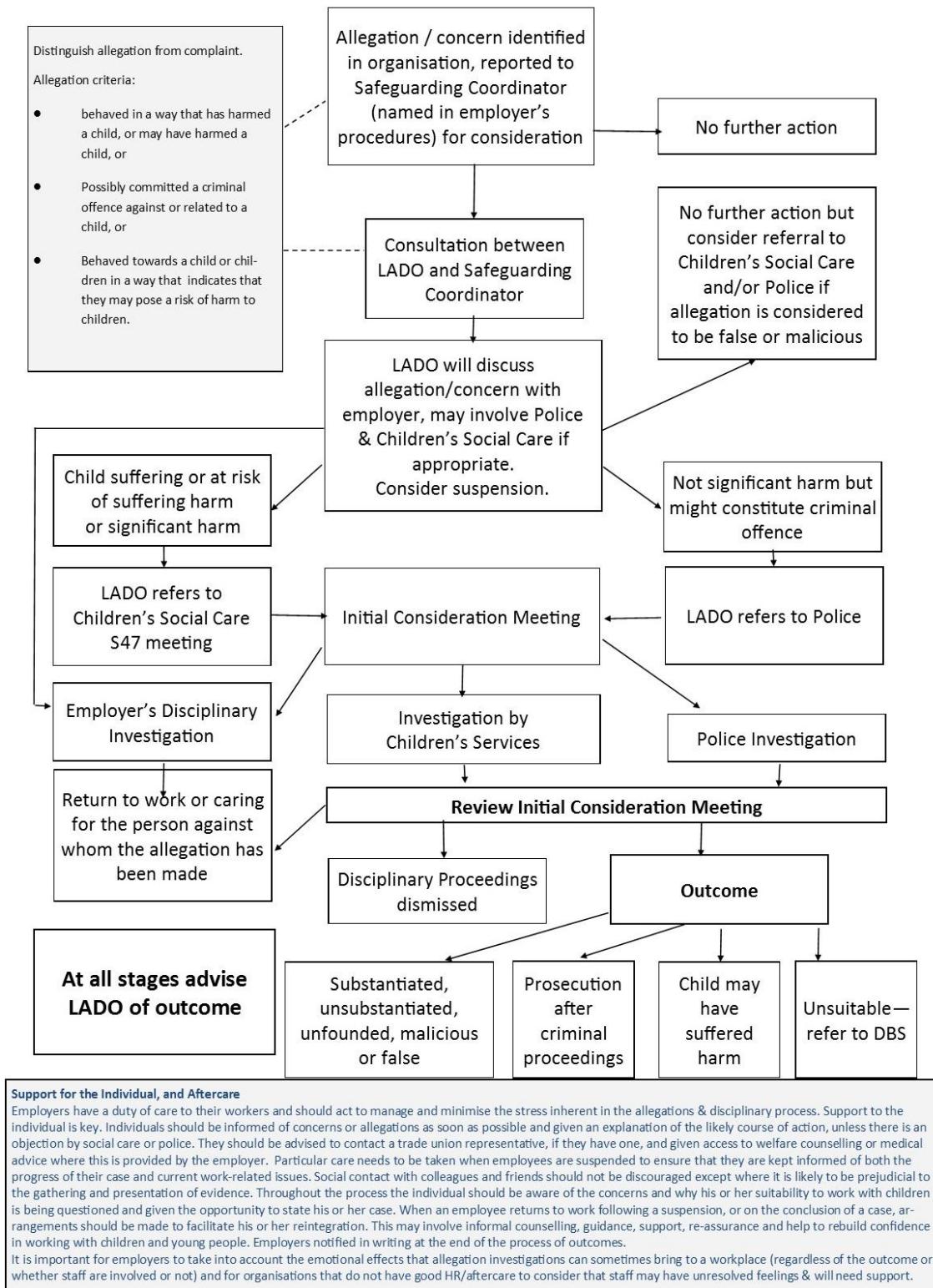
1.1 Child/Young Adult



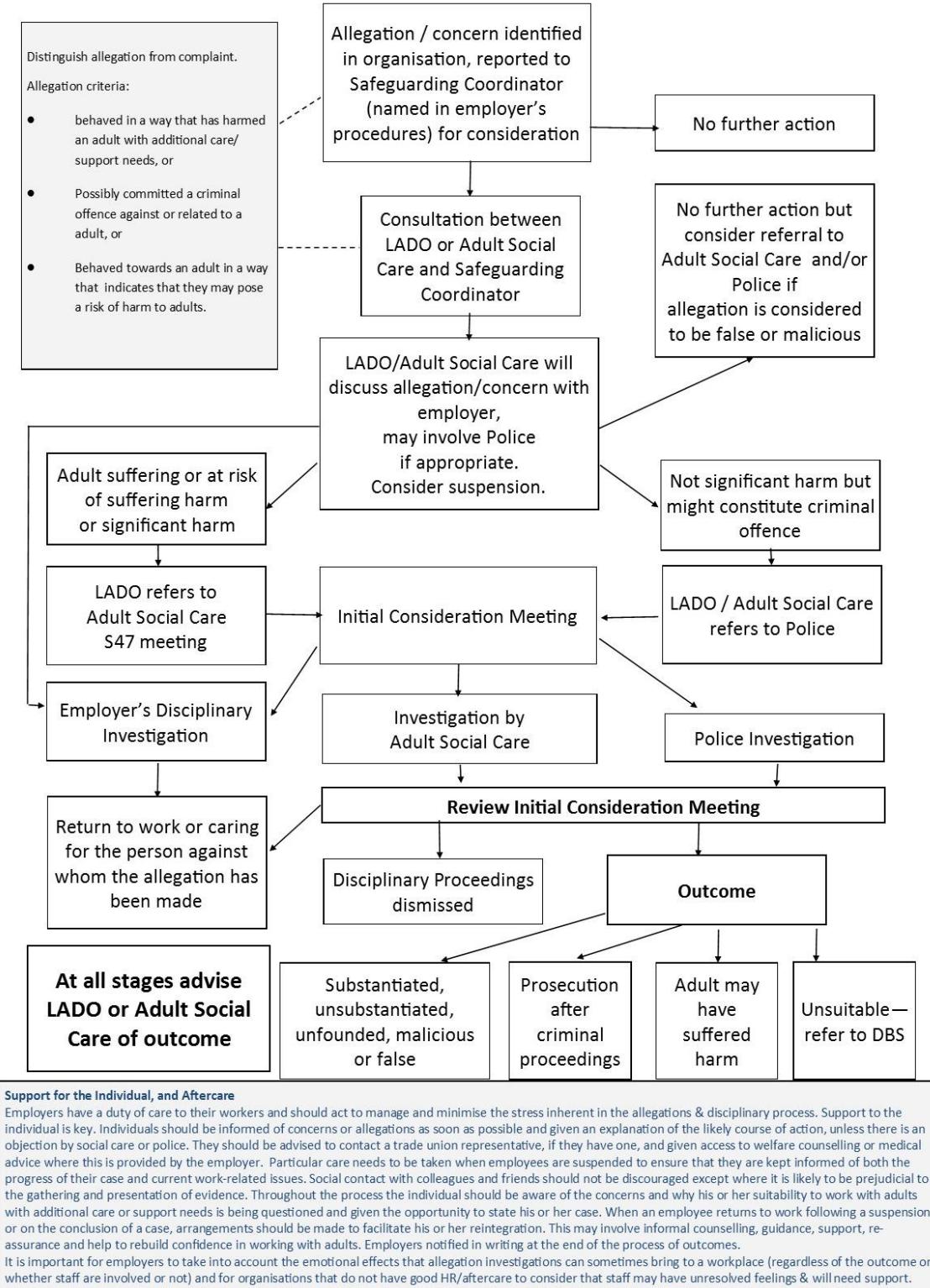
1.2 Adults



1.3 Worker (child)



1.4 Worker (Adult)



APPENDIX 2 - DEFINITIONS

2.1 STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (CHILDREN)

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

The definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (H M Government July 2018).

What is abuse and neglect?

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. 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 that 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 also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another individual. It could involve serious bullying

(including cyber bullying), frequently causing children to feel frightened or in danger, as well as 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

Whether or not the child is aware of what is happening or not involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve a high level of violence. 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. Adult males do not solely perpetrate sexual abuse; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE):

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.

Extremism:

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable, including the young, by seeking to sow division between communities because of race, faith or denomination. Justifying discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

Physical chastisement (resulting in physical harm):

Under UK legislation physical punishment is considered "unreasonable" if it leaves a mark on the child or if the child is hit with an implement such as a cane or a belt.

2.2 STATUTORY DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE (ADULTS WITH ADDITIONAL CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS)

Definition of adult with additional care & support needs ("vulnerable")

The Care Act 2014 (Chapter 14 Safeguarding and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014 (June 2014)) which covers England, defines the person who should be subject of a safeguarding enquiry as an adult who:

- has needs 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.

Definition of abuse

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect adults with additional care and support needs from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual

transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Physical Abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Sexual Abuse

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent. Includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty. Includes 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

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions. Includes 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.

Neglect or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. Includes 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. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired.

Discriminatory Abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional or Organisational Abuse

Institutional or Organisational Abuse includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home 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.

Domestic Abuse/Violence

The cross-government (not legal) definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional or (so-called) 'honour' based violence.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is a serious crime. It encompasses slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery victims can often face more than one type of abuse and slavery, for example if they are sold to another trafficker and then forced into another form of exploitation.

A person is trafficked if they are brought to (or moved around) a country by others who threaten, frighten, hurt and force them to do work or other things they don't want to do.

(Taken from government guidance on how to report modern slavery 8 Dec 2016)

Self-Neglect

There is no single operational definition of self-neglect. The Department of Health (2016), defines it as, ‘... a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding’.

Skills for Care provided a framework for research into self-neglect identifying three distinct areas that are characteristic of self-neglect:

- Lack of self-care - this includes neglect of one’s personal hygiene, nutrition and hydration, or health, to an extent that may endanger safety or wellbeing;
- Lack of care of one’s environment - this includes situations that may lead to domestic squalor or elevated levels of risk in the domestic environment (e.g., health or fire risks caused by hoarding);
- Refusal of assistance that might alleviate these issues. This might include, for example, refusal of care services in either their home or a care environment or of health assessments or interventions, even if previously agreed, which could potentially improve self-care or care of one’s environment.

2.3 DEFINITION OF SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Although not recognised as a category of abuse in its own right by the statutory authorities, Spiritual abuse will often co-exist with those accepted forms of abuse (described above). The professional safeguarding support organisation Thirtyone:eight has defined Spiritual Abuse as follows:

Spiritual abuse is linked with other forms of abuse, and could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader’s (or more seriously God’s) acceptance and approval.

2.4 Additional information

In addition to the above, in relation to adults and children, there needs to be an understanding of other forms of harm such as Female Genital Mutilation, Domestic Abuse, Forced marriage and trafficking of adults and children. All these are included in various pieces of legislation and all those concerned with safeguarding need to be aware of the issues.

APPENDIX 3 – ONLINE 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 password. Social media groups must be used in compliance with this policy.

Children and Workers or volunteers 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 Connect 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 Connect 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 Connect Church and that my child/young person 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.

Child/Young Person Agreement

I understand the importance of safety online and the church guidelines on acceptable use.

I will share any concerns, where I or another person may be at risk of harm, with the Safeguarding Coordinator or a trusted adult.

Child Name (Please print)	Child Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian (Please print)	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date

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Amendment Log

1. 02/03/2025 – Pete Ward – Amend DSL details due to new appointment.
2. 21/07/2025 – Pete Ward – Amend ‘Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding’ details