



Safeguarding Policy, Procedures, and Codes of Conduct

June 2026

Grace Church Hilton

Safeguarding Policy and procedures:

Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults

1. Purpose

This policy with its procedures and appendices outlines how we will seek to:

- 1.1. Ensure that we provide a healthy and spiritually nurturing, environment for everyone who engages with our church community
- 1.2. Ensure that every member of our church community is protected from harm, including harassment, abuse, and exploitation
- 1.3. Ensure that any harm that is identified, regardless of where it occurred is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately
- 1.4. Ensure that when supporting people who have experienced harm:
 - 1.4.1. We treat with dignity, respect, and compassion
 - 1.4.2. That their views and wishes are given full consideration
 - 1.4.3. That we act in their best interest
 - 1.4.4. That we ensure they are appropriately involved in and informed of decisions that affect them
- 1.5. Ensure that where concerns or support needs that fall below the threshold for reporting to statutory services are identified, responses that are appropriate, proportionate, and consent-based are made
- 1.6. Ensure that appropriate, confidential safeguarding records, that allow us to fulfil our duty of care to protect and promote the wellbeing of those to whom we minister, are securely kept, and disposed of in line with our legal duties and best practice under both safeguarding and data-protection legislation
- 1.7. Ensure that our trustees, leaders, and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities and duties and are supported to fulfil them competently and confidently
- 1.8. Support the development of an open and transparent culture that listens to the views and wishes or concerns of every member of our church community
- 1.9. Provide leadership and accountability for every member of our church community, including our most senior leaders in relation to safeguarding
- 1.10. Ensure that all our ministry is provided in a manner that is consistent with our biblical beliefs, and that where challenge, or even formal church discipline, are required Christian love, grace and mercy, gentleness and kindness characterise our interactions
- 1.11. Ensure that our leaders model biblical and Christlike servant leadership, valuing, caring for and nurturing those that God brings under their authority with meekness and humility, as those who will give an account in the final judgement
- 1.12. Ensure that all church members have a basic understanding of safeguarding and that they understand their responsibility to raise concerns and challenge any abusive behaviours

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies in particular to leaders or volunteers who work on our behalf with vulnerable people (children, young people, their parents / carers, adults at risk of abuse or adults with care and support

- needs) and to those who have leadership and oversight of the church's activities. This includes trustees, senior leaders, group / ministry leaders, paid leaders, volunteers, or others working on our behalf
- 2.2. The policy also outlines the general responsibilities of every member of our church community to raise concerns about individuals or practice in the church with the appropriate officers.

3. Context

As a church, in Hilton, we are committed to Proclaiming grace, Growing in grace, Enjoying grace and Being a community of grace.

This means that, where there is opportunity, we will seek to teach children and vulnerable adults from The Bible in appropriate ways, so as to encourage and support a Bible-based faith in Jesus. For children, this will principally be alongside their family in our homes or meeting venues, although at other times we may run clubs/groups/activities specifically for children to attend with their parents' permission. We may also work within the local school to do assemblies or school clubs, within their specific policies.

Grace Church, Hilton is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, charity number 1161858

The church is led by Elders, who also make the decisions about the running of the church

4. Definitions

Additional needs: is a term most often applied to children who require support beyond what we would usually expect to provide to a child of that age or developments stage.

Adult: a person who is at least 18 years of age

Adult at risk of abuse / in need of protection: refers to adults who have care and support needs, are at risk of abuse, and due to their support needs are unable to protect themselves from the abuse.

Adult with care and / or support needs: refers to an adult who requires help with day-to-day tasks that most people would be able to perform for themselves.

Child: A child is a person who has not yet attained their 18th birthday which aligns with the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. In Scotland, the position is slightly more complex as Scottish law also recognises an age of "Legal Capacity" which is 1. Unborn children are included within the scope of Child Protection.

Child in Need: Similar to targeted safeguarding, this refers to care and support that is offered to a child or family with more complex needs such that if effective support is not provided, the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health, development, or wellbeing.

Child Protection: refers to safeguarding activity that has met the statutory threshold for referral to the Police or Social Care and involves the prevention of, or response to "significant harm".

Deacon(s): refers to those appointed by the church to that office to support the Elders and serve the church in practical and legal matters.

Elder(s): refers to those appointed by the church to that office to provide spiritual leadership and instruction. The Elders have the spiritual authority within the church.

Officers: refers to all those who hold formal office in the church including Deacons and Elders, and Trustees.

Regulated activity: refers to activity that a barred person must not do. In simple terms, it is activity that requires a DBS check.

Safeguarding arrangements: is used in this policy, procedures and related documents as a generic term that includes all aspects of the church's approach to safeguarding, including matters related to policy, process, culture, and practice

Single Central Record: is the master record of all pre-appointment checks and processes that were completed prior to appointment to a role.

Spectrum of safeguarding: is the whole range of safeguarding activities that includes universal safeguarding, consent-based care, and support (i.e., support that falls below the statutory threshold), and the statutory responsibility to protect children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse from significant harm.

Leaders: refers to any paid employee or office holder.

Statutory threshold: the point at which the church has a duty to report a concern to report a matter to one of the statutory bodies such as the Police, Social Care, or the Charity Commission.

Sub-threshold (or consent based) safeguarding: matters or concerns which do not meet the criteria for referral to statutory authorities. These issues may still be serious and require a response from the church, however, internal processes will be followed.

Targeted Safeguarding: care or support that is offered to a child or their family on the basis of consent to prevent harm and promote wellbeing where there is a risk of poor outcomes from the individual if their support needs are not met.

Trustee(s) refers to those who are legally responsible for the governance and oversight of the charity.

Universal safeguarding: activity that is required to keep everyone safe. This includes those who have no additional needs and includes the interface with other aspects of safety such as Health and Safety and employer responsibilities.

Volunteer(s): refers to anyone who is appointed by the church to a role or who performs identified tasks on behalf of the church for which they receive no payment (other than out-of-pocket expenses that are appropriately authorised).

Vulnerable people: is a generic term that can be used to mean different things and so care is needed. In the context of this policy, the term is used in a generic sense to include anyone who has a support or care need or whose ability to protect themselves against abuse is limited. This includes children, young people, adults with support needs and adults at risk of abuse. It also includes those who, due to specific individual circumstances find themselves, either for a short time or over a more extended time, requiring additional care, support, or protection, but who would not otherwise be regarded as needing support.

5. Values and beliefs

If the church has articulated values and a mission statement these can be referenced or inserted here

We believe that:

- 5.1. Everyone who engages with our church community, including leaders, volunteers, and beneficiaries, should be protected from bullying, harassment, exploitation, or abuse.
- 5.2. We have a particular responsibility to protect and promote the wellbeing of those who have care and support needs and those at risk of abuse including: children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse;

ensuring they are safe while in our care and that we respond appropriately to disclosures or indicators that they may be experiencing abuse or neglect while in our care or elsewhere

- 5.3. Every member of our church community has a responsibility to act to support the values and commitments outlined in this policy
- 5.4. Everyone who engages with our church community should be treated with dignity and respect
- 5.5. Our approach to safeguarding is rooted in, and is a practical outworking and expression of, our biblically based values and supports and confirms our gospel witness

5.6. Our approach to safeguarding stems from our values to be making known God's grace:

Grace is incredible undeserved kindness.

God shows us His grace through Jesus Christ by His Spirit.
His Grace is for everyone, and it changes lives.

As a church, in Hilton, we are committed to...

Proclaiming grace

The gospel of God's grace is the good news everyone needs to know for salvation.

We are therefore committed to unashamedly proclaiming this good news to all those in our community and beyond.

Growing in grace

We are saved by grace and we are to continue in grace. We do this by growing in the knowledge of God as revealed in His Word.

We are therefore committed to faithful preaching and teaching of The Bible, applying it to all aspects of our lives.

Enjoying grace

By grace we are reconciled to God and given the freedom to enjoy Him and all the blessings of the new life that He has given us.

We will therefore seek to praise Him in all areas of our life, encouraging one another to live joyfully as we continue to discover and celebrate the great blessings we receive.

Being a community of grace

As we receive God's grace, we are united together in Christ, forming one body, of which Jesus is the head.

We are therefore committed to live in community; to value each person, care for one another, share our lives, each contributing to the life of the church.

It is in this context that we will proclaim, grow and enjoy God's grace.

6. Our responsibilities and commitments

6.1. Our responsibilities

- 6.1.1. To ensure that the protection of all members of our community, but particularly children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse, working to ensure that safeguarding these people is a shared responsibility across the whole church.
- 6.1.2. To treat each person as equal in the sight of God, showing no favour or partiality
- 6.1.3. To seek to minister to, and to encourage growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency, and sensitivity, in accordance with our fundamental beliefs as laid out in our statement of faith, charitable aims and governing documents
- 6.1.4. To value, respect and listen to the wishes of every member of our community, including those who are vulnerable or find it difficult to make their voice heard
- 6.1.5. To ensure that as a church we are alert to the risks within society, including risks associated with grooming, online abuse, radicalisation, gender-based violence, exploitation, domestic abuse etc and to report appropriately

- 6.1.6. To work in partnership with children, young people, their parents / carers, adults at risk of abuse and local and national partner agencies and organisations as appropriate, to promote the welfare of, and to protect, each member of our community; particularly those who are more vulnerable
- 6.1.7. To work to develop and maintain an environment that is protective, caring and nurturing for all who engage with our community, in accordance with our doctrines and beliefs as outlined in our governing documents
- 6.1.8. To ensure that everyone who ministers or serves within the life of the church is suitable and competent to do so and that they understand the responsibilities of their role
- 6.1.9. To ensure that we will support victims of past and present abuse and trauma recognising our limitations and referring to specialist services where necessary.

6.2. How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities

- 6.2.1. We aim to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the church and our leaders will support the implementation of best practice as well as an accountability to each other, and particularly amongst the leadership, to ensure safeguarding practices are carried out
- 6.2.2. We will ensure that those who are responsible for safeguarding at the various levels of the church are appropriately trained and supported to fulfil their role competently and confidently
- 6.2.3. We will actively seek to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with our biblical beliefs and best practice in safeguarding
- 6.2.4. We will ensure that we have robust and relevant policies, procedures and systems that support the culture of our organisation and the work of all those involved in safeguarding, and that these are reviewed for effectiveness annually
- 6.2.5. We will ensure that we appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one deputy who will take responsibility for leading the safeguarding of children and adults across the organisation
 - 6.2.5.1. Safeguarding will be promoted and overseen by our senior leaders
 - 6.2.5.2. Delegation of tasks and responsibilities will be clearly outlined in the relevant role descriptions and the organisation's safeguarding structures, complete with contact details. These will be included in our procedures, and made publicly available
- 6.2.6. We will adopt proportionate safer recruitment best practice in the recruitment and selection of leaders and volunteers
- 6.2.7. We will provide effective leadership and support to the leaders and volunteers who deliver services on our behalf including training and feedback where necessary
- 6.2.8. We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry:
 - 6.2.8.1. Managing health and safety with effective policies and procedures and using risk assessments where needed
 - 6.2.8.2. Considering risks presented by online services and communications as well as physical environments; including our use of social media and technology
- 6.2.9. We will ensure that we monitor the conduct of our leaders and that we have policies, procedures, and systems for raising and managing allegations, or complaints against leaders or volunteers.
- 6.2.10. We will also take action if forms of abuse take place by members of the church, or those who attend our public meetings
- 6.2.11. We will seek to clearly identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who are part of our community and to respond appropriately and proportionately:
 - 6.2.11.1. To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them
 - 6.2.11.2. To provide information, guidance, and support as we are able
 - 6.2.11.3. To share information appropriately with partner agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met
- 6.2.12. We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as:
 - 6.2.12.1. Consent forms
 - 6.2.12.2. Attendance data for work with children, young people, and Adults at Risk of Abuse

- 6.2.12.3. Accident and incident reporting
- 6.2.12.4. Confidential recording of safeguarding concerns
- 6.2.13. We will involve children, young people, their parents or carers and adults at risk of abuse in our safeguarding processes wherever possible; making reasonable adjustments where necessary to enable them to participate in the decisions that affect them
- 6.2.14. We will ensure that we have a culture and policies and procedures for raising concerns or complaints by any member of our community including children, young people, adults at risk of abuse and their parents / carers and for dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest, and fair manner, including clear appeals processes
 - 6.2.14.1. We will also ensure that our leaders are competent and confident in handling complaints, concerns, and allegations
- 6.2.15. We will ensure that relevant policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc are available for the public to view

Safeguarding Procedures

7. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide leaders and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

8. Scope

These procedures apply to all leaders and volunteers and others who act on behalf of the church.

9. Governance and oversight

The Trustees/Elders will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

- 9.1. Ensuring that they appoint from amongst their number a nominated Safeguarding Trustee who will act on their behalf to provide leadership and guidance on matters related to safeguarding
- 9.2. Ensuring that the church leadership promote the importance of safeguarding and lead the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable and that safeguarding is appropriately prioritised, and its profile maintained
- 9.3. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained and skilled Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a deputy are appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced
- 9.4. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is implemented and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the DSL and Deputy DSL at least annually, but more frequently as required
- 9.5. Ensuring that clearly defined safeguarding procedures and systems are in place, that they are understood and implemented by all leaders, volunteers, and anyone else who acts on our behalf
- 9.6. Ensuring that the DSL provides a verbal update and report to the trustees/Elders for the Trustees AGM. This can be conveyed by the safeguarding trustee if the DSL isn't present.
- 9.7. Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures
- 9.8. Ensuring that safeguarding roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and that appropriate accountability is provided (see appendix A)
- 9.9. That a clear statement in relation to safeguarding is included in the annual Charity Commission submission
- 9.10. That any "Serious Incidents" (as defined in the Charity Commission Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>) are reported accurately and in a timely manner

10. Recruitment and ongoing support of leaders and volunteers

The recruitment / appointment and support of leaders and volunteers is of critical importance to Grace Church, Hilton and to our work and ministry. To fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all leaders and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

10.1. Management of recruitment processes

- 10.1.1. At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of leaders or appointment of volunteers will be trained in Safe Recruitment
- 10.1.2. Leaders and volunteers will be provided with written Job / role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position / role
 - 10.1.2.1. Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a DBS check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- 10.1.3. Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions
- 10.1.4. A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained

10.2. Recruitment process (Applying to both paid and volunteer leaders)

- 10.2.1. Prior to appointment, all leaders and volunteers will need to complete and return a form containing a self-declaration of fitness and suitability for the role (see appendix). Where necessary and appropriate (e.g., lack of literacy skills, English as a second language etc) support can be provided for completion of the forms.
- 10.2.2. Regardless of whether the leader, or volunteer is being recruited to a paid, or voluntary, position There will be a written job description / person specification for the post being recruited to
- 10.2.3. If the applicant hasn't been known by the church leadership for one year or more, written references will be obtained for those leading an activity, and followed up where appropriate
- 10.2.4. A disclosure and barring check will be completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information) for all appointed workers.
 - 10.2.4.1. However, where a disclosure and barring check has been made within the last year by another organisation known and trusted by the leadership (e.g. Local Education Authority, Scripture Union, Scouting UK) and regular contact has been maintained throughout this period between the worker and the leadership then the previous check will be considered sufficient.
 - 10.2.4.2. Or, if a previous DBS check is verified using the status check service (available when applicants sign up to the update service), this will also be considered sufficient
- 10.2.5. Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the DBS has been checked or the result of the new DBS has been received
- 10.2.6. Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to commence prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a risk assessment will be completed
- 10.2.7. All workers will be given a copy of the church's safeguarding policy and sign their agreement to comply with it.
- 10.2.8. The Single Central Record, training Log and Personnel file will be updated as appropriate throughout the process (including details of the DBS certificate and check)

DBS Checks

- 10.2.9. Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, leaders and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check
 - 10.2.9.1. Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the result of the DBS check has been received

Blemished DBS Checks

- 10.2.10. The applicant will be asked to present the DBS certificate to the Lead Recruiter
 - 10.2.10.1. The applicant may, if they wish to, withdraw their application
 - 10.2.10.2. If the application is withdrawn, consideration should be given to whether this requires the triggering of the “Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people” (*see section 14 of this policy*)
- 10.2.11. If the applicant self-declared the blemish and it has been discussed previously, the recruiter will check to ensure that the detail provided in the self-disclosure is consistent with the information on the DBS certificate
- 10.2.12. If the applicant did not self-disclose, an open conversation about the circumstances of the blemish will be discussed with the applicant
- 10.2.13. Whether the discussion arises from self-disclosure or examination of the certificate, a formal assessment will be conducted to ascertain the applicant’s suitability for the role and the outcome will be recorded
 - 10.2.13.1. Advice can be sought from CSS if required
 - 10.2.13.2. The applicant will be given every opportunity to provide input to the assessment and the outcome will be explained to them
- 10.2.14. A blemished DBS check does not necessarily prevent the individual from engaging in regulated activity. The risk assessment may conclude:
 - 10.2.14.1. That the individual is unsuitable for the role
 - 10.2.14.2. That further investigation is required
 - 10.2.14.3. That the person is suitable for the role with restrictions
 - 10.2.14.4. That the blemish does not indicate unsuitability
- 10.2.15. If the risk assessment concludes that the individual is unsuitable for the role, consideration will be given to whether the “Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people” (*see section 14 of this policy*) process needs to be triggered
- 10.2.16. Once the details of the certificate have been recorded in the Single Central Record, the certificate will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained

New and ongoing review of workers and volunteers

- 10.2.17. As a new worker, leader, or volunteer begins their role, the leadership of the church (or leader who oversees that particular area of ministry) will give particular attention to how the new worker is fulfilling their role. As they review the worker, they will ensure that the worker’s conduct is appropriate and adheres to safeguarding practices and the policies and procedures outlined in this document. If at any point this is seen to not be the case, the leader will talk with the worker, addressing concerns. If the worker continues in the same manner, or refuses to comply with instruction from the leadership and/or safeguarding practices, they will be removed from that position
- 10.2.18. Regular support, guidance and review will be provided by the church leadership or leader who oversees that particular area of ministry to workers in their various roles

Ongoing support and supervision

- 10.2.19. All leaders and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care.
- 10.2.20. Where DBS checks are required and the update service is not active (ie a status check on a previous DBS cannot be performed), these will be updated at least every three years

Training

- 10.2.21. All leaders and volunteers in formal, ongoing, regular roles within the church that involve regulated activity or those who manage such leaders will be required to attend regular safeguarding training
 - 10.2.21.1. Trustees will receive initial training. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance stays up to date
 - 10.2.21.2. Church leaders will refresh their training every three years
 - 10.2.21.3. Volunteers and leaders involved in working with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years
 - 10.2.21.4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years
 - 10.2.21.5. All leaders, volunteers and trustees will undergo some informal update activity annually
 - 10.2.21.6. Training should include themes on domestic abuse and trauma and the impact on victims including children.
 - 10.2.21.7. Children are now regarded by law (Domestic Abuse Act 2021) as victims of domestic abuse if they are living in a home where their parents or relational care givers are abusing each other.
- 10.2.22. A log of training and DBS checks will be maintained by the church

11. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

Grace Church Hilton recognises that there are many factors that impact and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe the procedural aspects.

Health and Safety

- 11.1. The officers aim to ensure that the health and safety of everyone who enters our church community is protected by:
 - 11.1.1. Regularly reviewing our health and safety policy to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance
 - 11.1.2. Maintaining and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments for both the premises and the activities of the church
 - 11.1.3. Maintenance and analysis of Accident and Incident Reports on receipt to ensure appropriate lessons are learned and timely responses are implemented and an overview analysis of reports that examines trends and recurring themes will be conducted at least annually
 - 11.1.4. Ensuring that adequate First Aid cover is available, and that only qualified First Aiders administer First Aid, except in emergency situations when instructed to do so by Emergency Services
 - 11.1.5. Ensuring that appropriate safety equipment such as First Aid kits, Fire Extinguishers etc are available and maintained in any public premises that are used
 - 11.1.6. That venues used comply to health and safety standards and procedures

Awareness raising

11.2. *Grace Church Hilton recognises that any member of our church community could discover or receive a disclosure of abuse, and therefore all members need a basic awareness and competence, regardless of whether they engage directly in ministry to children, young people, or vulnerable adults. We will raise awareness by ensuring that:*

- 11.2.1. Information about our policies , procedures and codes of conduct are publicly available and promoted by our leaders
- 11.2.2. Details of our safeguarding team are prominently displayed
- 11.2.3. We set clear expectations of conduct and that clear processes for identifying, challenging, investigating, and dealing with inappropriate conduct are implemented
- 11.2.4. We implement and promote clear and transparent processes for the raising of concerns or complaints, supported by a culture that encourages and welcomes these as opportunities to learn and improve

When engaging in ministry to children and / or young people we will:

- 11.3. Ensure that registers of children attending, and leaders present are maintained
- 11.4. Ensuring that those involved in such ministries have been appointed in accordance with our Safe Recruitment procedures
- 11.5. Ensure that consent is obtained for their attendance at the group and that contact details and information about any additional or specific needs are recorded
- 11.6. Ensure that appropriate child: adult ratios are maintained in line with guidance from the NSPCC:
 - ✓ 0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
 - ✓ 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
 - ✓ 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
 - ✓ 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
 - ✓ 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children
- 11.7. Ensure that appropriate accident / incident reporting is in place and that any accidents or incidents are reported to parents / carers in a timely manner
- 11.8. Ensure that appropriate order and discipline are maintained
- 11.9. Ensure that children are encouraged and empowered to raise any concerns that they may have with leaders or their parents as appropriate

When children or young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and childcare is not provided and their parents are present

- 11.10. During these times, children remain the responsibility of their parents who are responsible for their safety and care
- 11.11. Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way

When young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and participating in that meeting in their own right

- 11.12. Although there are not specific procedures for such meetings, the normal principles of safeguarding will apply
- 11.13. If the young person is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their parents / carers

- 11.14. If the young person is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their parents / carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact the parents and establish open communication and transparency
- 11.15. Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the young person is adequately protected
- 11.16. Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way

When ministering to Adults at Risk of Abuse or Adults with additional support needs

- 11.17. Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the individual is adequately protected
- 11.18. If there are concerns or support needs identified they will be reported to the DSL in the usual way

General provisions

- 11.19. The church will ensure that information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed in the building and online
- 11.20. Leaders will promote the need for every member to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, teaching and culture of the church and by personal example

12. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures

Managing immediate risk

- 12.1. Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual
 - 12.1.1. The worker may seek advice from the team leader or from the DSL, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm
 - 12.1.2. In such urgent situations and if the DSL cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or Social Care to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity

Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

- 12.2. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL
 - 12.2.1. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding
 - 12.2.2. Details of the concern must be recorded on the "Incidents and concerns reporting form" (See appendix D) either before, during, or immediately after the discussion with the DSL

Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

- 12.3. In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required

- 12.4. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a “Confidential File” in relation to the person at risk
 - 12.4.1. A Chronology (See appendix D) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file
 - 12.4.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis
 - 12.4.2.1. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a “need to know” basis
- 12.5. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care
 - 12.5.1. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:
 - 12.5.1.1. To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect
 - 12.5.1.2. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse
 - 12.5.1.3. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness
 - 12.5.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix B for contact details)
 - 12.5.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children’s Social Care
 - 12.5.4. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process
 - 12.5.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the “Record of action” and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis
- 12.6. Confidential files will be stored electronically with password protection on the church’s cloud storage
- 12.7. The DSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding

13. Allegations against or concerns about leaders and volunteers

Grace Church Hilton takes allegations against our leaders and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We recognise that that we have a responsibility to take the allegation seriously, to manage the situation effectively while the investigation takes place and to and to support the person accused throughout the process.

- 13.1. Allegations against leaders or volunteers within the church should be reported to Mark Selby (01283 329848). If the allegation is against the DSL, the report should be made to Chris Hammersley, Deputy DSL (07891 577123). If the allegations implicate both the DSL and the Deputy DSL, then the report should be made in the first instance to Christian Safeguarding Services: 0116 218 4420 contact@thecss.co.uk).
- 13.2. Full details of the allegation will be recorded
- 13.3. The church’s investigating officer will assess whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved
 - 13.3.1. Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable
 - 13.3.2. If so, care will be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
 - 13.3.3. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation will not be divulged
 - 13.3.4. Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims

- 13.4. If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the church's investigating officer will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed
- 13.5. If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the investigating officer will consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency
- 13.6. Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
- 13.7. These records will be confidential and stored electronically with password protection on the church's cloud storage
- 13.8. Where necessary, the DSL will seek and follow specialist advice throughout the process

14. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

- 14.1. Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the church leaders will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks
- 14.2. With the consent of the individual (if required), the church will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate
- 14.3. The leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated
- 14.4. If necessary, a formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the church leaders and the individual. The agreement will include:
 - 14.4.1. The church's commitments to the individual who poses the risk
 - 14.4.2. The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community
 - 14.4.3. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the church
 - 14.4.4. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement
 - 14.4.5. When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed
- 14.5. All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored
- 14.6. The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the leaders either:
 - 14.6.1. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk
 - 14.6.2. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared
- 14.7. If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on

Basis of policy and legal framework

This policy is consistent with:

- Current legislation
- National guidance
- Local arrangements
- Our charitable objectives, governing documents, and doctrinal statements

Details of the relevant legislation and guidance is available in appendix B

Related policies and procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Our statement of Faith
- Our governing documents
- Our complaints policy

Policy due for review:

June 2027

Policy last reviewed

June 2026

Last review conducted / approved by:

Mark Selby

Chris Hammersley

Kevin Carter

(Trustees of Grace Church Hilton)



Safeguarding statement

We want everyone who comes into contact with us to feel safe, valued and cared for. We believe that each person is made in the image of God, and as a result have an inherent dignity and worth.

We also recognise that we live in a sinful world, where human beings rebel against God and his ways for us, and harm one another in innumerable ways. We believe that the human heart is wicked and deceitful and that we are all capable of falling into sin.

We believe in the good news that God offers us forgiveness and new life if we will receive Jesus Christ as our saviour and Lord. We believe that when we submit to God and allow him to work in us by his Holy Spirit, we will grow in our faith and gradually become more like Jesus. Our greatest purpose and joy is to be in relationship with God, and to know his transforming work within us that gives us the power to change and become more Christlike; living lives that glorify God.

The church is a place where the love of God for each person is displayed and where we live, learn, and grow together in our faith. This involves supporting, encouraging, and even challenging and rebuking one another when we sin; all for the glory of God and for our individual and mutual good. We believe that God sees everything and that he knows even our secret and hidden sins and that one day each of us will stand before him as our judge.

As we journey and grow together in this life of faith, we recognise that we are not perfect and that at various times we will all have to both offer and seek forgiveness from others. We do, however recognise that within our church there is the opportunity for individuals or groups to harm, abuse, or exploit others. We as a church wish to stand against any misuse of power, abuse, or exploitation. We all have a responsibility to care for and protect each member of our church community, but particularly those who are weaker or more vulnerable.

If you have any concerns about the way that you, or anyone else has been treated, or about anything that we do as a church, please speak to one of the Elders.

As a church we take safeguarding seriously and we work with local and national organisation to help us to do all we can to keep everyone safe. We will fulfil all our legal duties to protect both children and Adults at Risk of Abuse, but we aim to go above and beyond and to discharge our safeguarding duties in a way that is biblically faithful and pleasing to our loving heavenly father, who calls us to do justice, love kindness and to walk humbly before him.

We commit to speaking to you openly and honestly if we have any concerns that you need to know about. If you have any concerns or require any support of help, please do not hesitate to speak to someone that you trust within the church.

Appendix B

Safeguarding responsibilities

Governance of safeguarding

The elders will ensure that they provide leadership of safeguarding across the organisation by:

- Ensuring that legally compliant policies, procedures, codes of conduct and systems are implemented
- Ensuring that a suitably skilled and knowledgeable Safeguarding Officer and at least one deputy is appointed, supported, and resourced
- Providing accountability to those responsible for various aspects of safeguarding
- Reviewing the safeguarding arrangements to ensure that an effective and proportionate approach is thoroughly implemented and consistently enacted across the church
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Officer and deputy provide regular updates to the Trustees
- Ensuring that Charity commission requirements, including the responsibility to report any serious incidents are fully met

Leadership and management of safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy, will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed, updated and any changes signed off by the trustees
- Safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely and proportionate manner, including making referrals to statutory agencies as required, working with partner agencies such as the Local Authority and the Police and the maintenance of accurate records and systems
- Leading the implementation of the safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensuring that those engaged in ministry on behalf of Grace Church Hilton are provided with proportionate and appropriate training and that they are competent to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensuring that regular reports are provided to the elders/trustees and that any urgent issues are communicated in a timely manner
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and promoting its importance across the organisation

Individual responsibilities

Everyone working on behalf of Grace Church Hilton is required to:

- Act in accordance with the policies, procedures and codes of conduct provided
- Adhere to local legislation, guidance, and procedures
- Ensure that they remain vigilant to the risks of harm to

Appendix B
Key safeguarding contacts

Grace Church Hilton Phone: 01283 329848 E-mail: mark@gracechurchhilton.org.uk Leadership Mark Selby, Chris Hammersley, Kevin Carter Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mark Selby Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Chris Hammersley Our policies and other useful information about safeguarding is available online, can be supplied on request and also found pinned to the Grace Church storage cupboard at Hilton Village Hall The roles and responsibilities of those involved in safeguarding can be found in appendix A	Statutory services Local Authority details Derbyshire County Council The local Children's Care Services office telephone number (office hours) is 01629 533190. The out of hours emergency number is 01629 533190. The local Adult Care Services office telephone number (office hours) is 01629 533190. The out of hours emergency number is 01629 533190. Starting Point contact and referral service information from Derbyshire County Council can be found here: https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/children-and-families/support-for-families/starting-point-referral-form/starting-point-contact-and-referral-service.aspx Allegations against leaders or volunteers should be reported to Mark Selby in the first instance (or see our safeguarding policy for further details if this is not possible) <i>Please remember that e-mail is NOT secure so confidential or sensitive data should not be included</i>
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Appendix C - Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework

- Our Doctrinal Basis
 - This policy reflects the organisation's fundamental biblical beliefs and should be read in conjunction with our Doctrinal Basis
- Our governing documents

Safeguarding Children	Safeguarding Adults
• National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children) ○ Children Acts (1989 & 2004) ○ Children and Families Act 2014 ○ Children and Social Work Act 2017 ○ Working together to safeguard children (2018) ○ What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015) ○ Protection of Children Act 1999 ○ Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006 ○ Protection of freedoms Act 2012 ○ Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2018 amended) ○ Prevent duty guidance 2016 ○ Sexual offences Act 2003 ○ The Safe Network Standards (available from the NSPCC website) ○ The policy also takes account of the principles outlined in: ▪ Keeping children safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition ▪ Keeping children safe in education 2021 ▪ FGM duty guidance ▪ Prevent duty guidance ▪ Domestic Abuse Act 2021	• National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults) ○ The Care Act 2014 ○ Human Rights Acts 1998 ○ Care Standards Act 2000 ○ Mental Capacity Act 2005 ○ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007 ○ Sexual Offences Act 2003 ○ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 of Fraud Act 2006 ○ Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ○ Health and Social Care Act 2008 ○ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) ○ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) ○ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) ○ LSAB Multiagency Policy and Procedures
• Local guidance and procedures ○ <i>Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures</i> ○ <i>Local authority guidance</i>	• Local guidance and procedures ○ <i>Local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures</i> ○ <i>Local authority guidance</i>

Appendix D
Standard Document Samples

	Application to volunteer
	Concerns reporting form
	Role description
	Confidential file chronology
	Confidential file record of conversations and actions
	Template report from DSL to trustees
	Complaint form

Grace Church Hilton

Self-declaration form when applying for roles within the church

About You		
Full name	Address	
Phone number		
Mobile number		
E-mail address		
About the role		
Role applied for		
Is the role subject to a DBS check?		
Children only	Adults only	Children and adults
Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?		
Where needed, please supply details of 2 people who can comment on your suitability for this role.		
Reference 1		
Name		
Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them		
Address		
Phone		
E-mail address		

Reference 2		
Name		
Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them		
Address		
Phone		
E-mail address		
Self-declaration		
	Yes	No
Do you have any criminal convictions that would affect your ability to perform this role?		
Is your state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health adequate to fulfil this role?		
If the role involves working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, are you, or have you ever been barred from such work?		
Are you in agreement with the church's beliefs as outlined in the Doctrinal Basis?		
Do you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, codes of conduct, risk assessments etc that are relevant to this role?		
Is there anything that you wish to add or that you wish us to consider in relation to this self-declaration?		
I confirm that the information supplied in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. Signature: Date:		

Grace Church Hilton
Staff / volunteer role description

Role title:	
Responsible to:	
Role purpose	
Role description	
Person specification	
Date last reviewed	Reviewed by

Incident / concern reporting form

About this form and the person completing it			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate box(es)</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed
About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / (where appropriate)
<i>Please insert more lines as required</i>			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?</i>			
Context of the incident / disclosure / concern			
<i>Where / when / who else was present etc.</i>			

Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety	
Other action taken or advice sought	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	

Notes for completion

About this form and the person completing it

Please complete all sections

About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident

When reporting a concern involving a child or young person, please complete all sections.

When reporting a concern about an adult, the parent / carer details may not be required. Where this is recorded, please include the relationship to the person involved. Please insert additional lines as required.

Details of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can

When reporting a disclosure, please quote the individual where possible. Please also comment on their body language or any other non-verbal communication that might be useful.

When drawing conclusions, please include the evidence that has led to that conclusion.

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can

Action taken to ensure immediate safety

Please provide details. If no action was required, please indicate by writing "None".

Other action taken or advice sought

If any advice was sought, please provide details including who you spoke to, their contact details and what advice was given or action that was taken.

Signature

Please ensure that you sign the form.

Confidential File Chronology

This policy developed from Christian Safeguarding Services template.

Grace Church Hilton

Record of safeguarding conversations and actions

Date of action / conversation	Document reference
Description of record	
Information given	
Advice received	
Actions to take	
Outcomes	
Recorded by	Date recorded

Grace Church Hilton

Safeguarding report to the trustees and officers

Report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy covering the period from XX/XX/XXXX to XX/XX/XXXX	
Report completed by:	Date
Summary of safeguarding activity	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to children	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to adults	
Number of cases referred to Children's Social Care	
Number of cases referred to Adult Social Care	
Number of allegations received	
Number of allegations investigated by Local Authority	
Number of reportable incidents reported to charity commission	
Were there any common themes or issues in the reports submitted?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
Do you have any concerns about the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
What training or informal update activity been completed this year?	
Any recommendations to or requests of the trustees?	

Declaration from Safeguarding Leads	Yes	No
Has the policy been reviewed for legal compliance and effectiveness? <i>(CSS can be consulted to check whether any significant changes have occurred)</i>		
Are DBS checks up to date for all leaders and volunteers?		
Is the Single Central Record up to date?		
Is leaders and volunteer training up to date?		
Is DSL training up to date?		
Is the training log up to date?		
Any other comments		

Appendix E

Codes of Conduct

Code of conduct for leaders and volunteers working with children or young people

Those working with children and young people will

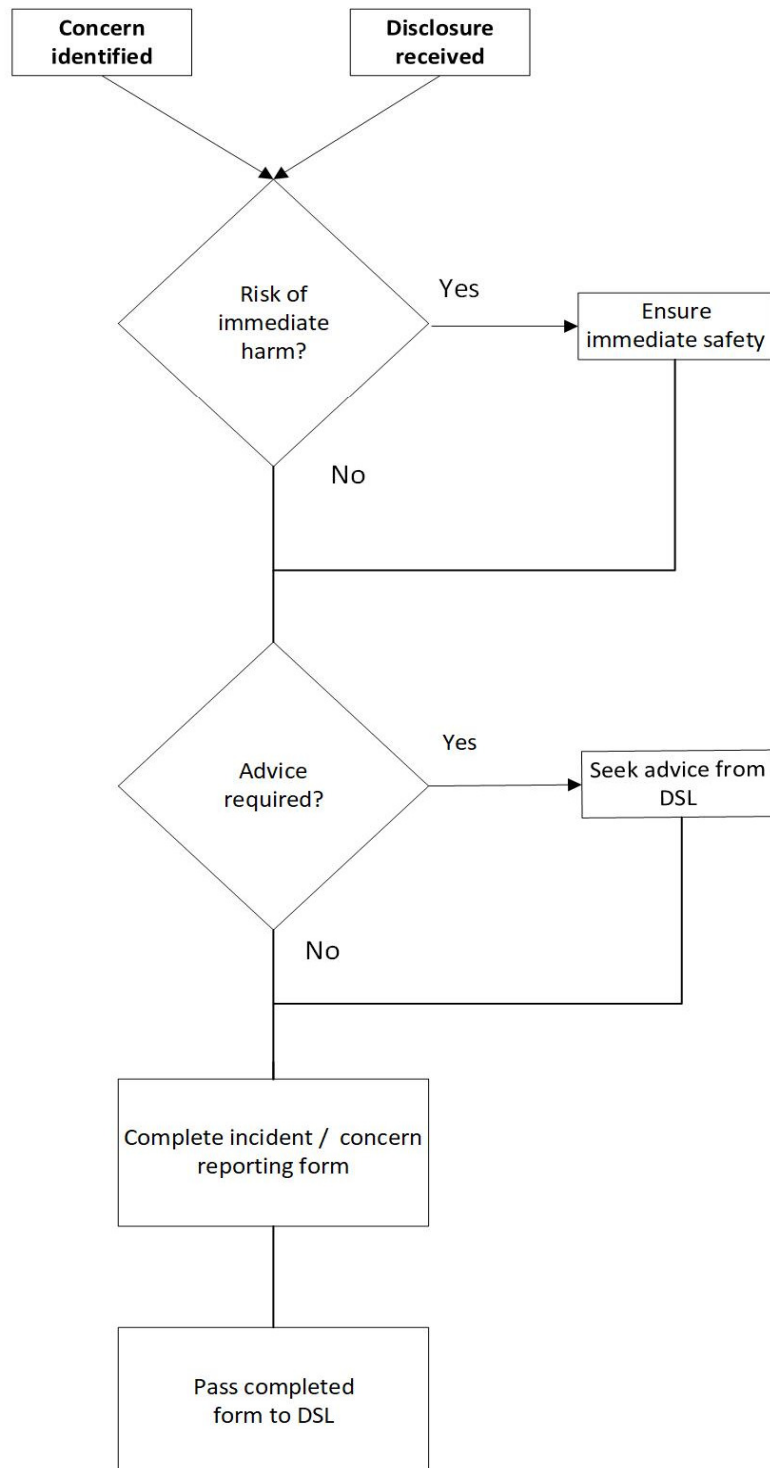
- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented
- Attend safeguarding training where required
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from parents
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of the children in their care
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or authority as adults and leaders within the group
- Only take responsibility for children if they are physically and mentally fit and able to do so
- Treat them with respect and dignity
- Treat them in an age-appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice
- Treat them as individuals
- Respect their views and wishes
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- Ensure that age-appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented in accordance with this policy
- Ensure that any age-appropriate physical contact is child led
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual child or the group
- Refrain from any physical chastisement
- Refrain from making any social media connections with them
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them
- Act with fairness and treat children equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding
- 2022 Position of Trust law now states that is a church leader/youth leader engages in an inappropriate relationship with a 16-27 year old, this is now illegal and carries a 5 year prison sentence.

Code of conduct for leaders and volunteers working with Adults

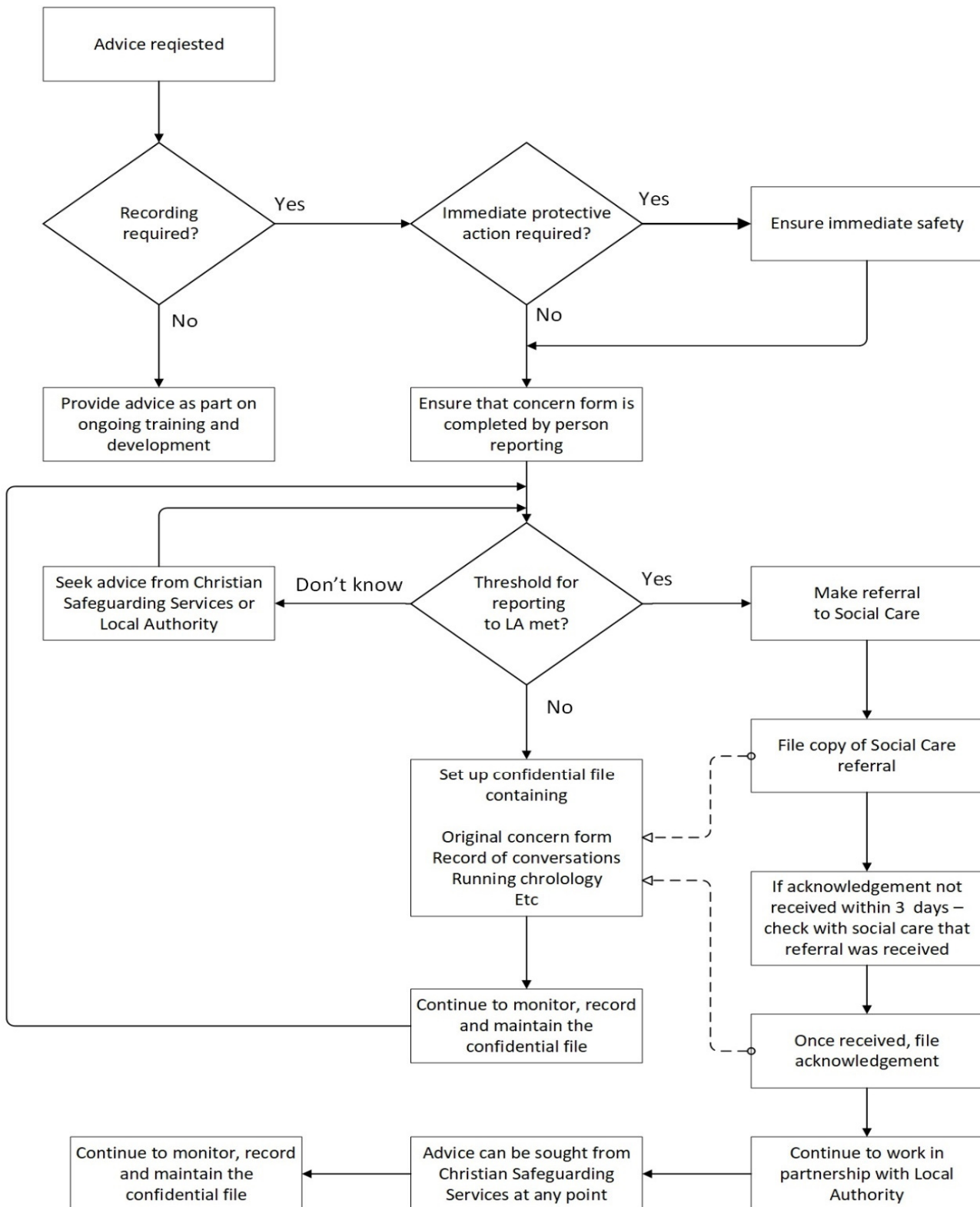
Those working with vulnerable adults including adults at risk of abuse will:

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the church leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of those with whom they are working
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit
- Treat them with respect and dignity
- Ensure that support is client led and that their views, wishes, and choices are respected
- Treat them as individuals
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented
- Ensure that any physical contact is client led
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding

Reporting concerns or disclosures



Processing concerns or disclosures: the role of the DSL



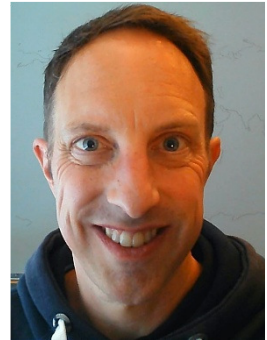
Safeguarding Information for Grace Church Hilton

Charity Number: **1161858**

Our Designated Safeguarding lead is: **Mark Selby**

Phone: **01283 329848**

Email: mark@gracechurchhilton.org.uk

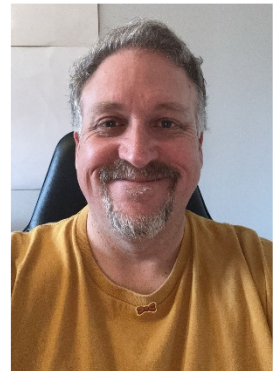


Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Chris Hammersley

Phone: **07891577123**

Email: chris@gracechurchhilton.org.uk



In an emergency, call your local authority's:

Children's services: 01629 533190

Adult's services: 01629 533190

Or the Police

Christian Safeguarding Services can also be contacted on: 0116 2184420