

Ewhurst Baptist Church

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This statement, in summary of the full Child Protection Policy, was adopted at a church meeting held on 14th April, 2011

It will be presented every three years to a church meeting for review and evaluation of its effectiveness.

1. As members of this church we commit ourselves to the safeguarding of children and ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
2. It is the responsibility of each of us to do everything possible to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of children and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
3. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children / youth.
4. The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
5. The church adopts the guidelines of the Baptist Union of Great Britain published in *Safe To Grow* as contained in this policy.
6. Each person who works with children will agree to abide by this policy established by the church.

This church appoints Marian Copus and Simon Bodington as the Designated Person and Deputy

Signed(Chair of meeting)

Position

Date

EWHURST BAPTIST CHURCH

Child Protection Policy

(April, 2011)

Statement of intent

Ewhurst Baptist Church is committed to provide a safe and secure environment for members, staff and visitors and to promote a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety and the well-being of others.

The church has a ministry to children and the Leadership take very seriously the responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons entrusted in their care. This policy is intended to set out the means by which their safety and welfare is protected as far as we are able. All adults attending the church have a general responsibility to safeguard children, to treat them with respect, and to report any concerns to the Designated Persons.

The church's Child Protection Policy draws upon the guidance contained in the Baptist Union publication *Safe to Grow*. This policy will be the subject of consultation, review and updating on a three-year cycle.

Children are defined within this policy as anyone aged up to their 18th birthday.

What constitutes neglect or abuse

Government Guidance¹ gives four categories of abuse:

1. Physical abuse: involving hitting, shaking, burning, or in any way causing physical harm, including pretending or causing physical ill health.
2. Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in any sexual activity, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, looking at inappropriate material or activity, or encouraging any form of sexual behaviour.
3. Emotional abuse: any treatment of a child which causes emotional ill health, including conveying worthlessness, inadequacy, or value only be fulfilling the needs of another, making inappropriate expectations or putting children in positions where they feel afraid or in danger. Other forms of abuse by definition involve emotional abuse, but it may also occur alone.
4. Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's physical or psychological needs, so as to cause impairment to their health or development, such as failing to provide food, shelter, clothing or protection, emotional support, or appropriate medical treatment.

Possible signs and symptoms

- Disclosure from the child themselves
- Parents hinting that they are finding it difficult to cope
- Sudden changes in a child's behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn

¹ Working together to safeguard children Dept of Health 1999 Taken from the BU publication "Safe to Grow"

- Physical appearance e.g. unexplained bruises, cuts or burns especially if on a part of the body not prone to injury
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Signs of neglect e.g. a very unkempt appearance
- Sexualised behaviour e.g. inappropriate sexual awareness or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour or play
- Excessive nervousness or watchfulness

This list is not exhaustive, but also presence of one of these does not in itself constitute proof of abuse

Named contacts

All adults within the youth work of EBC, (including visiting staff, volunteers and students on placement) are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Church's Designated Person with responsibility for child protection.

The Designated Person is: Marian Copus [Tel: 01483 267014]
 The Deputy Designated Person is: Simon Bodington [Tel: 01483 419138]

The Designated Person shall be the focal point of Church/Youth Project staff who have any concerns about an individual child's safety and the first point of contact for external agencies who are pursuing Child Protection (CP) investigations.

The photographs and names of both the Designated Person and Deputy will be displayed in the church in an accessible place.

Guidelines for responding to a child who may have been abused

- Do not attempt to question or interview the child once it is clear that abuse is suspected or known to have occurred.
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. not telling anyone else.
- Accept what you hear without passing judgement.
- Tell the child what you are going to do.
- Make careful notes (the circumstances, what the child said, what you said etc) as soon as possible, preferably within an hour. Include dates and times of incident/recording and keep the notes safely.
- Contact the person responsible for child protection concerns or, in their absence, take action yourself without delay.
- Listen and pass on to the church Designated Person - do not question or investigate.
- The Designated Person should contact Children's Services or the police. In some situations advice may be sought from the CCPAS or Baptist Union before deciding what action to take.

Reporting incidents of suspected abuse

As indicated above, any concerns should be reported to the Designated person or the deputy. If the concern is about the Designated Person or their Deputy another member of the Leadership Team should be contacted.

When an individual concern/incident is brought to the notice of the Designated Person, he/she will be responsible for deciding upon whether or not this should be reported to the Social Services Department. Use referral form (see Appendix B)

Where there is any doubt as to the seriousness of this concern or disagreement between the Designated Person and the member of staff reporting the concern, then advice can be sought from the Church Leadership or the relevant Social Services Department.

In circumstances where a child or young person has a suspicious injury which requires urgent medical attention the CP referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency medical assistance. If the child or young person is thought to be at immediate risk (because of parental violence or intoxication, for example) urgent police intervention will be requested.

Where it is suspected that a child or young person might be at risk of significant harm, nothing will be said to the child's parent/carer without prior discussion and approval by the Designated Person.

When dealing with matters relating to Child Protection, the welfare of the child is paramount. Issues relating to confidentiality do NOT apply. Workers should not fail to report concerns on the basis of the child or young person not wanting information shared.

All parents/carers of the child or young person new to the Church Youth Project are to be informed of our Child Protection responsibilities and the existence of this policy. Copies will be kept in the church office. From time to time there will be periodic reviews at church meetings, the CPP will be mentioned in the welcome pack, and there will be publicity on notice board with names and contact details of child protection leads.

In situations where children or young persons sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of the Youth Workers, parents/carers will be notified of this as soon as possible.

Ewhurst Baptist Church recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by anyone becoming involved in the church who may wish to harm the children or young persons. Some adults may groom parents or children with the intention of wanting to abuse a child on the church premises, on church activities, or in their home. Ewhurst Baptist Church recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by newcomers who may wish to harm the children or young persons.

Recruitment and Training

Recruitment

Child Protection is a high priority in Ewhurst Baptist Church and this will be reflected in all recruitment and supervision processes. Staff, both paid and voluntary, who want to work with or have regular contact with children, will be expected to:

- Complete an application form which asks for details of previous employment, including voluntary work.
- Two references will be required for all staff, both paid and voluntary, who work with children.
- Complete an Enhanced Disclosure CRB check
- Be interviewed to establish their previous experience of working in an environment where there is contact with children.

- Agree to take part in regular training on Child Protection issues. This applies to all staff members, paid and voluntary who work with children.
- All appointments will be subject to an agreed probationary period, during which the person will be supervised to an appropriate level.

Once the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is in place, staff members, both paid and voluntary, who work with children will need to be registered. For further information go to: www.isa-gov.org.uk.

The interview process for all paid staff will include questions on child protection and if this is an area where the candidate lacks knowledge they will be expected to take part in training during the probationary period. The probationary period will include specific supervision to ensure the member of staff is fully conversant with the Policy and is implementing it in their practice.

Training

Training on CP issues will be organised by the Designated Person and their deputy subject to input from the Local Authority or other outside agencies. All staff (paid or voluntary) will be issued with Ewhurst Baptist Church's Child Protection Policy. The Designated Persons, however, will need to attend an appropriate dedicated training course and have specialised knowledge on the subject.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff (paid or voluntary) are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct in respect of their contact with the children or young persons and their families/carers.

Children or young persons will be treated with respect and dignity. Whilst it will be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. It is not acceptable for a leader to form a romantic relationship with a child or young person with whom they have a relationship of trust.

Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued or where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a child or young person for their own or other's safety, this will be appropriately recorded to the Designated Person and the parents / carers.

Whenever possible first aid should only be administered by qualified first-aiders. A first -aider will be on the premises during children's activities and a list of first-aiders posted on Hall notice board. If it is necessary for a child to remove clothing for this treatment, there should, whenever possible, be another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting, nappy-changing or washing after soiling himself or herself, two adults with whom the child is comfortable should be present. All first aid treatment and non-routine changing or personal care will be recorded.

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with children or young persons. The door to the room in which the counselling or meeting is taking place should be left open or have a glass panel. Where this is not practical because of the need for confidentiality another member of staff will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting.

Ewhurst Baptist Church workers should also be alert to the possible risks which might arise from contact by them with the children or young persons outside the church. Home visits to children or young persons should only take place with the prior knowledge of the Designated Person and, if possible, accompanied by another adult. Visits and telephone calls by the children or young persons to the homes of staff and parents/carers should be likewise approved by the Designated Person or their Deputy and parents/carers aware of the visits. Staff whether paid or voluntary should avoid giving lifts to children or young persons on their own unless absolutely necessary and if this is unavoidable then the child or young person should be requested to sit in the rear of the vehicle.

All trips and overnight stays will require a risk assessment to identify any issues that need addressing to keep children and staff safe. This will be undertaken by activity leaders on the form supplied, signed off by the Designated Person or their Deputy and stored in the main office following the activity. Where activities involve overnight accommodation, staff must always have separate sleeping accommodation. On outside trips sufficient supervision for the number of children and young persons should be provided, according to local authority guidelines at the time of the outings.

Complaints/Allegations made against Staff

Ewhurst Baptist Church takes seriously all complaints made against members of staff, both paid and voluntary. The parents/carers, staff and children and young persons may share concerns about the actions of any of the church workers. All such concerns/complaints will be brought immediately to the attention of the Designated Person and the Church Leadership, in order that they may activate the appropriate procedures.

If the allegation involves what appears to be physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect the Designated Person in collaboration with the Leadership will take action. Where it appears that a criminal offence may have been committed, this will be reported to the Police for their investigation and to the appropriate Social Service Department if this is deemed necessary.

Staff (paid and voluntary) who are formally investigated for the abuse of children or young persons (or who resign before investigative action can be instigated) will be notified to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Records

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents, Child Protection concerns and actions taken relating to individual children or young persons. Use the template recommended by the Baptist Union (see Appendix A). They will be securely kept by the Designated Person in a locked cabinet in the church office and can be accessed by him/her and the Deputy or Church Leadership. Referrals made to Social Services under the Child Protection procedures will be recorded in detail and confirmed in writing.

Safety on Church Premises

The presence of intruders and suspicious strangers approaching any of the children or young persons will be reported to the Police immediately.

Anyone attending the church who has been convicted of child abuse or any offences against children will have a designated person to whom they are accountable and be subject to the church's guidelines

for those accused or convicted of offences against children. Guidance is available from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service: refer to 'Help...a sex offender has joined my church'.

Computers

There are no computers in the church building which are accessed by children and all are password protected to prevent use by children. Computer safety will regularly be reviewed as part of the review of this Child Protection Policy

Publicity

Copies of this policy will be given to all workers and the Church Leadership. It should be brought to the attention of all the Church Members and available on request to the parents/carers of the children and young persons who attend any Church activities.

Praying with children

Ewhurst Baptist church accepts the following guidelines suggested by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory service:

1. Parental permission and the permission of the child must always be sought before praying for children in a prayer ministry situation.
2. Those praying for children on an individual basis should always be members of the church who are suitably trained and formally authorised within the church, denomination or movement to do so in recognition of their expertise and experience in this sensitive area. Training will be provided for those involved in praying with children.
3. Children are easily frightened and are very susceptible to suggestion. They may also be upset by shouting and may easily believe they are bad, wicked or corrupt. A child should *never* be shouted at or be told they are demonised, possessed or oppressed by the devil, evil spirits or such like.
4. It is very important not to spiritualise problems arising from behavioural issues, learning difficulties, mental health problems, copied or unconventional behaviours, which will usually be the cause of a child's difficulties.²
5. It is preferable that a parent should be present during prayer with a child.
6. If it is thought appropriate to comfort them or lay hands on them during prayer, children should always be asked permission before doing so.

Reviews of Child Protection Concerns

The Designated Person and the Church Leaders on a regular basis should review any child or young person, of whom members of staff have concerns.

Other useful contacts:

ChildLine: Tel: 0800 1111 (for children) Web: www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC: Tel: 0808 800 5000 Web: nspcc.org.uk

Baptist Union Safeguarding - Mave Whitchurch (SEBA) (01273) 441509, mave@seba-baptist.org.uk

² © CCPAS child protection manual 'Guidance to Churches'

_‘Safe to Grow’ published by the Baptist Union in 2005. This is an explanation of a church's responsibility under the Government's code of practice for working with children, plus sample forms and letters.

APPENDIX A

S a f e t o G r o w R e p o r t f o r m

This report form is for the purpose of keeping a record of reports made to the Children's Responsible Person. As well as this report, you should make a full factual written record of your observations and any conversations, which should be signed and dated.

Name of worker:

Name of organization:

Name of child:

Date & time of incident:

Nature of concern:

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Have you made a full written record of the incident/concern? Yes/No (Please tick)

Who have you spoken to about your concerns?

Child: Yes / No (Please circle)

Carer: Yes / No (Please circle)

Organisation leader: Yes / No (Please circle) Name

Social Services: Yes / No (Please circle) Name

What feedback have you received?

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.....

How have your concerns been followed up?

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.....

Signature of Worker: Date and time

Signature of Children's Advocate/Responsible Person

Date and time

APPENDIX B

**EWHURST BAPTIST CHURCH
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN – REFERRAL FORM
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

Use this form to make referrals for child protection. Child protection referrals must be made by telephone, followed up by this completed form within 48 hours.

To: Children's Social Care, Surrey County Council

From: Referrer's Details (Please print)

NAME:

JOB TITLE:

TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

DATE:

TIME:

FAMILY DETAILS

FAMILY COMPOSITION:(Include all adults and children and record first name and family name)

Name: Parents/Carers	DoB	M/F	Ethnicity	Religion	1st Language Interpreter needed Y/N?	Disability or special educational needs
Children – Youngest first						

Schools attended:

Reason for Referral – Please indicate clearly if you suspect the child/ren is/are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

PLEASE USE ADDITIONAL PAGES (IF REQUIRED)

Action to Date – Please indicate what actions have been taken to date by you

Have the family been informed of the referral?

Please give name and/or contact details of any other professionals involved with the family

Flowchart

