

Bunyan Baptist Church

Stevenage



Refreshing community for everyone

Child Safeguarding Policy

Nov13

Policy history

Policy author	Eric Beach
Replaces	Child Safeguarding Policy Mar13
Approved at Church Meeting	26 th November 2013
First Review	Updated with revised Designated Person details + minor changes to the recording following Mar14 AGM
Second Review	Updated with details of new organisation doing DBS checks Spring 2016
Next Review Due	2018 OR in case of significant changes to law, good practice guidelines or personnel
Compliance monitoring	Eric Beach

BUNYAN BAPTIST CHURCH

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

OVERALL MISSION

As members of Bunyan Baptist Church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and the safeguarding of all, especially children and young people [from here on known collectively as 'young people' by which we mean those under 18 years of age].

Young people are valued, yet vulnerable, members of the community who need our special care. As a Christian community who trust in God, we believe we are encouraged to be vigilant, but not over-anxious about risks. At the same time we want to love our neighbours as ourselves, be a good witness of what it is to be a Christian Church, and to obey the requirements of authorities. Our approach thus coincides with what secular authorities would regard as good practice.

We take seriously the charge given by Jesus to welcome young people and to give them free access to Him. Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)

We note, too, the individual worth of young people through Jesus' words, "Whoever welcomes this little child, welcomes Me; and whoever welcomes Me, welcomes the One who sent Me. For whoever is the least among you all is the greatest." (Luke 9:48)

We must also take seriously the requirement to protect young people. "But if anyone causes one of these little ones to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea." (Matthew 18:6-10)

We also take seriously the message of the Parable of the Wheat and Weeds / Tares from Matthew 13:24-30, where both good and evil is allowed to grow up within the kingdom community. We have a responsibility to identify those that might be a risk to young people [eg known sex offenders or others barred from working with young people] and provide suitable boundaries that protect both the young people and those individuals.

Overall Aim of the Policy

This policy aims to do three things:

- to ensure that the church works in a 'professional' manner to take reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to young people are minimised; and, where there are concerns about young people's welfare, taking appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies
- to provide guidelines that will ensure that only suitable staff are engaged in our work with young people and that they are properly trained, supervised and monitored in order to avoid inappropriate relationships being formed and to ensure that they remain above suspicion of any wrong-doing or abusive behaviour
- to ensure that suitable and sufficient procedures are put in place that will protect the young people in our care from harm based on reasonable and suitable risk assessments.

Objectives

The following objectives will enable the trustees and members of Bunyan Baptist Church to carry out these aims. We will endeavour to:

- follow the '*Safe to Grow*' guidelines published by the Baptist Union and the Home Office Code of Practice '*Safe from Harm*' and abide by any legal requirements regarding child safeguarding
- update this policy as required and review its contents every two years
- exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with young people, whether paid or unpaid
- provide suitable and sufficient training and supervision for all who work with our young people and ensure that they have received and read a copy of this policy outlining our procedures
- communicate best practice in training sessions and other meetings and encourage all workers to put it into practice
- ensure that all church members know who should be contacted in the church in case of a child safeguarding issue arising
- treat seriously all allegations / suspicions of abuse / neglect. If necessary, the Advocate will report a case to Children's Services (what we used to call "Social Services") or the police if appropriate, to ensure that concerns of abuse or neglect are examined objectively by people who are independent of Bunyan Baptist Church

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

All church members and other members of the congregation

- It is the responsibility of everyone within Bunyan Baptist Church to commit to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of young people while in our care and to report any abuse and / or neglect discovered or suspected [wherever it may be taking place].

Charity Trustees

It is the responsibility of the **charity trustees** to

- ensure that this policy is implemented and that suitable and sufficient procedures and resources are put in place to protect the young people we work with
- nominate a designated safeguarding officer / competent person [known locally as **The Advocate**] and **Designated Persons** who will be the points of contact for any child safeguarding issues or concerns raised within the church [see below]
- monitor the process where youth workers [defined as anyone working specifically with those aged 0 - 18 year old] are recruited and vetted for suitability and the review process. This will include a criminal record check [through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which replaces CRB] and risk assessment by the Designated Persons at least once every three years
- nominate individuals who can act as **DBS Verifiers** and **The Administrator** who will carry out the responsibilities outlined in the sections below
- make a final decision on accepting an application to work with young people that raises concerns
- ensure that church members and other members of the congregation know about the various individuals with responsibility for child protection by
 - issuing a statement at a church meeting on an annual basis
 - sending out key details of the role of the Advocate / Designated Persons with the notices on one of the following Sundays
 - requesting that the current policy is published on the church website
 - publishing a poster about child safeguarding [as per appendix 2]

The Advocate

It is the responsibility of **The Advocate** to

- ensure that they make themselves and their role known to church youth leaders, members of the congregation and young people. Their photograph, name and phone number should be publicly displayed [see Appendix 2]
- be a voice for young people in respect of child safeguarding concerns.
- be fully conversant with the “Safe to Grow” publication and know where they can go to find advice when needed
- act as the key contact person that the Designated Persons turn to if they have any concerns about a child or young person in their care, or about the behaviour of one of their fellow-workers
- act as the point of contact between the church and Hertfordshire County Council’s ‘Children’s Services’ [which would formerly have been known as ‘Social Services’] or other local Safeguarding Children [Child Protection] agencies. The advocate [or deputies in their absence] are normally the **ONLY** person who should approach statutory agencies with regards to any concern/allegation. When such a contact has been made, the advocate should inform the trustees while taking appropriate steps to protect the anonymity of those concerned.

Designated Persons

There are currently three **Designated Persons**:

- **DP Children’s**
- **DP Youth Work**
- **DP Twinklers**

Should the trustees so decide they can nominate further Designated Persons [eg DP Crèche].

The **Designated Persons** shall

- make themselves known to all who work with young people in their area of responsibility
- arrange for [but not necessarily personally provide] support, resources, training and supervision to be provided for those who work under them as far as is reasonably possible
- ensure that all who newly apply to work with young people within the church are suitably risk assessed [not necessarily solely by the designated person] to determine their suitability, and that this is recorded. They must ensure that staff employed / taken on as volunteers are, to the best of their knowledge, not likely to pose a threat or risk to the young people with whom we work. This will include
 - completing an application form
 - providing suitable references that are taken up
 - an interview [normally conducted by the appropriate Designated Person]
 - a DBS check

- ensure that this risk assessment process is reviewed at least once every three years if workers wish to continue in youth work. This will include a repeat DBS check and a fresh interview process to check that the person is still suitable for this work. Again the execution of this process will be a shared responsibility
- ensure that nobody shall engage in their area of youth work without the aforementioned appropriate checks and supervision etc and 'chase' anyone identified by the Administrator who has received a DBS form but not returned it with the appropriate evidence
- notify the Trustees of anyone failing to co-operate with this process in a timely fashion
- ensure that individuals still going through the application process will be supervised at all times by a suitably vetted and trained leader while they work with young people
- normally be the recipient of all concerns regarding child protection in their area of concern and decide if the concern is significant enough to go to the Advocate
- keep accurate records of all referrals and any subsequent actions using the form provided
- keep those records secure and confidential in line with any data protection policy that may be in force at the time
- decide what course of action should be taken and, with the person reporting the concern, carry out any action as appropriate
- endeavour to access for themselves suitable training offered either by the church or externally to ensure that they are up to date with what is currently considered good practice

All who work with young people

It is the responsibility of **all who work with young people** to ensure that *as far as reasonably possible* they will

- familiarise themselves with this policy and follow the correct procedures as laid down here and any guidelines subsequently produced
- attend Child Safeguarding Training at least once every two years. Where this is done as part of their professional life [ie they are teachers, NHS employees etc where Safeguarding Training is mandatory for them], then they can negotiate exemption on the understanding that they **MUST** familiarise themselves with this policy and demonstrate that by answering some basic questions as posed by their Designated Person.
- engage in 'best practice' as identified and communicated by the leadership and *as far as reasonably possible* provide a safe working environment for our young people
- refer any concerns that they have in the first instance to the relevant Designated Person. If the Designated Person feels that it is necessary, then they will take it on to the

Advocate. If the Designated Person is not available, **or** the complaint is about the Designated Person, **or** the Designated Person refuses to take action that they feel strongly is required, then they may go directly to the Advocate.

- only allow parents / carers [ie those who are not DBS-checked as part of this church] who stay in groups [which is permissible] to supervise their own offspring
- supervise leaders who are under 18 years of age at all times. It is Bunyan policy that we will not allow under 16s to be involved as regular youth workers, though they may be invited to help occasionally under strict supervision.

The DBS Document Verifier[s]

It is the responsibility **The Verifier[s]** to

- meet with the candidate once the DBS form has been completed to check that the form has no obvious errors and check and record the “evidence” of identity presented.
- complete all the necessary check forms and send them to the company that provides our DBS checks - Due Diligence Checking

The verifier will be registered with ‘***Due Diligence Checking***’ as an officer of the church.

The Administrator

It is the responsibility **The Administrator** to

- assist with the efficient administration of the appointment procedures
- administer the criminal records checking procedure as required by the authorities [now DBS which replaced CRB] and keep a register of those who have been checked and when a review is required
- identify those people who are due for a repeat check and issue them with new DBS forms so that these checks are repeated at the appropriate intervals [currently once every three years]
- tell the Designated Persons who is being rechecked and any that might need ‘chasing’ to return their forms
- keep up to date with and communicate new ‘vetting’ procedures and/or legal requirements to the trustees and those who work with young people
- ensure that all who work with young people are provided with a paper copy of this policy
- provide secure storage of all records pertaining to DBS checking and ensure that these can only be accessed by those with permission to see the information [usually only the administrator and the advocate]

At the time of this policy, the officers mentioned above are

Advocate	Jan Fry	
Deputy Advocate	Barbara Francis	
Administrator	Denise Beach	
Verifiers	Minister, Church Secretary, Denise Beach, Eric Beach	
Designated Persons	DP Children	Ruth Hyde
	DP Youth	Andrew Ginn
	DP Twinklers	Kirsty Homfray-Cooper

Provision of training and advice

Concern has been raised about the levels of competence required to deliver training and / or provide professional advice as there are potential legal implications and possible issues regarding insurance and professional liability.

In line with what is currently being proposed by the Central Baptist Association's Safeguarding Group, the Trustees are taking the line that there should be a distinction made between the competencies required to deliver basic safeguarding training and that required to provide specific advice.

To provide basic safeguarding training, a person must be competent to identify and deliver key learning objectives and also to be aware of the limit of their knowledge with regards to more complex Safeguarding issues. The learning objectives will include delivering basic information about what may constitute a Safeguarding issue [eg types of abuse / neglect; possible indicators; power imbalances within relationships – possibly including reference to issues around domestic violence and children; appropriate and inappropriate behaviour etc] and what the processes are for dealing with that within Bunyan Baptist Church. The point of reference for any query within this training is the BUGB publication 'Safe to Grow'. Basic information given should be tested against this benchmark and where a complex question is asked, the answer to which the trainer is possibly not sure, they should qualify their answer with a reminder to check it against this document [in the same way that all preaching should be tested by scripture].

To provide safeguarding advice a person must have a level of competency that can only really be obtained by working in the field in a professional capacity. It is quite acceptable to ask 'what if ...' type questions of the duty officer at CSF [or another safeguarding professional] if it can be done in a way that doesn't identify the church and the individuals concerned. It is acceptable to say 'I think the answer is but you must check that against 'Safe to Grow' / with a recognised professional'

Appendix 1

Incident Report Form

Bunyan Baptist Church

This form is for recording reports made to the Designated Persons / Advocate.
 As well as this report, you should make a full factual written record of your observations and any conversations which should be dated and signed.

Name of worker

Name of child

Age of child / Date of Birth

Date of incident

Time

Nature of concern:

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

Who have you spoken to about your concerns? **[Please put date of contact beside each]**

Child	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Carer	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Organisation leader	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name
Other	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name
CSF [Children's Services]	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name

What feedback have you received?

How have your concerns been followed up?

Signature of worker Date and Time

Signature of Designated Person or Advocate Date and Time

Child Safeguarding at Bunyan Baptist Church

Bunyan Baptist Church operates a Child Safeguarding Policy designed to deal with issues of abuse / child protection raised within the context of its operation.

While designed primarily to protect children, the policy is also designed to protect those adults working with them from any unwarranted accusations or suggestions of improper behaviour.

Any concerns regarding such issues should be raised initially with the Designated Persons



For Twinklers – Kirsty Homfray-Cooper



For 0-10s – Ruth Hyde



For 11-18s – Siân O'Hara



For adults – Jan Fry

Child Safeguarding Advocate

The Advocate is the key link between the church and the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board [ie those employed by the local authority to deal with any child protection issues]

When a concern is raised with the Designated Persons above, they will make every effort to bring this to the advocate [or deputy advocate] for a decision as to whether to take it further and involve external agencies.



Jan Fry – Our Advocate