

Bunyan Baptist Church

Stevenage



Refreshing community for everyone

Safeguarding of 'Adults at Risk' Policy

Feb17

Policy history

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Policy author | Eric Beach |
| Replaces | This is a new policy |
| Approved at Church Meeting | |
| First Review | |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Second Review | |
| Next Review Due | Feb 2019 OR in case of significant changes to law, good practice guidelines or personnel |
| Compliance monitoring | Eric Beach and Designated Persons |

BUNYAN BAPTIST CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING OF ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

OVERALL MISSION

As members of Bunyan Baptist Church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and the safeguarding of all, not only children and young people.

Those who are vulnerable members of the community need our special care. This has always been one of the key roles of the church in society. However, this does not come without its own set of risks. 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 in Matthew 25 to look after those vulnerable in our society

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’

“Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’

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

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community. We have a responsibility to identify those that might be a risk to people at risk [eg known sex offenders or others barred from working with young people] and provide suitable boundaries that protect both the people at risk 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 those defined as 'adults at risk' [see below] are minimised; and, where there are concerns about their 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 adults at risk 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 adults at risk who come into contact with our community 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 Belong*' guidelines published by the Baptist Union and abide by any legal requirements regarding safeguarding adults at risk.
- update this policy as required and review its contents every two years
- exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with adults at risk, whether paid or unpaid
- provide suitable and sufficient training and supervision for all who work with adults at risk who come into contact with our community 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 safeguarding issue arising
- treat seriously all allegations / suspicions of abuse / neglect. If necessary, the Advocate will report a case to Adult 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.

DEFINITIONS

WORKING WITH ...

This policy is referring primarily to the regulation of those engaging with adults at risk in an 'official' capacity on behalf of the church. However, it also provides a framework whereby those with concerns about the abuse of adults at risk can raise them.

'Engaging in an official' capacity can take many forms. It will include any individual or team that runs events that are aimed at sectors of our community that might include adults at risk. This could include Twinklers, lunch clubs for older people, friendship groups, house groups, and various outreach activities which we either currently run or could run in the future. It will also include any kind of pastoral visiting, counselling, bereavement support and prayer ministry within the church.

It will not include friends visiting friends or neighbourly visits as long as they are not being done following a referral from the church nor are being promoted as part of the churches ministry.

What is required at all times is a culture of openness whereby any activity that might be considered to be part of the church's work is open to scrutiny and question regarding its appropriateness and any power imbalance that might be present which could be perceived as abusive or coercive.

REGULATED ACTIVITIES

There are six regulated activities which require a worker to have an Enhanced DBS check with a barred list check. They are:

1. Providing personal care

Anyone who assists with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc.

Anyone who prompts and supervises with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc, as the adult cannot make the decision to do so themselves.

Anyone who trains, instructs or offers advice on the above because of an adult's age, illness or disability.

2. Assistance with cash, bills and/or shopping

Anyone who assists in managing an adult's cash, paying their bills or shopping on their behalf.

3. Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs

Anyone who provides assistance in the conduct of an adult's own affairs, for example, lasting or enduring powers of attorney.

4. Conveying

Anyone who transports an adult to, from or between places where they receive health, personal or social care (this does not include transporting people to and from church).

5. Providing healthcare

Any healthcare professional providing healthcare to an adult.

6. Providing social work

Anyone who provides social care.

Volunteers at Lunch Clubs or social activities provided for the elderly are not likely to meet the definition of regulated activity with adults at risk, unless they are providing physical assistance with eating, drinking or going to the toilet.

No member of the congregation should engage with adults at risk 'in an official capacity' without first having undergone a formal 'vetting procedure' as outlined below and been authorised to do such work.

No-one engaging with adults at risk in an official capacity should engage in any of the 'regulated activities' without the first having gained the express written permission of the Trustees.

ADULTS AT RISK

The term '**adult at risk**' has replaced the previously used 'vulnerable adult', focusing on the situation rather than the characteristics of the adult themselves. The label 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for any abuse lies with the abused adult.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following simple definition taken from CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service):

Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are some times in life where risks may increase. Some of these circumstances may include:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty (especially if it creates a dependency on or needing help from others)
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past abuse or trauma
- English is not their first language

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 adults at risk who come into contact with our community 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 adults at risk who come into contact with our community and who 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 safeguarding issues or concerns raised within the church [see below]
- monitor the process where those working with adults at risk are recruited and vetted for suitability and the review process. This will include [where we are providing a 'regulated activity' – see above] 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. This risk assessment process will be based on interview of candidates to ascertain their suitability for the role, the provision of suitable records and the undertaking of training such as will be required to carry out the post safely, competently and in compliance with Bunyan policies.
- nominate individuals who can act as **DBS Verifiers** and **The Administrator** who will carry out the responsibilities outlined in the sections below. These will be the same people who administer this for child safeguarding
- make a final decision on accepting an application to work with adults at risk that raises concerns

- ensure that church members and other members of the congregation know about the various individuals with responsibility for protection of adults at risk 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 safeguarding of adults at risk [as per appendix 2]

The Advocate

The advocate will now cover issues both of child safeguarding and the safeguarding of adults at risk.

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

- ensure that they make themselves and their role known to church leaders and members of the congregation. Their photograph, name and phone number should be publicly displayed [see Appendix 2]
- be a voice for adults at risk in respect of safeguarding concerns.
- be fully conversant with the “Safe to Belong” 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 adults at risk 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 ‘Adult Services’ [which would formerly have been known as ‘Social Services’] or other local Safeguarding 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 will initially be one **Designated Person [Adults at Risk]**

Should the trustees so decide they can nominate further Designated Persons.

The **Designated Persons** shall

- make themselves known to all who work with adults at risk 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 adults at risk 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 adults at risk 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 [where required to carry out regulated activities]
 - attendance at required training to allow them to work safely, competently and in line with Bunyan policies.
- ensure that this risk assessment process is reviewed at least once every three years if workers wish to continue working with adults at risk. This will include a repeat DBS check and a fresh interview / risk assessment 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 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 adults at risk
- normally be the recipient of all concerns regarding safeguarding 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 adults at risk

It is the responsibility of **all who work with adults at risk** 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 suitable 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 adults at risk
- 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.
- 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 workers with adults at risk, 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 adults at risk
- ensure that all who work with adults at risk are provided with a paper copy of this policy if required
- 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 |
| Administrator | Denise Beach |
| Verifiers | Minister, Church Secretary, Denise Beach, Eric Beach |
| Designated Persons | XXXXXXXXXXXX |

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; 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 Belong'. 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 Adult Services [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 Belong' / with a recognised professional'

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 Adult at Risk

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]**

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|---|----|---|------------|
| Adult at Risk | Yes | • | No | • | |
| Carer | Yes | • | No | • | N/A • |
| Organisation leader | Yes | • | No | • | Name |
| Other | Yes | • | No | • | Name |
| Adult Services | Yes | • | No | • | 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

Appendix 2

Safeguarding of Adults at Risk at Bunyan Baptist Church

Bunyan Baptist Church operates safeguarding policies designed to deal with issues of abuse of adults at risk raised within the context of its operation.

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

Any concerns regarding such issues should be raised initially with the Designated Person[s]

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Insert photo + name + phone number

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 safeguarding 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