

## **KEEPING CHILDREN AND ‘ADULTS AT RISK’ SAFE AT SUNNYHILL**

This policy and the accompanying procedures draw on ThirtyOneEight guidelines and previous Sunnyhill Church Safeguarding policy.

This policy reflects the contents of these documents and additional guidance taken from the Diocese of Salisbury Safeguarding Adults guidelines. This revision merges safeguarding adults and children into one shared policy with separate sections where appropriate.

### **Glossary:**

Adult at risk	‘Adults at risk’ are those, over the age of 18, who have a need for care and support and are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs are unable to protect themselves
Child	Anyone below the age of 18
Young Person	Anyone Below the age of 18
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
Vulnerable Adult	Now officially known as an ‘Adult at risk’
NextGen	A generic term for all our children and youth groups
ThirtyOneEight	ThirtyOne Eight is our safeguarding consultancy service

Safeguarding is about promoting welfare for children and “adults at risk”. It can be limiting to think of safeguarding purely as a 'procedure' or 'policy' because, while it is important that procedures and policies are in place to ensure everyone knows their responsibilities, the actual act of safeguarding is protecting a person's human rights in whatever way works best for them.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ‘ADULTS AT RISK’ (VULNERABLE ADULTS) WITHIN SUNNYHILL CHURCH.**

Sunnyhill Church is committed to and will champion the protection of children, young people and ‘adults at risk’ both in society as a whole and in its own community. The church fully endorses and will implement the principles that the welfare of the child and the wellbeing of the adult at risk are paramount. We will foster and encourage best practice within the church community by setting standards for working with children, young people and ‘adults at risk’. We will work with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and ‘adults at risk’. We are committed to acting promptly whenever a safeguarding concern is raised and will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child protection or safeguarding adults is necessary.

### **WHY DO WE NEED A POLICY ON KEEPING CHILDREN AND ‘ADULTS AT RISK’ SAFE?**

As a Church, we are committed to reflecting God’s standards in all that we do. We have many children, young people and ‘adults at risk’ involved in a variety of activities within Sunnyhill Church and we are grateful for the high level of commitment shown by the leaders and helpers who serve in the church.

Most children will come from caring families and meet no harm at home or in any other setting. Many 'adults at risk' do not consider themselves in that way and receive high standards of care either at home or in residential care. However, there will be some who are being abused or neglected at home or elsewhere. As caring Christians, we need to be ready to respond to their needs appropriately. We also need to safeguard children and 'adults at risk' from harm within the Church both by preventing abuse by adults and minimising other risks within activities. It is the commitment of Sunnyhill's Leadership and Trustees that we will provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all children, young people and 'adults at risk'. This will enable them to develop physically, socially and spiritually within the context of the Church and minimise the risk of abuse.

It is the responsibility of Sunnyhill Church and all leaders of groups and organisations within the Church to be aware of the policy and work within its guidelines. The policy applies to all adults who have direct contact with children and young people under 18 years old while attending or running Church related activities. This will include any activities which run under the auspices of the Church where ever they take place. The policy also applies to all those who work with 'adults at risk' on behalf of Sunnyhill doing pastoral visits or running Church related activities.

This policy will be reviewed every 1 years and it is the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure such reviews takes place. Each review should include the safeguarding training needs of all relevant volunteers, staff and Trustees and the aim is that training should take place annually.

The Church DBS Recruiter along side the Churches Safeguarding Officer will administer and verify DBS checks and will be appointed by the Trustees. The Church Safeguarding Officer is a source of advice and delivers necessary training. The Senior Leadership and Trustees oversee these arrangements.

**Reviewed Nov 2022 Date of next review Nov 2023**

Lead Pastor	Dom Bird	01202 805683
Safeguarding Officer	Louise Bird	01202 805683
Chair Of The Trustees	Danny Jackson	01202 805683
Health and Safety Officer	Matt Mellor	01202 805683
DBS Recruiter	Louise Bird	01202 805683
ThirtyOneEight		01322 517817
Poole Children's Services Social Work Team		01202 735046
Poole Adult Social Services Help Desk		01202 633902
Out of Hours Social Work Service		01202 657279
Police Safeguarding Referral Unit		01202 222777

## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING 'ADULTS AT RISK'?

Most adults who are part of our church community can keep themselves safe and seek help and support themselves where that safety and wellbeing is threatened. Safeguarding Policy and procedures relate only to the group of adults we define as 'adults at risk' (previously known as vulnerable adults) Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The Care Act 2014 emphasises the Wellbeing principle whereby an individual's wishes and feelings must be at the fore of any decisions and they should be assisted to fully participate in the process. The group defined by the Care Act as **'adults at risk' are those who have a need for care and support and experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those needs are unable to protect themselves.** This may include carers in certain circumstances. This may be the very frail and elderly, people with severe mental illness, learning disability or serious physical illness or disability.

Local authorities have a duty to make enquiries or cause others to if they believe an adult is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect (section 42) There is particular protection in law under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 for those who lack mental capacity to make certain decisions themselves due to illness or mental impairment. We are obliged legally to act in their best interests.

The categories of abuse for safeguarding adults are as follows –

- **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN?

Safeguarding children is everything we do to promote the welfare and safety of **children below the age of 18 years.** Within this, child protection deals with children who are abused or neglected

or at risk of being so. "Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by others, for example via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children" (Working Together to safeguard children 2015)

- **Physical abuse**

For most injuries to young children there will be suitable explanations as children do have accidents. However, it is important to record all injuries very carefully. Recording can do no harm and could be vital information for the future protection of a child.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning/scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to the child. A parent/carer may fabricate symptoms or deliberately induce illness in child in order to get medical attention. Female genital mutilation is where external genitalia of girls are cut as a cultural practice and is illegal.

- **Neglect**

Is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur in pregnancy where there is the misuse of drugs or alcohol. Neglect may involve the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter including exclusion from home. Neglect can be abandonment or not providing adequate supervision of the child. There may be a failure to protect the child from physical harm or danger or failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment. Neglect may be emotional rather than physical – unresponsiveness to the emotional needs of the child.

- **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware that this is happening. This may involve physical contact which can be penetrative or non-penetrative. It may include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is perpetrated by men, women and other children against both boys and girls.

Most sexual abuse is not known until a child chooses to tell a trusted adult – this could happen in the Church context. Any statement of abuse must be taken very seriously. Sexual abuse often starts very subtly and builds up so slowly that the child begins to accept the abuse as something he or she has to tolerate. By the time the child wants to tell "the secret", he or she feels guilty and confused and fears no one will believe the truth. The child may have become very good at covering up the abuse and may feel he or she is betraying someone close to them and loved by them.

Child Sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. (See NSPCC web site for more detail)

- **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, causing severe, persistent adverse effects on child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a child they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued to the extent they meet another's needs. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of how they communicate. There may be age or developmentally inappropriate expectations which may include interactions beyond the child's developmental capacity as well as overprotection and limitation of exploring and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently frightened or in

danger or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Some emotional abuse is present in any other form of ill-treatment but it can be very damaging when it occurs alone.

## **PROCEDURES FOR SAFEGUARDING**

Additional Information: “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused.” (March 2015 HM Gov).

### **HOW TO KNOW IF A CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK IS BEING ABUSED**

Sometimes, a specific incident or injury will alert you but more often an accumulation of concerns will build up over time. Few signs of abuse are significant alone, but a cluster of signs must be taken seriously.

**The child or adult might show by their own behaviour that abuse is taking place**, behaving in a way which is inappropriate for their age and stage of development. Major changes in a child's or adult's behaviour would contribute to the possibility of abuse as one explanation.

**There may be signs that can be observed**, for example, inadequate clothing, poor hygiene, hunger or tiredness. Developmental delay or poor growth can be significant when there are other signs to arouse concern. The child or adult might tell you or hint at telling you about abuse.

There might be **concern about the behaviour of the adults in relation to the child or 'Adult at risk'**, for example, reports that the child is left alone or not well supervised. A parent may say that they are not coping or are punishing the child excessively. Someone may observe that a parent is criticising, humiliating or scapegoating a child. A carer for an adult at risk may say they are not coping or they may be observed psychologically abusing the adult. Someone may appear to be exploiting or putting under pressure the child or 'Adult at risk'.

**Signs must be recorded carefully and referred to the Safeguarding Officer.** It is not always clear how significant such signs are at the outset. Any bruise or burn in a non-mobile child should be taken very seriously and always reported to the Safeguarding Advisor. An allegation of abuse or an injury is urgent and the evidence may be gone if there is a delay. A child's or adult's safety could depend on the quality of observation and recording. It is important not to wait for firm evidence before recording and sharing concerns and not jumping to conclusions or making assumptions. Advice must be sought at an early stage.

### **Limited confidentiality**

No individual should promise confidentiality to someone who is a potential or actual abuser or to someone who makes an allegation against a particular individual. If a child or 'Adult at risk' makes an allegation, it is unacceptable not to pass this on as this will allow the abuse to continue. The child or young person should not be given responsibility for this decision, but advised of the need to refer this on. An adult at risk will be consulted early what outcome they want but a referral should be made to Adult Social Services and advice sought even if they want nothing done.

If an adult who is not an 'adult at risk' (see definition above) discusses their own past abuse, the adult needs to be advised of the very strong reasons for this information being given to the Police in terms of protecting children now. If they do not wish to do so, the listener does not have to immediately go against these wishes, but does need to discuss the matter with the Safeguarding Officer for advice. Particularly sexual abuse is often addictive and perpetrated over many years.

If someone admits to abusing children, they need to be advised that such information has to be passed on to Church's Safeguarding Officer and the Police out of our duty to care for children and 'adults at risk'. This is rare as most abusers are very practised at not telling any one about their behaviour.

If there are any concerns, advice should be sought as soon as possible from the Safeguarding Officer or the relevant Social Services Team. If it is an allegation against a volunteer or staff member, this must be referred to the Safeguarding Officer, If it is an allegation against the Safeguarding Officer it must be reported to the Chair of the Trustees. It is important not to delay such action.

## **RESPONDING TO ABUSE OR NEGLECT CONCERNS**

Action must be taken where there are direct concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child or an adult at risk. It is not the Church's job to investigate abuse – it is the role of the statutory agencies – Police and Social Services.

Time can be crucial particularly in relation to physical or sexual abuse so there should be no delay Parents of children or young people should not be advised of the concerns until they have been discussed with the Safeguarding Officer or Social Services. Similarly carers for 'adults at risk' shouldn't be advised until professional advice has been sought.

It is very important where there are suspicions of abuse or neglect that the 'adult at risk' or child are not questioned about this. Instead, record all concerns and seek advice.

The Church's Safeguarding Officer will discuss the matter with whoever raises the concern, with the ThirtyOneEight advisor and with the Police and Social Services if there are concerns about significant harm to the child or adult. If concern remains about a child or 'adult at risk' after such a discussion or if no one is available, anyone can ring Social Services directly. It will be helpful for future concerns to inform the Safeguarding Officer afterwards.

It is important to understand that even the most respected and trusted member of the Church community could be an abuser. The fact that someone is known well does not preclude them from being an abuser. Some people target churches as being places to obtain easy access to children or 'Adults at risk' and may patiently wait for their opportunity. The welfare of the child or adult has to come before loyalty to the Church, however unbelievable the allegation may be.

If a parent or carer talks about concerns that their loved one is being abused, this must be passed on to the Safeguarding Officer and Social Services even if the parent/carer cannot be persuaded of the need to do this themselves. This is essential in order to safeguard the child or 'adult at risk' and other potential victims.

Concerns about abuse by another child or young person or by an adult at risk also need to be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Officer. Although, many young people will experiment sexually, if there is an imbalance of power or age, this should be responded to in a similar way to sexual abuse by adults. Sexual activities remain unlawful for under 16 year olds and there is specific protection for under 13 year olds deemed unable to consent. There is also specific protection for 16- 17 year olds and adults with learning disability or mental disorder from someone misusing a position of trust eg a Church volunteer.

All allegations against a member of the paid staff or volunteers will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer within Poole Borough Council as well as to Social Services and the Trustees of Sunnyhill.

After referral to Social Services, the Church will continue to offer support to the child or 'adult at risk' and to the person who received an allegation. Such support needs to be agreed with Social Services. The Police and Social Services work jointly in investigating child abuse and safeguarding adults and the paramount concern is the welfare of the child or the wellbeing of the adult at risk.

Telephone referral to Social Services should be followed up by a written confirmation within 24 hours. Where there is a Common Assessment Form completed due to earlier concerns for a child this should be forwarded at this point but paperwork should not slow down a referral. Social Services will undertake a full assessment of the situation and this will often result in the

family being offered the help they need. Very rarely will this involve the removal of a child from home. For 'adults at risk', the Local authority leads the enquiry and the adult's own views where they have mental capacity will be significant in decision making.

### **WHAT DO YOU DO IF A CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK TALKS TO YOU ABOUT ABUSE?**

- Take what is being said seriously, however young or confused they are.
- Keep calm and don't show distress.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not try to obtain more information than is necessary to establish concern. Don't ask questions but don't stop the free flow of information if the person wants to talk. Listen carefully without interruption.
- Explain to the child/adult what you will do with the information next and in a way they can understand.
- Don't make promises to the child/adult that you can't keep.

Write everything down immediately using the child's or adult at risk's own words if possible. Refer to the Church Safeguarding Officer before discussing with the parents or carer or anyone else.

## **POLICY**

### **PREVENTING ABUSE WITHIN THE CHURCH – SAFER WORKING PRACTICES**

Within Sunnyhill Church, we often know each other well and there are excellent relationships across generations which benefit us all. While keeping children and young people safe from risk of harm, we must continue to build these relationships. For many of us, relationships with adults when we were young brought us to our present faith. Equally, we love and care for many 'adults at risk'. We are able to continue to do this but need to do it in the safest way possible.

It is, however, important to have in place a policy which helps to ensure the safety of both children and adults.

### **SAFER WORKING PRACTICES IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT** (vulnerable adults)

Appointments of Nextgen volunteers and those volunteering with vulnerable adults –

#### **Appointment of volunteers to be leaders or helpers will follow the procedures outlined below.**

Any person who wishes to be involved in volunteering within Sunnyhill that will lead to direct contact with children or vulnerable adults will be asked to meet with the Safeguarding Officer or agreed person. A refusal to meet will automatically exclude the person from working in any role that allows contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

In addition, searching questions will be asked about the potential volunteer's suitability to work with in the Nextgen ministry or with vulnerable adults. In the case of volunteers wanting to work with the Nextgen Ministry this discussion will be carried out by the Safeguarding Officer or in the case of a volunteer wanting to work with vulnerable adults this discussion will be done by a paid member of staff. The candidate's spiritual life and walk with God will also be explored. Any concerns should then be discussed with the Safeguarding Officer and the Senior Leadership Team.

All volunteers must submit to a Disclosure and Barring Service check organised by the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Volunteers will be asked to register on the live update service on the DBS to make future checks easier. <https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>.

If there are any doubts about someone's suitability to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, these should be explored fully by the Safeguarding officer but if concerns remain which they consider may impact on the well being of children, young people or vulnerable adults, the person should not be appointed to a position of trust within the Church. The person may be able to help in other ways and should be supported after the process which they may experience as a rejection.

The wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be paramount. It is important to realise that just because someone receives good references and a clear DBS check does not mean they pose no risk to children, young people or vulnerable adults. All new workers will undertake a six-month probationary period at the end of which their suitability will be re-discussed with the Nextgen pastor. Anyone whose behaviour in any way causes concern about them working with children, young people or vulnerable adults should be asked to stop such work. This does not reflect on their Church involvement and they should be encouraged to use their gifts in other areas of Church life.

### **Practical guidelines for safer working practice with children and young people**

All leaders of groups will ensure that the venue is suitable and safe. If there are any concerns about this, they should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will share such information with the health and Safety Officer. The whereabouts of the first aid kit, the nearest mobile phone and fire extinguishers and exits should be known by leaders and helpers.

There should be basic First Aid knowledge by leaders and hygiene standards should be maintained where food or drinks are served.

Where children are taken away from the usual venue parental/gurdian approval must be sought.

Drivers should have a driving license for two years, appropriate insurance and notify the Safeguarding Officer if they have 6 points or more.

All adults working with children or young people will attempt not to be alone with a child or young person unobserved. This means there should always be two adults present during activities. An adult is over 18 years old

This will apply wherever the adult is with a child including Church members' homes or cars.

Two leaders are sufficient for 20 children over 8 years old, with one additional leader per 10 additional children. A balance of gender should be maintained where possible. For children under 2 years old there should be one leader per three children, from 2-8 year olds one per eight children. Failure to comply should be communicated to the Safeguarding Officer who needs to record the reason why the group was unable to meet this quota.

If specific situations arise where one to one contact with a child or young person is necessary (for example a pastoral meeting) this should be agreed in advance with the Safeguarding Officer and parent/carer. Such arrangements must take place in a building where other adults are present and where those meeting are clearly visible.

Care will be taken about the use of photos or video images of children and young people. Occasionally photos of Church events will include group pictures of un-named children. If children are going to be named or photographed individually, prior permission will be sought. No details of the identity of the child should accompany photographs in Church publicity or the website.

Use of Email, texting and social media contact by leaders and volunteers needs to be with great care. Only group texts and emails should be sent using a church given e-mail address or social media contact not personal accounts. Leaders and volunteers must not allow access of young

people in the Church to their own personal social media so must not have them as “friends” or enter into messages with them.

Contact about activities and events should usually be via the parents/carers or if direct with the young person, always with the permission and knowledge of the parent/carer.

All leaders and helpers should receive the support they need. They will be supported by the Safeguarding Officer. They will receive regular support in the form of meetings and training events.

Leaders and helpers need to try to behave in a way which could not be misconstrued. Relationships with children and young people should offer them a role model as Christians. Levels of personal care eg. toileting should be appropriate and related to the age and stage of development of the child.

Touching of children and young people needs to be considered with care. It is not helpful to assume touch is never appropriate. Touch should always be initiated by the child not the adult. It should be age appropriate and any concerns about inappropriate touch by a child should be referred to the Church Safeguarding Officer. The use of touch must be to meet the child’s needs, not the adult’s. Any touching should take place in a public setting, observed by another adult.

Care should be taken when playing physical games that there is no inappropriate touching and that children are happy with the activity. Leaders and helpers should monitor each other in the area of touch and should help each other maintain safe standards. Any concerns about the behaviour of another leader or helper should be referred immediately to the Church Safeguarding officer.

Sunnyhill Checkins procedure should be used to ensure we have a record of all children involved in an activity or event. Consent and information should be filled in with a parents or carer for regular activities or events at the time of check in for an event or group. Checkins should be used each time the group meets.

All events need to be risk assessed and those risk assessments need to be given to the Health and Safety officer 72hours before the event. Accidents or incidents that may occur should be noted on the relevant form and passed to the Health and Safety Officer.

At other times in Church life, children could be abused by someone worshipping with us. It is important that the parents of the children take responsibility to ensure that children are not alone in unobserved parts of the Church building or grounds. If they are in a large group of children playing, it may not be essential to have an adult with them, but one should know where they are and who is there.

Where mixed age social or musical activities take place two adults should always be present with children.

### **Protection of children in Church premises user groups**

Those that work for other organisations associated should adhere to those organisational child protection policies which should be no less stringent than Sunnyhills own policy. Agreements for hiring premises will make hirers responsible for ensuring the safety of children. Regular bookings are required to have a child protection procedure in place which will be disclosed to, but not approved by, the trustees.

### **SAFER WORKING PRACTICE IN RELATION TO ‘ADULTS AT RISK’**

All leaders of groups will ensure that the venue is suitable and safe. If there are any concerns about this, they should be reported to the Health and Safety Officer.

The whereabouts of the first aid kit, the nearest telephone and fire extinguishers and exits should be known by leaders and helpers. There should be basic First Aid knowledge by leaders and hygiene standards should be maintained where food or drinks are served.

Consideration needs to be given about how many people should undertake an activity with 'adults at risk'. There will be situations where it would be appropriate to always have two people helping an adult at risk. For example, where someone will be very distressed or where the adult lacks mental capacity. Guidance can be sought from the Safeguarding Officer in such situations.

### **Visiting residential homes or hospitals.**

When such visits are being undertaken on behalf of Sunnyhill Church, it is important to consider safe practices. Consideration should be given to two volunteers if the adult lacks mental capacity. On arrival at a home, the volunteer should identify themselves and sign in if appropriate. Where they are left with the adult at risk, the volunteer should always clarify how they would get help if needed and what to do when their time with the adult comes to an end. In particular, it is worth checking fire exits and if an alarm should go, knowing how to find a carer to assist the adult to a safe area. It is preferable to visit in a communal area where possible. Any concerns about the care within such organisational settings need to be reported in the same way as individual concerns above and dealt with as safeguarding matters. Any concerns about the individual that are not safeguarding should be shared with the person on duty at the home and a check made as to where the home would like this recorded.

Handling money needs to be done very cautiously for 'adults at risk'. If the adult may lack capacity about their finances then advice should be sought about how appropriate it is to handle money for them. Where a volunteer is getting shopping or handling money unavoidably, receipts should always be obtained. Confusion over financial situations is often a cause of safeguarding adult referrals and the commonest reason for referrals for barring to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Touch is an issue that requires careful thought for 'adults at risk'. Many such adults are deprived of touch and will particularly welcome affection expressed in hugs etc. However, personal choice of the adult at risk must be respected and touch always offered sensitively and carefully.

### **CARE FOR THE ABUSED AND THE ABUSER**

As a Church, we attempt to offer a loving Christian community to all who wish to be part of it. This will include abusers, both known and unknown. Sexual abusers, in particular, may become part of the community and are much safer within such a community who can offer oversight and support. They should be treated with love and respect, but helped to avoid further abusive situations. If someone has been convicted of sexual offences against children or 'adults at risk', they will not do any voluntary or paid work involving contact with children or 'Adults at risk' or attend mixed age church activities. Where they are known abusers, boundaries will be agreed with them to keep children in the fellowship safe. Where appropriate this will be with the oversight of the probation service. Any offenders will be carefully managed and monitored.

We may have within our Church family those who were abused as children and still suffer from the consequences. The Church offers a number of supports to such hurting adults including care by the pastoral team and the prayer ministry. Where children or young people need support due to past or current experiences, this will always be offered in conjunction with the statutory services and with the consent of those with parental responsibility.

## APPENDIX A

### SIGNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT FOR CHILDREN AND 'ADULTS AT RISK'

#### **Signs of physical abuse might include:**

- Unexplained or recurring injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries or improbable explanations
- Admission of excessive punishment
- Child or adult flinching when touched
- Fear of returning home
- Self-destructive tendencies or aggression to other children
- Certain types of injuries, eg. object or finger shaped bruises, bite marks, burns or scalds, injuries to the face, head or genital area.

#### **Signs of neglect might include:**

- Loss of weight
- Leaving a child alone without proper supervision
- Exposure to dangers the child is not able to deal with
- Inadequate clothing, lighting, food or heating
- Being unkempt or dirty
- Failure to seek or follow medical advice.
- Neglect of accommodation
- Poor physical condition (e.g. leg ulcers or ulcerated bed sores)
- Clothing or bedding in poor condition including being wet or soiled
- Weight loss or gain through inadequate or unsuitable food
- Medication not given as prescribed
- Failure to ensure appropriate privacy and dignity
- Can be self-neglect in adults

#### **Sexual abuse**

Most sexual abuse is not known until a child or adult chooses to tell a trusted adult – this could happen in the Church context. Any statement of abuse must be taken very seriously. Sexual abuse often starts very subtly and builds up so slowly that the child begins to accept the abuse as something he or she has to tolerate. By the time the child wants to tell "the secret", he or she feels guilty and confused and fears no one will believe the truth. The child may have become very good at covering up the abuse and may feel he or she is betraying someone close to them and loved by them.

#### **Some signs of sexual abuse might include:**

- Unprompted allegation by the child or adult or hinting at a secret.
- Behavioural changes – withdrawn, self-harm,
- eating problems, nightmares or sexual acting out.
- Fear of someone
- Possession of unexplained amounts of money or gifts
- Unusual behaviour by an adult in relation to the child.
- Urinary tract infections, vaginal, penile or anal infections
- Pregnancy in a woman unable to give consent
- Difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding
- Bleeding, bruising, torn tissue or injury to the rectal, anal and/or vaginal area
- Bruising to thighs and/or upper arms.
- Uncharacteristic sexually explicit/ seductive behaviour
- Self harm
- Obsession with washing

**Signs of emotional abuse or psychological abuse might include:**

- Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- Appear to be frightened, fearful or avoiding eye contact
- Behavioural signs e.g. Overactive, aggressive, withdrawn
- Irritable, aggressive or challenging behaviour, unexplained sleep disturbance
- Poor concentration
- Self harm, refusing to eat, deliberate soiling, compulsive stealing or scavenging
- Language or developmental delay
- Inability to play in child
- Excessive lack of confidence or need for affection and attention
- Use of excessive punishment by parents or over reaction to mistakes by child
- Eating problems, unusual weight gain.

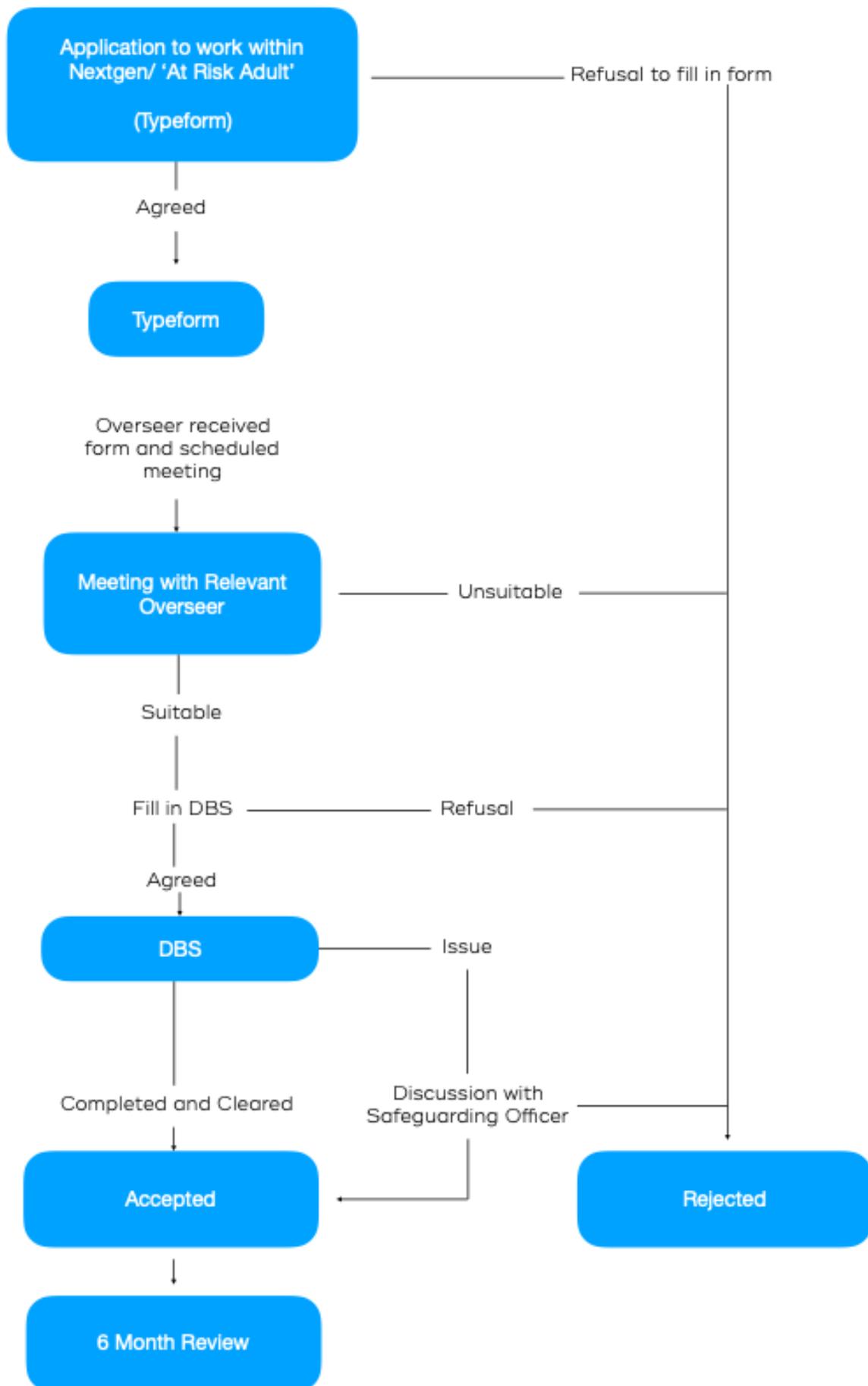
**Signs of financial abuse of adults:**

- change in living conditions;
- lack of heating, clothing or food;
- inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money;
- unexplained withdrawals from an account;
- unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents;
- the recent addition of authorised signers on a client or donor's signature card; or sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents.
- Power of attorney obtained or misused when the adult lacks mental capacity for finances

**Additional Types of Abuse**

- Forced Marriage
- Modern Slavery, trafficking
- Exploitation by radicalisation
- Sexual exploitation
- Internet/Cyber bullying or grooming
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour based violence
- Domestic abuse

Appendix B



## Appendix C

**Aim:** To help transition youth in maintaining appropriate friendships that have formed when they were under 18 with others in our youth work once they turn 18.

This will only apply to those who are turning 18 from within our youth work at Sunnyhill and are serving in a junior leader capacity.

### **Practice:**

We recognise that young people in Sunnyhill Church form friendship with other young people that are at a variety of ages. Once young people turn 18 and are also volunteering within our NextGen ministry they can struggle to transition into the safeguarding requirements of being over 18 while still serving on the NextGen team.

To help them transition the following process will be required- All next Gen leaders who turn 18 while serving in the Next Gen would be asked by the Safeguarding Officer to submit to them a list of names of any significant friendships/ relationships that they have with under 18's within the NextGen ministry. This list will provide awareness of existing friendships with under 18's, it will allow them to continue investing into those relationships with the Safeguarding Officers full knowledge.

This list will be revised once the NextGen leader turns 19 through a meeting with the Safeguarding Officer to see if these relationships are still appropriate.