



Oadby Baptist Church Safeguarding Policy

Last Updated: March 2017

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Section A - Oadby Baptist Church Safeguarding Policy Statement

- 1 Oadby Baptist Church has a moral and legal duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”. The church recognises that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, accordingly, the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and protection of vulnerable adults.

- 2 Oadby Baptist Church Safeguarding Policy Statement:

Children and young people are an important part of our church life. They have much to give us and much to learn from us. All church members have a responsibility to ensure that we nurture them in worship, learning and community life. We listen to them and respect their wishes and feelings.

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.

The church is committed to the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet, “Safe to Grow”. Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church’s agreed procedures and good practice guidelines.

As part of our commitment to children and young people the church has appointed the following people to form the Safeguarding Team:

Sheila Lamb	Designated Person	0116 2717777
Chris Swan	Assistant Designated Person	07808 882033
Leanne Mitchell	Deacon	0116 2734234
Chris Smith/Paula Jones	DBS checks	
David Carter	Youth Action Team Leader	
Paul Groom	Church Member	
Michelle Hughes	Girls’ Brigade Team Leader	
Chris Smith/Mark Jones	Boys’ Brigade	
Chris Smith	Sunday Club Rota	
Luke Wigston	Reality Youth Worker	

The names and photographs will be displayed on the church premises, with the accompanying statement, “If you have any concerns, please contact one of the above.”

- 3 Oadby Baptist Church recognises the following as definitions of abuse:
- 3.1 **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse causes harm to a child's person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.
 - 3.2 **Neglect:** Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.
 - 3.3 **Sexual Abuse:** Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.
 - 3.4 **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

The full Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Person during January and the 'Oadby Baptist Church Child Safeguarding Policy Statement' will then be read to church members annually at the AGM. The leader of each organisation will ensure that all staff and volunteers will also have their attention drawn to it following the church AGM.

This policy and procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, deacons, administrative, leaders of organisations, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used for ease of description.

Section B - Designated Staff with Responsibility for Safeguarding i.e. Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility

1. The designated senior member with lead responsibility for child safeguarding issues will ordinarily be the minister of Oadby Baptist Church, in conjunction with the Designated Person. During a period of interregnum the designated senior member will be selected by the diaconate and named in this policy document. The currently agreed 'designated senior member' is Leanne Mitchell.
2. He/she has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the church of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people.
3. He/she has received appropriate training and should keep up to date with developments in child protection issues. They will also have responsibility for making new staff and volunteers aware of the existing safeguarding policy.

4. He/she will be the main contact point for safeguarding issues and will have contact details for relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers. This list will include contact details of relevant individuals and provisions such as EMBA Safeguarding Procedure Team and the local police child protection unit. Contacts for the national safeguarding teams for the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade will also be held.
5. The diaconate is responsible for ensuring that exempted questions regarding DBS checks are asked on relevant volunteer and employment application forms.

Section C - Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns

If a child or young person tells a member of staff or volunteer about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the child is telling you.
- Do not put words into the child's mouth.
- Reassure the child that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- Inform the child that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter.
- Note the main points carefully.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said, did and your questions etc.
- If there is immediate danger to a child or young person, call police or Social Services directly. Then refer the matter to the Designated Person.
- Staff or volunteers should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Designated Person, who will take appropriate action.

Section D - Regulated Activity and Obtaining Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

1. Under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, an individual working unsupervised with children is considered to be engaged in regulated Activity and must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will involve a check of the children's barred list, in order to perform their duties.

2. However, an individual working in a directly and permanently supervised position is not considered to be engaged in regulated activity but should still have an enhanced DBS disclosure check. However because they are working in a supervised role the enhanced check will not include a check of the children’s barred list.
3. Note that applications for a DBS enhanced check can only be submitted where the applicant is aged 16 or over at the time of making the application.
4. Within Oadby Baptist Church the following procedures will apply to obtaining enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks:
 - 4.1. Upon their appointment, new leaders may work in a supervised capacity for up to 2 months whilst DBS checks are being processed. Any extension to this period would need to be at the discretion of the Designated Person and ‘senior member’ named in section B of the policy
 - 4.2. DBS checks will be required:
 - 4.2.1. When the work is more than a ‘one-off’ or standing in for someone at short notice, rather than an ongoing commitment
 - 4.2.2. Where the individual is over 16 years of age
 - 4.2.3. Where there is a possibility that the individual will be working in an unsupervised capacity with children and young people
 - 4.2.4. Where the individual is taking any leadership role on a residential event
 - 4.2.5. In addition, all members of the diaconate will have DBS checks undertaken as members of the church leadership team.

Examples (not exhaustive) of what this looks like in reality are:

DBS Check Required	DBS Check Not Required
Someone going on to a rota to help out at Sunday Club or the Brigades	A church member sharing an interest/leading devotions with the Brigades
Someone who uses their home as a regular venue for a youth group to meet	Volunteering to take names and write out name badges for Messy Church
	Someone helping with refreshments for Holiday Club or a Reality Youth event

4.3 To ensure visibility of leaders working within the church, any appointment that requires a DBS check to be undertaken must be approved by the Designated Person and ‘senior member’ named in section B of the policy.

For further details, please refer to the BU publication, “Safe to Grow”

Section E - Duty to Refer Abuse to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS))

1. The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 both make it mandatory to refer anyone known to pose a threat of harm to a child or

vulnerable people to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This means that the designated member responsible for safeguarding must not knowingly appoint anyone who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. This includes anyone who is believed to have committed such a breach of conduct while on the job or who has a record of such conduct.

2. The church has a legal duty to refer an employee or volunteer who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to the DBS, failure to do so can result in a fine and/or up to 5 years imprisonment. There must be sufficient and solid evidence that the employee or volunteer poses a risk of harm before they can be referred to the DBS. The DBS will not consider evidence based on rumour or unsubstantiated reports. The church should also inform the police and other relevant authorities if they believe a relevant conduct has occurred.
3. Referral forms can be downloaded from the DBS's website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs.

Section F - The DBS' Barring Process

1. Whenever new relevant information (such as a conviction or caution) becomes known, the information will be sent to the DBS. The DBS will consider this information, together with other information known on the individual and decide whether it indicates that the individual poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups. If so, the DBS will commence its barring process and the DBS will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant with the barring information.
2. The applicant should be advised by the designated member to make a representation to the DBS regarding the barring information. The DBS will assess the barring information and representation and decide whether to bar the applicant. If there is sufficient barring evidence, the applicant will be placed on either the **Children's Barred List** or the **Vulnerable Adults Barred List** or both depending on the offence. The applicant must then be removed from regulated activity.
3. The applicant has the right of appeal to a tribunal and must be advised of this right. Serious offences committed against vulnerable people will lead to automatic barring and the applicant will have no right to make representations or to appeal against a barring decision.

Section G - Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used for ease of description.

1. In rare instances, staff of Christian organisations have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. Oadby Baptist Church recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
2. Oadby Baptist Church recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the church will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

Section H – Use of Social Media, email and texting

All those involved in working with children and young people will exercise care in the use of social media and respect the principles set out below. Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with children under the age of 11 years. All communications in these forms will be via their parents. The rest of the principles relate to communication with children and young people aged 11 years and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- 1 Electronic communication and texting should only be used for reasons relating to work and not for general socialising purposes.
- 2 Staff and volunteers should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication can be used.
- 3 Staff and volunteers should not ask children or young people from church activities to join their personal social networking page(s) but may respond to requests where appropriate, as long as the child or young person is 13 years or over.
- 4 Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communicating.
- 5 Care should be taken as comments on social media can be misinterpreted, especially by young people and children.
- 6 Communication by electronic means and texting with children and young people should never take place during school hours and should not be undertaken before 9.00am or after 9.00pm.
- 7 Where possible, email and messaging should take place within groups rather than to individuals.
- 8 Staff and volunteers should give very careful consideration as to whether it is necessary to give personal mobile numbers to children and young people.
- 9 Webcams will not be used where any form of internet chat is used for one-to-one conversations.

- 10 Staff and volunteers should keep records of electronic communications between themselves and children/young people in the same way that they would keep written communications.
- 11 Staff and volunteers will explain the church's policy on use of social media to the children and young people, if a problem arises.

Section I - Letting of Premises for One-Off Events

The Diaconate has decided that when the church premises are let for a one-off event e.g. parties, concerts it is not necessary to have a church member present. However, any person booking and taking responsibility for the premises will be given a copy of Oadby Baptist Church Safeguarding Policy and will be asked to sign that they will abide by its stipulations.

Section J – Self-harm and Suicide Policy

(This section of the OBC Safeguarding policy is included courtesy of Reality Youth Project – Matt Brown. Some wording has been changed in order to apply to Oadby Baptist Church)

Definition

Self-harm is defined as deliberate, non-suicidal behaviour that inflicts physical harm on the body and is aimed at relieving emotional distress.

Rationale

The staff and volunteers are dedicated to the wellbeing of children/young people, including the mental and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable young people who may be engaging in harmful behaviours and putting themselves at risk. It is important that everyone in these situations is safe and has access to the right support and information. Staff and volunteers recognise that a young person who is engaging in self harm is likely to be in emotional distress and needs to be treated with utmost sensitivity and respect, with a non-judgemental attitude.

Disclosures of Self-Harm

If a disclosure of self-harm is made then the OBC designated person should be informed, and together they will decide on the course of action to be taken. Parents will be informed if the young person is under the age of 14 years and only if it is not thought that this will put the young person at further risk. As with all Safeguarding issues, the young person must always be aware that confidentiality cannot be maintained but that only relevant people will be informed and that all disclosures will be recorded and dated.

It is important that young people have information that will minimise harm to themselves including:-

- i) Awareness of basic first aid,
- ii) Importance of cleaning implements and wounds

- iii) The risk of self-harming under the influence of alcohol or other substances
- iv) When to seek medical attention

Disclosures of Suicidal Thoughts

If a young person expresses suicidal thoughts, feelings or plans, it is important that this information is taken seriously and shared with the appropriate people. The young person should be reassured and informed of the process.

When a disclosure takes place the OBC designated person should be informed and together a course of action will be taken, referral to GP or CAMHS worker, if that is appropriate. The support from other agencies will also be considered. Parents will be informed if the young person is under the age of 16 years and only if it is not thought that this will put the young person at further risk.

As with all Safeguarding issues, the young person must always be aware that confidentiality cannot be maintained but that only relevant people will be informed and that all disclosures will be recorded and dated.

Appendices:

- EMBA Safeguarding Procedure: EMBA Safe To Grow
- The Girls' Brigade Safeguarding Procedure
- The Boys' Brigade Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- DBS Service Provider:
Due Diligence Checking Ltd. (DDC)
Support team: Helen Palethorpe/Kim Scullion 0116 260 3055 or contact@ddc.uk.net

Sheila Lamb
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