

COMMITMENT *to* SAFEGUARDING



SAFEGUARDING POLICY & GOOD
PRACTICE HANDBOOK



We've achieved the

Safeguarding Standards Award

2023-2026

KingsGate has demonstrated the required level of safeguarding practice needed to achieve the Safeguarding Standards Award by Thirtyone:eight which has been verified by a process of external and independent assessment.

For emergency help or guidance contact

safeguarding@kingsgate.church

The **31:8** 7am-12am (midnight)
emergency advice line

0303 003 1111

Introduction

There is no doubt that at the centre of the gospel is a mandate to love and care for everyone that comes into contact with us at one of our campuses, services or activities.

That responsibility clearly extends to those who would be considered more vulnerable in the community and so we readily recognise that we share a commitment to the safeguarding of both children and adults with additional care and support needs. We want to do all we can to ensure their well-being, help prevent any form of abuse and to properly record and report any abuse that we discover or suspect.

Safeguarding can be complex, raising some very difficult and sensitive issues that are better considered as a team than resting on the shoulders of any one individual and so we are very glad to have a partner organisation in Thirtyone:eight

Established in 1977, Thirtyone:eight (formerly CCPAS) is the only independent Christian safeguarding charity in the UK and for over ten years we have worked closely with them in this important area. They have guided us in the formation of this policy and will partner with us in delivering excellent, professional training for appropriate staff and volunteers across all our KingsGate locations.

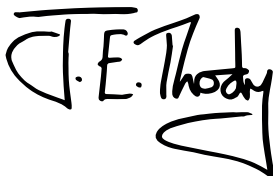
This document is designed to guide us (and any organisations and groups that operate under the covering of KingsGate) in providing a safe environment in which children or adults with additional care and support needs can develop physically, intellectually and spiritually. Additionally, this policy and subsequent guidelines are designed to offer support and protection to staff and volunteers. By carefully studying and implementing the procedures in the following pages, staff and volunteers will together build an environment and culture that is safer for all concerned.

There are of course statutory requirements upon us from both government and local authorities and so the procedures set out in this document have been developed in accordance with statutory guidance. They also concur with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Alongside those resources, we have also referenced the Home Office code of practice for working with young people, "Safe from Harm". The resultant Policy Statement on Safeguarding can be found in appendix 1.

"Commitment To Safeguarding" is required reading for all KingsGate staff as well as those who have a specific role or responsibility for either children or adults with additional care and support needs. It is available to any person that asks to see it.

Thank you for your personal commitment to safeguarding. We could not provide the service and ministries we do without your engagement with these processes. As you embark on your safeguarding training, I sincerely pray that God will grow you as a person, equip you for every good work He has planned for you and together we will continue to build an organisational culture that will truly honour God.



Jim Thody
Safeguarding Team Leader



Safeguarding Policy & Good Practice Handbook

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Part 1: Basic Foundations

Working Definitions

When considering our role with both children and adults with additional care and support needs, we recognise that we must handle all matters in this arena with sensitivity and care. Our guiding principle is that we should always aim for maximum consultation, co-operation and communication with parents and guardians.

It's important to note that children remain the responsibility of their parents or guardians. Our responsibility only over-rides that of the parent or guardian where we have good reason to suspect that a child or an adult with additional care and support needs is suffering or is at risk of significant harm. In those circumstances, we have a duty to bring this to the attention of the authorities through the agreed communication channels.

Should you encounter any situation which gives you cause for concern; make a written note of the conversation, observation, dates, times, names, etc. and pass on this information immediately to a Safeguarding Coordinator. Do not be afraid to be wrong. (Guidelines on how to do this are included later in this guide).

For clarity, it is understood that a child is

“a person under the age of 18 years”.

An adult with additional care and support needs is defined as

“an adult who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”_i

In understanding how we can provide a safe place it is necessary for us to understand the nature of the abuse that people might face, who is likely to be the perpetrator of such abuse and what steps we can individually take to prevent the abuse of anyone for whom we have responsibility. Part 2 explores these themes.

Part 2: Understanding Abuse

Who is it that abuses children?

Children are very rarely abused by a stranger. More often than not it is someone close to the child, for example a parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative or friend of the family.

Sometimes the abuser is someone in authority such as a teacher, youth leader, children's worker, or a church worker or leader.

It is very important that we understand this and dispel the common myths and assumptions about who might abuse a child. It is all too easy to think that it can "never happen here" or that "the kind of people" who abuse children don't go to church or its activities. This would be an error of judgement and would minimise our effectiveness in looking after the children in our care.

Having said that "abusers are rarely strangers", sometimes paedophiles and others who set out to abuse children join organisations (including churches) to obtain access to children. That is why we have stringent controls on who can access our children and have careful processes for looking after them whilst they are in our care. See appendix 2 for an outline of the recruitment processes we use for those working with children and young people.

All of us who work with children need to understand the importance of good working practice and we will come to this shortly (see page 16).

Who abuses adults with additional care and support needs?

What is true for children is also true for adults with additional care and support needs. There are however, situations where strangers or members of the community that have strong prejudices towards these individuals, or are ignorant of the person's needs, might abuse the person concerned.

"It is very important to stress that most people do not abuse others. Many people who work with children or adults with additional care and support needs have a desire to do so for genuine reasons and in turn they play a very important role in protecting them" ⁱⁱ

What do we mean by abuse?

If we were to take a survey amongst those reading this document, there may well be as many definitions of abuse as there are people. Our individual understanding is affected by our experience, education, and any past training we have received.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence has a helpful definition which can serve as a starting point:

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons and may be:

- ***A single act or repeated acts***
- ***An act of neglect or a failure to act***
- ***Multiple acts - for example, an adult at risk may be neglected and also be financially abused*** ⁱⁱⁱ

THIRTYONE:EIGHT point out that there are four main categories of abuse detailed in government guidance in England. ^{iv}

1: Physical abuse - this includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, administering poisonous substances, suffocating, drowning or the use of excessive force.

2: Emotional abuse - this represents behaviours that are ***"persistent emotional mistreatment of children such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects of the child's emotional development"*** ^v

It can be very distressing for a child or an adult with additional care and support needs to experience lack of love and affection, threats, verbal attacks, taunting, being made fun of or shouting. The definition also extends to behaviours that might make the victim feel worthless, unloved and inadequate or to be exposed to interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability.

3: Sexual abuse - The sexual abuse of children or young people - also called Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) - is

involving a child or young person in an activity for the sexual gratification or gain of another person, whether support needs being exploited by being enticed or forced to watch, participate or contribute to the production of sexual images either in person or using digital communications.

Remember to keep in mind that the commonly held view that this form of abuse is only perpetrated by adult males is simply not true. Women and other children can also commit acts of sexual abuse.

4: Neglect and acts of omission represent the failure of responsible people to meet the basic essential needs of a child or adult with care and support needs.

This includes many different things like ignoring medical, emotional, or physical needs, failure to provide healthcare, support or educational services, withholding medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

The failure to provide adequate supervision (including leaving a child with inadequate care-givers) or to protect a vulnerable person from physical or emotional harm also qualify in this category of abuse.

In addition to these 4 'main' forms of abuse there are many other forms of abuse that are briefly mentioned below:

- Discriminatory abuse*
- Financial abuse
- Spiritual abuse
- Trafficking abuse*
- Domestic abuse*
- Organised abuse
- Abuse link to faith or belief*
- On-line abuse
- Substance misuse abuse
- Sexual exploitation*

1. This is a distressing list but it is necessary that we have a broad understanding of the types of things that should call us to attention when we see them in the lives of a vulnerable person.

It is worth noting that for some forms of abuse when concerning adults – consent and capacity must be taken into consideration.

So, next let us explore how we might recognise these signs of abuse.

(* helpful information leaflets are available from the Thirtyone:eight website www.thirtyoneeight.org)

How might we recognise abuse?

The following lists are some of the things that we should consider warning signs and symptoms of abuse.

However, they are only a guide and are not necessarily proof of abuse, but may be indicators of it.

By keeping our eyes and ears open we might notice:

- a. Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- b. A previously bright and bubbly child suddenly has become quiet and withdrawn.
- c. Nervousness/watchfulness.
- d. Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- e. Changed or inappropriate relationships with peers and/or other adults.
- f. Attention seeking behaviour.
- g. Persistent tiredness.
- h. Running away/stealing/lying.

Other things to look out for include: -

- i. Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them, or where differing explanations have been received.
- j. Injuries, which occur to the body in places, which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- k. Injuries and illnesses, which have not received medical attention.
- l. Instances where children are kept away from the group or school inappropriately.
- m. Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- n. Any signs of neglect, under nourishment or inadequate care.
- o. Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- p. A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters, and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age -nappropriate sexual play.
- q. Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- r. A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- s. Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home.
- t. Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

One or more warning signs may be evident. Many symptoms of distress in a child or an adult with care and support needs can point to abuse, but there are other explanations too.

It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but that the possibility should be considered. Any concerns should be raised with your Safeguarding Coordinator.

“All children and adults with additional care and support needs have the right to be protected from harm. We need to recognise the impact that abuse has on the victims”^{vi}

Part 3: A call to action

How safeguarding is organised in KingsGate.

If any of us suspects that abuse has taken place or is current, we have an individual responsibility to report our suspicions to the designated Safeguarding Coordinators at the Campus or location involved. The Safeguarding Coordinators are identified on posters in and around each location and on the KingsGate Website. Readers should acquaint themselves with the appropriate names for each Campus noting any contact details for easy access should a safeguarding emergency arise.

If your immediate leader is not available, you can contact another named person on that list for advice or failing that contact the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice which is open between 7am and 12am (midnight). The number is on the safeguarding poster and on the handy wallet card that comes with this handbook.

If you have a concern about the behaviour of your Safeguarding Coordinator you can contact the Safeguarding Team Leader listed at the end of this publication or contact the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. There is further advice in the staff whistleblowing policy. Because we are a church with Campuses and activities in locations remote from the Peterborough offices, each location has designated Safeguarding Coordinators to supplement the oversight given by the Safeguarding Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader.

When a cause for concern is received by the Safeguarding Coordinators in any of our locations it will be sent to the Safeguarding Team Leaders who will action the report in partnership with the relevant authorities and advise what action if any should be taken.

The Safeguarding Team Leaders and Campus based Safeguarding Coordinators form the “Multisite Safeguarding Review Panel”. They meet to regularly review safeguarding procedures and matters arising. The Safeguarding Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader have the mandate and authority to call the Multisite Safeguarding Review Panel to deal with any safeguarding matter as it arises.

Serious incidents will be reported to KingsGate’s Trustees who hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

What to do if abuse is alleged or suspected.

Supporting those affected by abuse

KingsGate Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

If you see or suspect abuse of a vulnerable person or have concerns about the behaviour of an adult, it is your personal responsibility to act.

Safeguarding is a responsibility we share together and by responding you may be adding to an existing body of knowledge held by The Safeguarding Team Leaders which could help prevent or stop an abusive situation.

Do not be afraid to report a concern or to be wrong.

Step 1: Assess the risk

It is important to recognise that there is a difference between what is urgent and what is serious. This will help to decide what to do next.

Thirtyone:eight offer an example...

“it is important to state that there is a difference between what is urgent and what is serious....if there is a concern that an adult with additional care or support needs may be being financially exploited that is very serious but not urgent because again things will need to be collated and time taken to get that problem sorted out. Remember, it is not your job to make judgements or to undertake investigations but to refer to the relevant people”^{vii}

Always consult immediately with one of your Safeguarding Coordinators. It is best to work with a team approach but we aim to keep the circle of knowledge as small as possible (see the Safeguarding Confidentiality Policy in Appendix 4)

DO NOT go charging in “all guns blazing”. You may unwittingly alert a potential abuser which may in turn lead to further manipulation and exploitation of the person you are trying to help. In the worst-case scenario, you may inadvertently “destroy” very important evidence that the police may later need if bringing a conviction.

Of course, any action that takes place in front of you, that is potentially or actually harmful to children or adults with additional care and support needs, requires challenging then and there.

If you see something dangerous, risky or harmful, calmly and quietly act to defuse the situation.

Step 2: Report your concerns

All incidents or worries concerning children, adults with additional care and support needs or workers should be reported without delay to the Safeguarding Coordinator or in the event of their unavailability the Thirtyone:eight 24-hour helpline.

As soon as you can – **definitely on the same day** - write down some notes about your concern.

Your notes should be legible, signed and dated. It is important to distinguish clearly between fact i.e. ‘I saw this bruise and it was 1” round, and on the left upper arm’, and judgment or assessment i.e. ‘it was caused by a pinch.’

Recording should be short and to the point and as near verbatim as possible. Long explanations and detailed story-like recording is unnecessary.

Your Safeguarding Coordinator will give you a ‘registering a concern’ form onto which you can transcribe your immediate notes as well as recording the date and time. You will find a copy of that form at the end of this document and on the KingsGate website www.kingsgate.church/safeguarding. There is also a link on the main webpage at the bottom for Safeguarding.

Further guidance in responding to abuse:

If a child/adult has a physical injury or symptom of neglect:

- Share your concern with your Safeguarding Coordinator. It's better to speak with your Safeguarding Coordinator than ignore something, even if it's just a niggle and you feel silly doing so. Their role is to hold all the pieces of the puzzle and the information you have could be more important than you realise.
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary then this should, of course, be sought immediately by ringing 999.

If there are allegations of sexual abuse:

- Contact your Safeguarding Coordinator immediately. Do not speak to the parent, guardian (or anyone else) if there is a possibility that they could be involved. The fact that you may feel the child/adult's story is unlikely must not prevent appropriate action being taken. For example, a child may say that he/she has been abused by an older young person. In reality, the perpetrator could be a parent or close relative, but naming another person may be the only way in which this child can seek help.
- The role of the church is not to investigate but to document details of the allegation and provide the information to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the allegation.

Safe practice is to report concerns to your Safeguarding Coordinator who will then take responsibility to report incidents/suspicions of child abuse to the Children's Social Care Department or in the case of adults with additional care and support needs the Adult Social Care Department.

Please be aware that any allegations or suspicions are covered by confidentiality (please see Appendix 4 for the KingsGate Policy on Confidentiality for greater clarity), and therefore church members have no rights to this information. The sharing of information is limited to a "need to know" basis. This will protect the interests of all the parties concerned.

5 helpful R's to remember in the responding process:

R - Recognise the abuse.

R - Respond to the abuse.

R - Record the abuse.

R - Report the abuse.

R - Reflect afterwards - have I done all I need to?

How should we react if someone tells us he/she has been abused?

People that work with children or adults with additional care and support needs are in a unique position and the influence of your relationship cannot be underestimated. Your group or ministry may be providing a haven, and perhaps the only place where a person feels comfortable and able to talk to someone about their situation. It is therefore possible that they may approach you to talk about abuse.

The following guidance may be of help:

General points: -

- a. Accept what the child/adult says.
- b. Keep calm; do not appear to be shocked.
- c. Look at the person directly.
- d. Be honest.
- e. Let them know that you will need to tell someone else - do not promise confidentiality.
- f. Even when a child/adult has broken a rule they are not to blame for the abuse.
- g. Be aware the child/adult may have been threatened.
- h. Make notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what the person said, including their name, age, address, relevant family information, and details of the situation and the activity that preceded disclosure.
- i. Never push for information or question them, don't try and 'fill in the gaps' - just record what they have said.

Helpful things to say: -

- I believe you.
- I am glad you have told me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will try to help you.

Avoid saying: -

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it.
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?

Carefully avoid making false promises. Particularly pertaining to confidentiality
Never make statements such as "I'm shocked, don't tell anyone else."

Concluding: -

- a. Reassure the child/adult that they were right to tell you and that you believe them.
- b. Let the child/adult know what you are going to do next, and that you will let them know what happens.
- c. Immediately refer to your Safeguarding Coordinator or the Thirtyone:eight helpline.

Even if abuse is no longer happening it is still important to report the matter, as the abuser may be abusing other people. It may be that the child/adult will also need guidance and help in overcoming the effects of the abuse. In specific circumstances the police may wish to prosecute an abuser.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Team Leader or Deputy, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services regarding the appropriateness of suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

The Safeguarding Team Leader or Deputy will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regard to the appropriateness of suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

Guidance on good practice

For the mutual protection of leaders and people involved in working with children or adults with additional care and support needs there are behaviours which qualify as “good practice”.

Good practice is defined as

“a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good result and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it.”^{viii}

The following paragraphs and examples of good practice have been distilled from years of experience and we encourage all our staff and volunteers to follow them.

General Guidance

- a. Avoid being on your own with any child or an adult with additional care and support needs. This may mean groups working in one large room, or adjoining rooms when at a campus-based activity, but due consideration should also be given in other off-site situations
- b. When transporting a child (under 18) it is always advisable to have another helper with you or ensure that the last two children are dropped off together. However, if you have to transport a child on your own, inform another adult and have the young person sit in the back seat. Judge the situation for yourself when it comes to an adult with additional care and support needs but err on the side of caution. (Remember an allegation could also be made against you, so staff working in Kids, Youth and Pastoral ministries need to be particularly wise and accountable).
- c. Exercise good judgement in your physical contact with children and adults with additional care and support needs.
- d. Exercise good judgement in your relationships - do not be over friendly with some at the expense of others. No favourites. When considering giving a gift to a child or to an adult with additional support needs under your care, exercise good judgement and high accountability with supervisors, or line managers for staff.
- e. Workers should always be careful that their actions do not give children or adults with additional care and support needs the wrong impression ie. mutual attraction with either sex.
- f. Never smack, hit or physically discipline a child. Never smack, hit or physically discipline an adult with additional care and support needs.
- g. Holding or physical restraint should be avoided as far as possible and should only be used if there are good reasons for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a person causing significant injury to themselves or to others. Other techniques should be used before physical constraint is considered. It is important to be aware that use of restraint can pose risks to the safety of the person, to the safety of the person applying it, and potentially to others who are present.
- h. If you feel that a child/adult with additional care and support needs may have a “crush” on you, talk to your team leader/line manager for advice and guidance.
- i. In order to help anyone, we need to develop healthy relationships by listening to them and respecting them.
- j. We must be mindful of the safety of the people in our care at all times, and in all circumstances.
- k. All organised activities which include the participation of children or adults with additional care and support needs should have a risk assessment completed in advance and any risks mitigated.
- l. Whenever possible have two or more adults present with a group, particularly when it is the only activity taking place on the church premises. A parent/guardian may want to accompany their child/adult, however, they should either act as observers or only help their own child/adult with additional care and support needs.
- m. Children should not be taken on trips or away from the premises without permission of parents and church leadership.
- n. Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) ensure that others know that the meeting is taking place and that someone else is around in the building.
- o. Tell children and adults with additional care and support needs that if they feel uncomfortable or that something may be wrong, they can always check things out with another adult.

p. Prayer works and helps in each and every circumstance but should not delay action when urgently needed.

If at any time, you feel unsure what is wise in a situation, always ask someone with more experience before acting.

Healthy Boundaries

- a. The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) should be appropriate and related to the age of the person - accepting that some people have special needs.
- b. Workers should treat all children and adults with additional care and support needs with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- c. Respect the privacy of people in your care and avoid rough or sexually provocative games or comments.
- d. In the exceptional circumstance that you need to invite a child to your home, you must first get your immediate leader's permission, another adult must be present, and the parent must be aware.

Feedback and reporting

- a. Anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which is wrong or could be misinterpreted should speak to the individual or the line manager about the concern.
- b. Teams should meet regularly to review procedures ensuring a common approach, sharing concerns and identifying other matters which may need clarification and guidance. This should include safeguarding and linked issues.
- c. If departure from these guidelines occurs, the episode must be reported back to your immediate team leader and a safeguarding coordinator. This provides protection for you and draws the leadership's attention to possible shortcomings in procedure and potential problem areas.
- d. Team leaders should keep brief records of issues/decisions discussed at worker's meetings for later reference.

Staffing Levels at KingsGate activities

Each group or activity should have a defined Team Leader and be staffed to a minimum level of two but preferably three or more responsible persons. This is to ensure mutual supervision and sufficient hands in the event of emergencies. Recommended levels for static activities are:

For 0 to 2 years - one adult to every three children (1:3)

For 2 to 3 years - one adult to every four children (1:4)

For 3 to 8 years - one adult to every eight children (1:8)

For over-8s - one for the first 8, then one for every additional 10 children

Recommended levels for outings etc. 0yrs - 8yrs 1:3

There is no recommendation for adults with additional care and support needs. We suggest a ratio of at least 1:6 so that each person can get maximum attention and care; however, this could go to 1:10 for both teenagers and adults with additional care and support needs depending on the circumstances.

There are no recommendations made as to the gender of the responsible persons. However, we would recommend that where possible, especially when going on outings, that there should be a male and female adult present.

Consent from parents or guardians

There are broadly two types of session that require different approaches to consent and permissions:

1. **“Open access sessions”**. In this first type of session children/adults with additional care and support needs come and go under the supervision of their parent or guardian or carer. It should be made clear to these people on arriving at this kind of activity that they should keep the children or adults they are responsible for with them at all times.

2. **“Registered activity sessions”**. In this type of session, we are taking full responsibility for the children from the moment their parent/guardian drop them off, to the moment they are collected. On a **registered activity**, we should also know who is collecting them after the sessions, and we recommend that for children under 8 years a responsible adult should always collect them. For activities for adults a carer may be appropriate/required for support purposes.

It is essential that parents/carers are clear as to which type of activity we are running.

For trips out, the parent/guardian must sign both an agreement form and a medical consent form for each and every trip. The information form should quite clearly state where the trip is going, with whom, and the travel arrangements, including leaving time, and the time when individuals should be collected. They should also be supplied with an emergency contact number that they can ring if they need to contact their child.

Copies of the consent forms for all those going on a trip should be photocopied and left with a colleague or at very least in a safe place so that in the unlikely event of a major emergency someone back at the Centre has contact details for all concerned. These should be shredded or disposed of in confidential waste following the outing.

How we work with ex-offenders who wish to attend KingsGate

From time to time, we have people who have a history of offending that might make them a risk to children or to adults with additional care and support needs ask if they can attend a KingsGate Campus or activity. In fact, some of our programs are specifically geared to help ex-offenders re-orientate themselves back into society. There is a clear process for working out the risks against the needs of the ex-offender when he or she wants to attend a KingsGate Campus . When the application is received:

- An appropriate member of the Safeguarding Team contacts the relevant authorities and requests a statement of the risk that the person might pose.
- The “Multisite Safeguarding Review Panel” meets to discuss the proposed attendance. At this meeting the panel will assess our capacity to supervise the person, any other factors brought to our attention in the reports we receive from the authorities and the overall level of risk presented.
- The panel decides if the request to attend is reasonable and workable.
- If involvement at KingsGate is agreed, a trained Safeguarding Coordinator will meet with the applicant and work through a written agreement. This details when and where they can or cannot attend, what protocols they must observe and to whom they must report.
- The agreement is then in turn reviewed by the Safeguarding Review Panel in consultation with the relevant authorities. The agreement is reviewed regularly by the designated coordinator and reports of any change brought to the Safeguarding Review panel.
- This process can take some time, but it is very thorough, balanced and fair.

Confidentiality

No member of staff or volunteer is permitted to divulge any information concerning a child or an adult with additional care and support needs, his/her family or anything a child/adult may tell them to anyone other than the designated people previously mentioned. This is to protect the interests of the child/adult. This confidentiality is a continuing requirement at all times and is required when workers are “off duty” or no longer involved in the work. Please refer to Appendix 4 for our Safeguarding Confidentiality Policy.

Working in the On-line Environment

With the increased use of online video conferencing facilities, we should all be aware of the potential safeguarding implications of using this technology. This might be online life groups, prayer ministry seasons, informal video chats, using Zoom or Facetime, or using instant messaging services such as WhatsApp. Recent research indicates that people are less inhibited when it comes to sharing over social media, or video conferencing. We need to be prepared for the different behaviours people might display using these technologies when compared to their behaviour in-person.

Suggestions for safe practice

For On-line LifeGroups you need to consider

1. Who is in your group and their individual needs. Do you have a vulnerable adult or are your group members under 18? If they are under 18 then you need to ensure you have read the separate Social Media policy for Under 18's. If you have a mix of adults and under 18's then please ensure you seek advice from your Area Pastor to ensure all safeguarding measures are in place. A risk assessment may well be appropriate, and your Area Pastor can help you with this.
2. Call the group to the meeting via an invitation with a passcode. This helps to block any unwelcome visitors who may try to hack into your meeting. With Zoom you are also able to lock the meeting once everyone is present and this will also prevent any other unwelcome people joining.
3. Ask members to show themselves on screen so that you can be sure that the people are who you think they are. They may then choose to turn off their cameras, but you need to verify who they are first.
4. Discuss confidentiality with your group. Do they understand the implications of 'over sharing' and what is appropriate to share in this context? Discuss a group contract or a set of group rules so that the whole group understands what the boundaries are. This can apply to video meetings as well as the use of WhatsApp, Instant Messenger or Facebook messaging.
5. Consider how you will welcome newcomers or visitors to the group. Discuss contact sharing and how the group can protect themselves from those who may misuse group connection channels. Many people have not considered the potential for misuse and in their desire to be welcoming and accepting of new people open themselves to potentially difficult situations.

For conducting Ministry Sessions online

1. Ensure that all involved with the ministry session understand the boundaries for confidentiality. You may want to start with a simple statement such as 'I want to acknowledge that this should be a safe space for us all and what is shared here should stay here. However, I also need to say that if you share anything about abuse then I have a duty of care to share this with my safeguarding coordinator.'. You could include this information in a pre-ministry email to ensure all have an understanding about this matter.
2. Ensure there are always two people doing ministry. It is better if they are not related members. e.g. not a married couple ministering to one other person - this ensures transparency and impartiality should a complaint be made.
3. When ministry is being delivered remotely it is appropriate for the 'client' to have another trusted person with them physically to provide support. This provides protection for those ministering as well as for the 'client'. It also ensures that if the link fails or becomes unstable there is another person physically with the 'client' to support them. It also ensures that if the 'client' chooses to leave the meeting those praying can be sure the 'client' is still physically safe as they are in the care of another person.
4. Always use a passcode for any on-line meeting to ensure unwelcome visitors can't eavesdrop.
5. Do log ministry sessions, who was present, who was prayed for and when. This information should then be shared with your ministry coordinator who will ensure the record is kept. Details of what is prayed for is not required. If there is a praise report please encourage your 'client' to share themselves.
6. Do give some advice to the people gathering, concerning those who may be around them who could be listening in. Use of headphones, a quiet room, ensure others in the house can't overhear you, appropriate background etc.

Concluding thoughts

Thank you for persevering through this handbook. We hope that you have found the training helpful.

Thank you for your willingness to do all you can to safeguard the wellbeing of those in our care.

Now that you have absorbed this important information it is important that you put its recommendations into practice and work with your team and colleagues to understand any implications or changes to working practice that you might have to initiate.

If you are unclear on any issue you can speak to any of the Safeguarding Coordinators at your location and they will do all they can to help, providing you with additional resources as necessary.

From time to time there will be additional training modules available along with a series of supplementary training leaflets for specific ministry areas that we are currently developing.

If you have further questions, please speak to your Safeguarding Coordinator or email: safeguarding@kingsgate.church

Appendices

Appendix 1

Policy Statement on Safeguarding

KingsGate Community Church **Policy Statement on Safeguarding**

To be displayed in a prominent place

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH ADDITIONAL CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS POLICY STATEMENT

- The following statement was initially agreed by the Leadership Team on 13th April 2016.
- KingsGate Community Church in all its Campuses is committed to the safeguarding of both children and adults with additional care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of children or adults with additional care and support needs and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of both children and adults with additional care and support needs and will ensure that all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults and children should enjoy appropriate access to the life and ministries of KingsGate Community Church where safe to do so.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those who will work with children and adults with additional care and support needs.
- We believe everyone should be valued and feel safe. We want to make sure that all children and adults with additional care and support needs involved in the life of KingsGate Community Church know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and KingsGate Community Church will ensure that as a place of worship/organisation all workers (paid and unpaid) will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and all other relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and The Care Act 2014.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding by working in partnership with Thirtyone:eight and other organisations.
- Encouraging everyone to embrace and abide by the safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Supporting all those involved in the life of KingsGate Community Church affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.**

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or an adult with care and support needs then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Team Leaders or one of the Safeguarding Coordinators identified on posters at each location.

Jim Thody
Safeguarding Team Leader

Date _____



Karen Smith
Deputy Safeguarding Team Leader

Date _____



Matt Negus
Trustee for Safeguarding

Date _____



Date _____

A copy of the safeguarding policy statement can be seen on our website <https://kingsgate.church/safeguarding>

Appendix 2

Policy on Recruitment of Volunteer Workers.

The recruitment procedures and the appointing of Children's & Youth Workers is an essential part of protecting children, as is recruitment of those who work with adults with additional support needs. Therefore KingsGate Community Church has developed a policy to cover the whole selection and appointment process.

Recruitment Procedure

An important part of recruiting Workers is forward planning, as appointing such workers can take up to three months. It is important that no steps are taken to short circuit the process.

References

It is our policy to require of applicants at least two references from two separate sources that are not family members when appointing Children's and Youth workers, and at least one reference for other roles.

We want every decision about the suitability of a candidate to be fair and based on the candidate's skills, qualifications, experience, and commitment to the values of the organisation.

Police Checks

It is a requirement of all staff and volunteers who are undertaking a regulated activity*, when working with children or adults with additional care and support needs to complete a check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A DBS check is for people who do certain types of jobs, including working regularly with children, vulnerable people and in healthcare. It checks a person's details against criminal records and other sources, including the Police National Computer and the Independent Safeguarding Authority to make sure there is nothing to prevent them doing their role. KingsGate require that you complete a DBS check for our specified roles. If you have completed a DBS check for another organisation and it is registered with the Update Service, provided the DBS is for the same type of check, your certificate number can be checked with the Update Service. Supporting Identification documents are still required as is the original certificate. DBS checks are renewed every 3 years.

All applicants or current employees/volunteers will be treated in a confidential manner if a criminal offence or relevant police investigation is disclosed.

Possession of a criminal record does not automatically make a person unsuitable for employment (unless certain criteria apply), but a risk assessment will be completed and a formal review of the current or expected role required.

Appointments

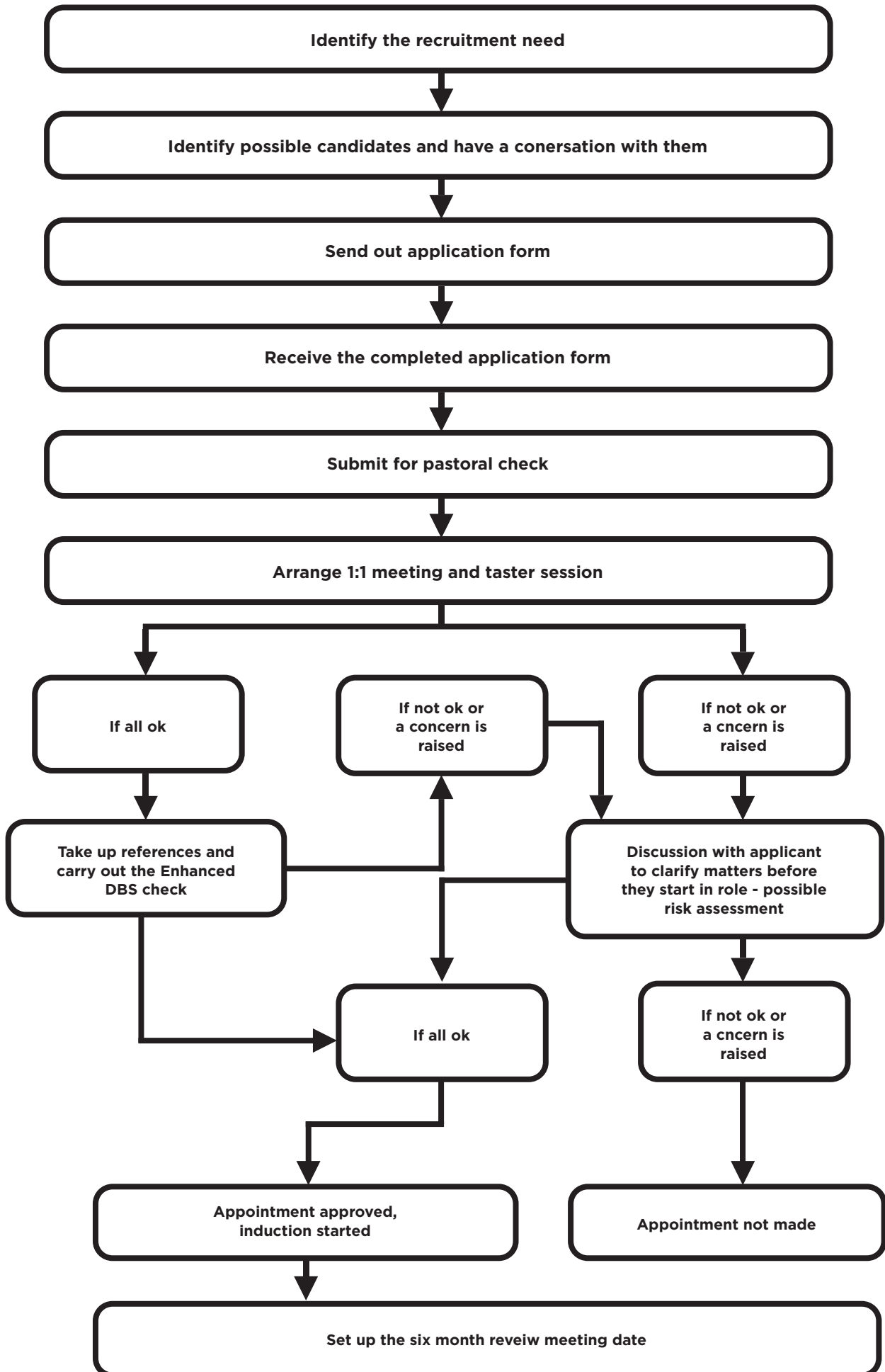
All appointments made by KingsGate for a position in Children's & Youth Work will begin with a probationary period of six months.

Ongoing Training

We endeavour to support all our staff and workers in their roles and so require that safeguarding training is kept up to date with refresher courses within a 3-year window. DBS checks must also be current. Failure to update either the DBS or training may require that some staff or volunteers temporarily step down from their roles until those records are updated.

* **'Regulated Activity'** is work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children, and which cannot be undertaken by a person who is on the Disclosure and Barring Service's Barred List.

SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE



Appendix 3

Registering a cause for concern

REGISTERING A CONCERN ABOUT THE SAFETY OR WELFARE OF A CHILD OR ADULT WITH ADDITIONAL CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS

Please handwrite this form. Do not type it. Staple any relevant notes to this page.
Please sign and date all pages.

Your details					
Your name:					
Your Contact phone number:			Date:		

Tell us who or what it is you have a concern about...	
Child/Adult's Forename:	Surname/Surnames:
Date of Birth/Age:	Address (if known):

Tell us about the concern or incident	
At which Centre or location was the concern or incident?	
Where did it take place?	Who saw and reported it?
What is the concern or incident and why do you think it needs action?	

What action taken and who else was informed:

Please sign and date this form:

Your signature The Date

Copy of form passed to:	
Name:	Position:
Date:	Action taken:

NEED IMMEDIATE HELP?		
<p>PHONE KINGSGATE 01733 31156 MON-FRI: OFFICE HOURS</p>	<p>thirtyone:eight 0303 003 111 7AM-12AM (midnight) HELPLINE</p>	<p>PHONE THE POLICE 101 OR 999 ANY OTHER TIMES</p>

Appendix 4

Safeguarding Confidentiality Policy

The definition of confidentiality is, “the act of keeping private or secret, information or material entrusted”, whether this is spoken or written. Information entrusted does not become the property of the confidant but remains the property of the one who confides. However, the practice of confidentiality in a truly caring community is more complicated and requires explanation.

KingsGate Community Church Leadership Team and Pastoral Ministry Team will seek to provide a private, warm and caring environment for people who may need to speak about things that are sensitive and/or personal. KingsGate believes that those in the ministry have a duty of confidentiality to the confider. The duty of the church to preserve a confidence is a prima facie duty but one that can be overridden by other more compelling duties which the confidant should recognise within the principle of “paramourcy”. In these cases, a confidence may be shared with designated others, including outside agencies.

The different ministry teams working in KingsGate will only share confidential information on a “need to know” basis with permission from the confider. On receiving such information, team members are required to “debrief” with the appropriate designated person. Any information shared with a leader will be discussed with other leaders on a need-to-know basis. The leadership will act as one for the well-being of the church and to promote effective prayer.

Grounds for overriding the duty of confidentiality:

1. The protection of the confider from harm, whether emotional, physical or spiritual.
2. The protection of an identified second party from harm, whether emotional, physical or spiritual.
3. The protection of non-identified individuals or society at large from harm, whether emotional, physical or spiritual.
4. The protection of the church community from harm, whether emotional, physical or spiritual.
5. Where an illegal act is being planned or has taken place.

The confidant should believe that there are reasonable grounds to override the duty of confidentiality but he or she is not required to be certain or provide proof or evidence that the belief is justified. Before sharing outside of the organisation takes place, it may be appropriate to discuss the matter with a leader of the church. In the case that a safeguarding matter has been identified this will be the designated safeguarding coordinator for the event.

If any written information is kept it will be stored securely electronically with limited access. The confider shall be allowed access to any such information, upon request.

It is important to clearly state how this policy statement will work within the church. Two of the pillars of the policy are “paramourcy” and “need to know”, and these are explained below, together with the necessity of “debriefing”.

a) Paramourcy

This is the basis by which it may be decided whose interest is of paramount importance. For instance, a client of the Pastoral Ministry Team may, in confidence, share that they are abusing a child. By the simple application of the rules for overriding the duty of confidentiality, one can see that the duty to the child is paramount to the duty of confidentiality.

b) Need to know

This is the basis for deciding the detail of the information that is being shared, either through the usual debriefing requirements or where it is believed that there are reasonable grounds to override the duty of confidentiality (paramourcy). The question one should ask is: does this person need to know this detail of the situation?

However, when dealing with statutory agencies, every assistance should be given.

c) Debriefing

The confider should be aware that debriefing to the leadership of the church is in their best interest. It means that the leadership is able to offer their experience and provide the ministry team members with the means of discharging their responsibility within the jurisdiction of the church.

This policy is in place for the protection of everyone in the church environment. This confidentiality is a continuing requirement at all times and is required when workers are “off duty” or no longer involved in the work. If the policy guidelines are not followed in a given situation, it should be understood that this falls outside the covering and responsibility of the church.

Any questions or concerns regarding this policy should be addressed to the church leadership

Appendix 5

Three safeguarding training levels

Level 1 Training	Level 2 Training	Level 3 Training
<p>Level 1 training is a basic introduction to Safeguarding for everyone serving in KingsGate ministries.</p> <p>This is an online course using a short video presentation and questionnaire reflection.</p> <p>This is highly desirable training for everyone in KingsGate ministries but essential training for anyone working with under 18's.</p>	<p>Level 2 training includes all the material in Level 1 and adds to it a much more in depth understanding of the issues around safeguarding.</p> <p>Through live presentation, group work and scenarios this training is essential for all leaders within KingsGate.</p> <p>The certificate from this training lasts three years during which leaders must come for a refresher course.</p>	<p>Level 3 training is a supplement to level 2 training and is for Safeguarding Coordinators.</p>
<p>This training is available every day of the year through our web links.</p>	<p>This training is delivered either in person twice a year or via the KingsGate Learning Platform</p>	<p>This training is delivered in a group as necessary.</p>

Appendix 6

List of supplementary policy documents

- Anti-Bribery and Corruption
- Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement
- Health and Safety
- Lone Working
- Risk Management
- Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing

These policies are available to staff and week-day volunteers on the Staff info section of SharePoint site at.....

<https://kingsgatecommunitychurch.sharepoint.com/staffinfo/Policies>

If you do not have access to this SharePoint area email safeguarding@kingsgate.church detailing which policy you require.

Appendix 7

Under 18s Social Media & Communication Policy

KingsGate Church recognises that social media and online communication is a huge part of the lives of young people today. The goal of this policy is to set guidelines and standards for practices that allow us to maximise this opportunity for connection and discipleship with Young People that are part of KingsGate Youth, whilst maintaining absolute safety and risk mitigation for the benefit and protection of both our Young People and our Youth Team. Whilst we recognise the opportunities that online communication presents, our primary means of pastoral care will still be in-person where possible.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION

- All direct communication to Young People aged Year 9+ goes through our KingsGate Youth Discord server, or Direct Messages on the KingsGate Youth Instagram and TikTok accounts.
- Parents will be informed if a Young Person signs up for Discord (unless unwise or inappropriate as signed off by Head of Youth).
- Young People aged Year 8 and under should not be communicated to directly online. All communication should be via parent emails and Dynamics group text messages (Parent permission is required for Young People to receive text messages from KingsGate Youth).

PHONE NUMBERS

- Youth Team should not have access to Young People's phone numbers and vice-versa. Any existing phone numbers held by Youth Team should be deleted. Any exemptions to this such as in the case of family or existing close relationships must be noted and signed off by Head of Youth.
- Young People can have access to a 'youth phone' number for emergencies in specific scenarios such as camp, trips etc.
- This phone is only to be in use during these specified activities and is to be left in the church building and turned off when not in use.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- Young People can 'follow' youth leader's public accounts, but not private accounts.
- Youth Team should not 'follow', 'friend' or 'subscribe' to Young People on any social media or online platform (eg. Instagram, TikTok, Discord, YouTube, Facebook etc.)
- Youth Team should not directly message Young People from personal social media accounts.
- Youth Team should not interact with (eg. like or comment on) Young People's social media posts.

VIDEO CALLS

- Video calls for events shall all be carried out via the Discord server, by setting up temporary threads that only the relevant people are invited to. Once the event has finished, this thread will then be deleted.

PHOTOS

- Photo and video permission will be sought from parents on initial new person sign up. Permission is required from both the parent and the young person. Approval of this will be logged on the Young Person's Dynamics profile.

EMAIL

- Young people can be emailed via Dynamics (as this can be tracked). Example scenarios where this would be appropriate are responses to event sign ups and invites to the Discord server.

YOUTUBE

- Whilst much of our content is hosted on YouTube, we do not privately communicate with Young People on this platform.

'This document is based on a Model Safeguarding Policy supplied by the Thirtyone:eight . This Policy must not be copied by other churches/organisations without the written agreement of Thirtyone:eight .'

Policy Title	kingsgate safeguarding policy handbook v19
Policy Prepared by	Safeguarding Review Team with the Senior Safeguarding Advisor of Thirtyone:eight
Date of completion	October 2025
Date for review	October 2026

Endnotes

- I. <http://www.safeguardingmatters.co.uk/the-new-disclosure-and-vetting-service/in-the-news/recent-cases-relating-to-vulnerable-adults/>
Thirtyone:eight : Facing The Unthinkable
- II. <http://www.scie.org.uk/> The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) improves the lives of people who use care services by sharing knowledge about what works.
- III. Working Together To Safeguard Children 2013
- IV. Thirtyone:eight : Facing The Unthinkable – page 10
- V. Thirtyone:eight : Facing The Unthinkable – page 18
- VI. Thirtyone:eight : Facing The Unthinkable – page 21
- VI. Source: <http://www.fao.org/capacity-development/en/>



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