

# Regional Gospel Partnerships

## Model Safeguarding Policy, Procedures, and Codes of Conduct

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# The South West Gospel Partnership

## Safeguarding Policy:

### 1. Context

- 1.1. The South West Gospel Partnership is a charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales, Charity number 1126798, whose charitable aim is the promotion of the Christian Religion.
- 1.2. The South West Gospel Partnership facilitates and supports a network of Bible-centred Churches across the South West UK region, who seek to advance the gospel in the region by working together and sharing resources.
- 1.3. The South West Gospel Partnership [‘the Partnership’] undertakes a range of activities in its own right and for which it is directly responsible. This includes:
  - 1.3.1. Organising regular gatherings of church leaders for their encouragement and equipping, and to promote the activities of the Partnership and strengthen the network
  - 1.3.2. Organising annual Men’s and Women’s Conferences for church members, for their encouragement and equipping, and to promote the activities of the Partnership and strengthen the network
  - 1.3.3. Running gospel ministry training events for church leaders, gospel workers and church members
  - 1.3.4. Running ministry training courses of a one to two-year duration involving weekly or monthly training sessions
  - 1.3.5. Promoting Bible-centred ministry to children and young people by providing training events for church leaders and church members
  - 1.3.6. Running occasional Bible-centred events for young people
  - 1.3.7. Providing bursaries to churches to help with the financial costs of providing a short-term ministry trainee position
  - 1.3.8. Promoting church planting and revitalisation
  - 1.3.9. Promoting events runs by churches within the network to other churches in the network
  - 1.3.10. Promoting local partnership between churches and church leaders in geographically-defined sub-groups.
- 1.4. Individual Partner/Member Churches affiliated to the Partnership are all legal entities in their own right. The South West Gospel Partnership has no legal authority over or responsibility for its Member or Partner Churches which each have their own legal status, governance and safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.5. The South West Gospel Partnership relates to other Regional Gospel Partnerships (RGPs) in the United Kingdom through an informal national network. This network facilitates the sharing of ideas and good practice between RGPs. This wider network is not a legal entity in its own right and whilst it serves to facilitate cooperation between and development of the RGPs, it has no legal authority over, or responsibility for the South West Gospel Partnership or any RGP. Neither does the South West Gospel Partnership have any legal authority over or responsibility for any other RGP in the network and *vice versa*.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy with its procedures and appendices applies to all ministry conducted directly by the South West gospel partnership
- 2.2. Ministry conducted by individual churches will be covered by that church’s own safeguarding policies

- 2.3. Where the South West Gospel Partnership partners with other organisations, or commissions services from other organisations, supplementary agreements will be in place as appropriate that clearly articulate lines of authority and responsibility
- 2.4. This policy applies to everyone who works on our behalf whether Trustees, staff, volunteers, or others working on our behalf

### **3. Purpose**

This policy with its appendices and related documents and policies outlines how we will:

- 3.1. Ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing, and protective environment for our staff, volunteers, others who work on our behalf, beneficiaries and anyone else who engages with South West Gospel Partnership and that they are protected from bullying, harassment, exploitation, and abuse
- 3.2. Ensure that if we identify abuse in the course of our ministry, it is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately
- 3.3. Ensure that our Trustees, staff and others who work on our behalf are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and duties and are supported to fulfil them competently and confidently
- 3.4. Support the development of an open and transparent culture that listens to the views of our Partner churches and those who engage directly with our charitable activities; supporting the raising of concerns and complaints and ensuring that they are handled biblically and in an open, carefully rigorous, transparent, and appropriately accountable manner
- 3.5. Provide clarity about how we will respond to safeguarding issues and the limits of our authority and involvement

### **4. Values and beliefs**

- 4.1. Everyone who engages with our charity has the right to be protected from any form of bullying or harassment, exploitation or abuse and we will seek to ensure that we provide a caring and nurturing environment that is open and transparent and that promotes the raising of concerns
- 4.2. In light of the position that we hold, we believe that it is our responsibility to provide leadership by example as a charity and to help foster a healthy culture in our Partner Churches with regard to the protection of those who are vulnerable, the promotion of their wellbeing, and the creation of safe and nurturing environments
- 4.3. Everyone who acts on our behalf, in any capacity, has a responsibility to act to support the values and commitments outlined in this policy

#### **4.4. Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:**

- 4.4.1. We are to honour the authorities that God has set over us and to live as responsible and good citizens in the time and place that God has set us, living as God would have us live, setting a good example to those around us
- 4.4.2. Every human life is valuable to God and each person bears his image
- 4.4.3. We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers and we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst from those dangers
- 4.4.4. God cares for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger and followers of the Lord Jesus are to imitate him by protecting and caring for those who are vulnerable and opposing exploitation
- 4.4.5. We are to bear witness to the truth as revealed by God in the scriptures, speaking truth in love and with all gentleness, loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us, and treating those with whom we disagree with respect and courtesy

- 4.4.6. The Christian gospel is advanced through example of life and by declaration of the message. It cannot be advanced by force or any form of coercion, but by the spirit of God who convicts and convinces; empowering those who willingly put their faith in Christ for the obedience of faith and increasing conformity to the likeness of Christ
- 4.4.7. When we meet as Christians, we do not gather as sinless and perfect people, but rather in a fellowship of grace that is to be characterised by gentleness, forbearance, repentance and forgiveness. As we meet, we seek to encourage and challenge one another to grow in faith, knowledge and obedience to God, reflecting his character, including his heart for both justice and mercy

## **5. Our responsibilities and commitments**

### **5.1. Our responsibilities**

- 5.1.1. To develop and maintain a healthy organisational environment and culture that is protective, caring and nurturing of all who engage with the charity, whether staff, volunteers, or beneficiaries
- 5.1.2. To ensure that all who engage with us, whether in person or online, and particularly those who disagree with our theological or other positions, are treated with respect and courtesy and that their dignity is upheld
- 5.1.3. To ensure that our staff, volunteers, or others who act on our behalf operate in accordance with our policies, procedures, and codes of conduct
- 5.1.4. To seek to ensure that our staff, volunteers, or others who act on our behalf are protected from bullying, harassment, abuse or exploitation from others outside the organisation
- 5.1.5. To ensure that we operate in an open, transparent, and accountable manner, listening to and taking seriously any allegations or concerns about our staff or volunteers or our systems and processes
- 5.1.6. To ensure that we have clear, proportionate, and appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with concerns and that we respond proportionately and in a timely manner if safeguarding concerns that meet statutory thresholds are identified
- 5.1.7. To exercise broader influence by example that encourages our Partner churches to recognise the importance of safeguarding in creating a healthy church culture.

### **5.2. How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities**

- 5.2.1. We will actively seek to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with our statement of faith, biblical principles, our charitable purposes, and best practice in safeguarding
- 5.2.2. We will ensure that we have robust and relevant policies, procedures and systems that promote and maintain such a culture and the work of all those involved in safeguarding, and that these are reviewed for effectiveness at least annually
- 5.2.3. We will seek to visibly demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the organisation, and our Trustees and senior leaders will support the development of best practice and ensure accountability for the behaviour and ministry of both paid staff and volunteers in relation to their work for the charity; including providing appropriate challenge to each other
- 5.2.4. We will ensure that those who are responsible for safeguarding at the various levels of the organisation are appropriately trained and supported to fulfil their role competently and confidently
- 5.2.5. We will ensure that we appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one deputy who will take responsibility for leading safeguarding across the organisation
  - 5.2.5.1. Safeguarding will be promoted and overseen by our senior leaders
  - 5.2.5.2. Delegation of tasks and responsibilities will be clearly outlined in the relevant role descriptions and the organisation's safeguarding structures, complete with contact details, will be included in our procedures and made publicly available

- 5.2.6. We will provide effective leadership, management and support to our staff including:
  - 5.2.6.1. Supervision and pastoral support
  - 5.2.6.2. Regular reviews aimed at identifying support needs, encouraging staff development
  - 5.2.6.3. Providing ongoing training and skills development appropriate to the role
- 5.2.7. We will provide effective leadership, management and support to volunteers who deliver services on our behalf including:
  - 5.2.7.1. Providing clear role descriptions
  - 5.2.7.2. Providing appropriate training, supervision and support
- 5.2.8. We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry.
  - 5.2.8.1. Developing a positive culture
  - 5.2.8.2. Managing health and safety through effective policies and procedures, risk assessment and management, and maintenance of proportionate systems
  - 5.2.8.3. Creating a gospel-centred, godly and loving environment that promotes physical, social, psychological and spiritual well-being in accordance with biblical values
  - 5.2.8.4. Considering the online as well as the physical environments; including our use of social media and technology
- 5.2.9. We will ensure that we monitor the conduct of our staff and that we have policies, procedures, and systems for managing allegations against staff or volunteers, supported by a culture of listening to allegations and responding with rigor, fairness, and transparency
- 5.2.10. We will ensure that our expectations in relation to the conduct of staff, volunteers and others who act on our behalf are clear through codes of conduct, policies and procedures including:
  - 5.2.10.1. Clear accountability processes and sanctions for infringements of the codes of conduct
  - 5.2.10.2. Intolerance of bullying; including cyber-bullying and the bullying of staff and leaders
  - 5.2.10.3. A culture of zero-tolerance of discriminatory or abusive attitudes, language, or behaviours
- 5.2.11. We will seek to be vigilant and should we identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who engage with the charity for any reason (including due to historic trauma and/or abuse) we will respond proportionately, as appropriate:
  - 5.2.11.1. encouraging them to seek the guidance and support of their local church to help them overcome their challenges
  - 5.2.11.2. signposting or referring them to local or national specialist services that can help them
  - 5.2.11.3. sharing information with statutory agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met
- 5.2.12. We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, data protection policies and national and local guidance and agreements.
- 5.2.13. We will ensure that our culture and our policies and procedures, facilitate and encourage the raising of concerns or complaints, dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest, and fair manner, including clear appeals processes
- 5.2.14. We will also ensure that our leaders are competent and confident in handling complaints
- 5.2.15. We will develop a culture that expects our staff, volunteers, others who act on our behalf and our Partner Churches to identify and raise safeguarding concerns and will support this with a clear whistleblowing policy
- 5.2.16. We will ensure that relevant policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc are publicly available
- 5.2.17. We will ensure that we our Partner Churches understand that clear and serious failures of safeguarding on their part will result in disaffiliation should the failings not be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner (disaffiliation decisions being taken by the Trustees)

# Safeguarding Procedures

## 6. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide staff and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

## 7. Scope

These procedures will be applied to all staff, volunteers and others who act on behalf of South West Gospel Partnership.

## 8. Governance and oversight

The Trustees, will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the charity by:

- 8.1. Promoting the importance of safeguarding and leading the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable across the organisation
- 8.2. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is in place and that the suitability and effectiveness of the policy and associated procedures and arrangements are reviewed by the Trustees at least annually, with input and support from the DSL
- 8.3. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced
- 8.4. Ensuring that the DSL provides an informal update to all trustee meetings and that a formal report is provided to the Trustees by the DSL at least annually
- 8.5. Ensuring that reporting on safeguarding (without disclosing any information that would identify either an individual, or a Partner Church) is included within the charity's Annual Report to its Partner Churches.
- 8.6. Ensuring that a comprehensive risk register is maintained on an ongoing basis
  - 8.6.1. The risk register must cover all high level strategic risks including data security and reputational risks
- 8.7. Ensuring that role clarity is achieved through a clear definition of the responsibilities of all those involved in safeguarding across the charity (see appendix B)
- 8.8. Ensuring that we set an example to our Partner Churches by modelling best practice and ensuring clarity of expectations

## 9. Recruitment and ongoing support of paid staff

*The recruitment support of any paid staff is of critical importance to the South West Gospel Partnership and to our work and ministry. In order to fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff will be subject to a recruitment process appropriate to their role.*

### 9.1. General Recruitment process

- 9.1.1. Applicants for paid staff positions will be required to submit a written application that covers fitness and suitability for the role and complete a criminal record self-disclosure form

- 9.1.1.1. Generally, self-declaration forms will be scrutinised prior to interview so that any relevant declarations can be explored during interview if this is deemed necessary
- 9.1.2. Prior to appointment all paid staff will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation
- 9.1.3. Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought, including, where possible, a reference from the current or previous employer
- 9.1.4. Prior to appointment, staff will be made aware of the Partnership's code of conduct
- 9.1.5. Staff will be provided with a written Job description and person specification prior to deciding whether to take up the position
- 9.1.6. Upon commencement of their position, all staff will be required to complete a formal induction process as outlined in their role description and including any matters identified during the recruitment process
- 9.1.7. Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions

## **9.2. Safer Recruitment**

- 9.2.1. If it is anticipated that a role will involve working with vulnerable adults or children, additional good practice for Safer Recruitment will be followed.
- 9.2.2. At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of staff for such roles will be trained in Safer Recruitment
- 9.2.3. Where a role is identified as involving regulated activity, an Enhanced DBS check will be sought prior to commencement of the regulated activity
- 9.2.4. Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be clearly identified as such
- 9.2.5. Where a role involves regulated activity that requires an Enhanced DBS check, a self-declaration form relating to suitability to work in regulated activity must also be provided
  - 9.2.5.1. Where an applicant requests that the declaration is not considered unless a position is to be offered, this will be respected.
  - 9.2.5.2. The self-declaration form will be retained in a sealed envelope, clearly identified as a confidential declaration
- 9.2.6. Where a DBS check is not completely clear, the risks associated will be discussed openly with the applicant, the implications will be assessed, and a decision will be made about the suitability of the individual by DSL. The assessment will include consideration of:
  - 9.2.6.1. The nature and context of the offence and its relevance to the role applied for
  - 9.2.6.2. When the offence was committed and the individual's subsequent track record
  - 9.2.6.3. Whether the information was self-disclosed and if not, why not?
  - 9.2.6.4. Any other relevant factors
- 9.2.7. A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained
- 9.2.8. DBS certificates will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained. The Single Central record and, where appropriate any risk assessment or management records are the only records that will be retained

## **9.3. Probationary periods**

*The precise nature and expectations of probationary periods will vary from role-to role as described in the role description, however, they are intended to be supportive of the volunteer / employee and to provide a framework that provides accountability to both the individual and the organisation. Probationary periods will not be used for punitive purposes.*

- 9.3.1. All staff will be subject to a formal probationary period of a defined duration
- 9.3.2. Prior to commencement of the role, a clear statement of the duration of the probationary period and criteria for successful completion of the probationary period will be provided



- 9.3.3. Regular support, guidance and review will be provided throughout the probationary period and the outcome (passed, extended, failed) will be communicated to the employee prior to the end of the probationary period and records will be retained of all discussions

#### **9.4. Ongoing support and supervision**

- 9.4.1. All staff will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management
- 9.4.2. Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years

### **10. Recruitment of volunteers**

*The recruitment of volunteers is of critical importance to the South West Gospel Partnership and to our work and ministry. In order to fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, volunteers will be subject to a recruitment process appropriate to their role.*

#### **10.1. Management of recruitment processes**

- 10.1.1. Volunteer roles vary greatly from being asked to help with some small practical task (cleaning, stacking chairs away, serving refreshments) to teaching on a training course or leading a ministry event involving children. The recruitment process may be formal or informal and must suit the frequency of the activity, the commitment required and the risk associated with the role.
- 10.1.2. Judgements regarding the appropriate recruitment process will be the responsibility of the person recruiting the volunteer or asking for volunteers to help with an activity.
- 10.1.3. In all instances where the role involves a potential direct risk to children or vulnerable adults then a formal safer recruitment process must be followed.
- 10.1.4. If there is any doubt about the risk to children or adults in connection with role, the DSL should be consulted.
- 10.1.5. Due regard should also be given to risk to the volunteer with care and consideration given to their physical well-being and their mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

#### **10.2. General considerations in the recruitment process**

- 10.2.1. Only those understood to be Christian believers in good standing with a local church will be asked to undertake volunteer roles/activities.
- 10.2.2. If there is safeguarding or reputational risk, a reference/recommendation from an individual's church leader should be obtained.
- 10.2.3. The role or activity should be clearly defined and appropriate instruction or training provided
- 10.2.4. Consideration should be given as to whether the volunteer needs to be made aware of the Partnership's Code of Conduct
- 10.2.5. Consideration should be given as to whether agreement with the Partnership's basis of faith is required
- 10.2.6. It should be made clear to the volunteer to whom they are accountable for the role or activity and that they are encouraged to raise any questions or concerns with that person.

#### **10.3. Safer Recruitment**

- 10.3.1. If it is anticipated that a volunteer role will involve working with vulnerable adults or children, a formal recruitment process must be followed incorporating good practice for Safer Recruitment.
- 10.3.2. At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of volunteers for such roles will be trained in Safer Recruitment
- 10.3.3. Where a role is identified as involving a regulated activity, an Enhanced DBS check will be sought prior to commencement of the regulated activity
- 10.3.4. Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be clearly identified as such
- 10.3.5. Where a role involves regulated activity that requires an Enhanced DBS check, a self-declaration form relating to suitability to work in regulated activity must also be provided
  - 10.3.5.1. Where an applicant requests that the declaration is not considered unless a position is to be offered, this will be respected.
  - 10.3.5.2. The self-declaration form will be retained in a sealed envelope, clearly identified as a confidential declaration
- 10.3.6. Where a DBS check is not completely clear, the risks associated will be discussed openly with the applicant, the implications will be assessed, and a decision will be made about the suitability of the individual by DSL. The assessment will include consideration of:
  - 10.3.6.1. The nature and context of the offence and its relevance to the role applied for
  - 10.3.6.2. When the offence was committed and the individual's subsequent track record
  - 10.3.6.3. Whether the information was self-disclosed and if not, why not?
  - 10.3.6.4. Any other relevant factors
- 10.3.7. A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained
- 10.3.8. DBS certificates will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained. The Single Central record and, where appropriate any risk assessment or management records are the only records that will be retained

**10.4. Ongoing support and supervision of long-term volunteers**

- 10.4.1. All long-term volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management
- 10.4.2. Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years

**11. Safeguarding Training**

- 11.1.1. Trustees will receive initial training. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the Trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance is up to date
- 11.1.2. All staff and volunteers in roles that involve a regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend induction training and regular refresher safeguarding training every three years.
- 11.1.3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years
- 11.1.4. A log of training will be maintained

**12. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment**

*South West Gospel Partnership fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.*

## **Health and Safety**

- 12.1. The Leadership team will ensure that health and safety is prioritised in all of our activities including:
- 12.1.1. Regularly reviewing our health and safety policy to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance
  - 12.1.2. Maintaining and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments
  - 12.1.3. Maintenance and analysis of Accident and Incident Reports on receipt to ensure appropriate lessons are learned and timely responses are implemented and an overview analysis of reports that examines trends and recurring themes will be conducted at least annually
  - 12.1.4. Ensuring that adequate First Aid cover is available, and that only qualified First Aiders administer First Aid, except in emergency situations and where instructed to do so by Emergency Services
  - 12.1.5. Ensuring that clear processes for emergencies such as building evacuation or lockdown procedures are in place and are clearly understood by those in charge of an activity
  - 12.1.6. Ensuring that appropriate safety equipment such as First Aid kits, Fire Extinguishers etc are available and maintained on an ongoing basis
  - 12.1.7. Fulfilling legal obligations with respect to employees of the Gospel Partnership to display approved health and safety information and/or provide each employee with a copy of the approved leaflet or equivalent pocket card.
  - 12.1.8. Ensuring best practice is promoted through announcements, effective signage etc
  - 12.1.9. Ensuring that appropriate and proportionate lone working policies are in place

## **General provisions**

- 12.2. South West Gospel Partnership will ensure that where appropriate information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed in venues used by the Partnership and also clearly communicated and easily accessible online
- 12.3. Leaders will promote the need to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, activities and culture of the charity and by personal example

## **13. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures**

### **Managing immediate risk**

- 13.1. Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect individuals involved such as requesting urgent medical attention or police presence
- 13.2. The worker may seek advice from the DSL, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm
- 13.3. In such urgent situations and if the DSL cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact the appropriate statutory service to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity

### **Concerns identified or disclosed during, or in relation to, South West Gospel Partnership ministry or events**

#### **Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- 13.4. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL
  - 13.4.1. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding
  - 13.4.2. Details of the concern must be recorded on the “Incidents and concerns reporting form” (See appendix D) either before, during, or immediately after the discussion with the DSL

**Managing the risks: the role of the DSL**

- 13.5. In discussion with the person reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required
- 13.6. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a “Confidential File” in relation to the person at risk
  - 13.6.1. A Chronology (See appendix D) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file
  - 13.6.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis
    - 13.6.2.1. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a “need to know” basis
- 13.7. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are an adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care
  - 13.7.1. Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:
    - 13.7.1.1. To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect
    - 13.7.1.2. To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse
    - 13.7.1.3. The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness
  - 13.7.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix A for contact details)
  - 13.7.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the DSL will follow up with Children’s Social Care
  - 13.7.4. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process
  - 13.7.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the “Record of action” and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis
- 13.8. Confidential files will be stored {please complete}
- 13.9. The DSL will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding

**Responding to disclosures of historic abuse**

- 13.10. Historic abuse disclosed by someone who is still a child will be treated according to procedures outlined above (13.1 onwards)
- 13.11. If historic child abuse by someone who is now an adult, it is the victim’s decision whether the information should be referred to the police. Victims have the right to report historic abuse regardless of how long ago the abuse took place, however, they are under no obligation to do so and the decision is entirely theirs. We will seek to support the victim through the process of deciding what action they wish to take but the decision is entirely theirs

**14. Allegations against or concerns about South West Gospel Partnership staff and volunteers**

*South West Gospel Partnership takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We will seek to manage the process effectively and while the investigation takes place, we will seek to support the person accused in line with our legal responsibilities while also managing actual, potential, or perceived risks to others.*

#### **Anonymous allegations**

- 14.1. Allegations that are made anonymously cannot be handled in the usual way and will generally be filed without full investigation.
- 14.2. Allegations that request a level of confidentiality that would compromise the integrity of an investigation, or its outcome will not be investigated, but may be addressed in general terms with the accused. They will generally be filed without full investigation
- 14.3. South West Gospel Partnership will not respond to allegations or complaints made in public space such as social media or other online or in-print publications. All allegations should be addressed to South West Gospel Partnership directly and the appropriate allegations / complaints processes invoked
- 14.4. Although anonymous allegations cannot, by definition, be handled in the usual way, South West Gospel Partnership will
  - 14.4.1. Log the allegations
  - 14.4.2. Seek to establish whether any pattern or consistency can be identified
  - 14.4.3. Consider whether any form of investigation or action can and should be taken

#### **External investigations**

- 14.5. Concerns, complaints, and allegations will generally be investigated internally
- 14.6. In exceptional circumstances such as where South West Gospel Partnership have concerns about the independence or competence of staff, or their capacity to conduct a timely investigation, South West Gospel Partnership will consider whether it is appropriate to involve an independent external individual or organisation to assist with the investigation
- 14.7. Unless directed by a statutory or regulatory body to involve an independent, external body, South West Gospel Partnership will make such decisions. Advice can be sought from CSS or other sources, but this decision rests solely in the hands of South West Gospel Partnership Trustees

#### **Procedure for handling allegations**

- 14.8. Allegations against South West Gospel Partnership staff or volunteers should be reported to the DSL or Deputy.
  - 14.8.1. If the allegation is against the DSL or Deputy it should be should be reported to the Chair of Trustees
- 14.9. Allegations can be raised in writing, or by prearranged discussion with the DSL. When arranging an appointment to discuss a complaint or allegation, the purpose of the appointment should be clearly identified in advance so that appropriate arrangements for recording the conversation can be made

#### **Initial considerations and actions**

- 14.10. Full details of the allegation will be established and recorded
- 14.11. An initial assessment to establish whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved will be conducted and enacted
- 14.12. The DSL, in consultation with the Chair of Trustees will identify an initial plan of action

- 14.12.1. Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable
- 14.12.2. If so, care should be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence
- 14.12.3. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation should not be divulged
- 14.12.4. Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims

#### **Allegations that meet a threshold for statutory reporting**

- 14.13. The DSL will, at the earliest opportunity, consult with / refer to relevant statutory agencies
- 14.14. The DSL will work with, and under the guidance of the statutory agencies to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed. Support can be requested from CSS at any time

#### **Allegations that do not meet the thresholds for statutory reporting**

- 14.15. The DSL will, in consultation with the Chair of Trustees, identify and appoint an investigation team consisting of:
  - 14.15.1. An Overseeing Officer (who must be the DSL or Deputy or a Trustee or, in exceptional circumstances, an external specialist) to provide scrutiny and accountability
  - 14.15.2. An Investigating Officer who will lead the investigation
  - 14.15.3. If additional resource is required / desirable, the investigation team can be expanded and will be led by the Investigating Officer
- 14.16. The Investigating Officer may consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency
- 14.17. The Investigating Officer will acknowledge receipt of the allegation and will notify those making the allegation and the accused of the process that will be followed and of anticipated timeframes
- 14.18. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the Investigating Officer and signed off by the Overseeing Officer
- 14.19. The investigation will be conducted
  - 14.19.1. The Investigating Officer and Overseeing Officer can contact CSS at any stage to seek advice
- 14.20. Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
  - 14.20.1. These records will be held and stored confidentially and securely by the Investigating Officer until the investigation is complete.
- 14.21. Once the investigation is complete, the final investigation report will be passed to the Overseeing Officer for sign off
  - 14.21.1. The report will conclude using the same outcome findings as the statutory processes, namely '*substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious*'
  - 14.21.2. Once the investigation is complete, all records will be sealed, identified with a label signed by the Overseeing Officer, recording the name of the individual against whom the allegation was made and the outcome, and then stored securely and confidentially in a designated archive for the purpose of regulatory accountability
  - 14.21.3. If the allegation concerns and employee details of the investigation outcome will be retained in the persons confidential file unless the outcome is "malicious"
- 14.22. The Investigation outcomes will be reported to the DSL and the Chair of Trustees,
- 14.23. The accused and those making the allegation will be informed of the outcome
- 14.24. If the allegation is upheld, corrective or disciplinary measures will be enacted according to the appropriate policies and contractual requirements

- 14.25. There is no appeal stage in relation to an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or other individual acting on behalf of South West Gospel Partnership
  - 14.25.1. If the person making the allegation believes that the outcome is incorrect, they can raise their concerns using the complaints process
  - 14.25.2. The complainant must outline clearly the basis of the complaint and the justification for complaining about the process and / or outcome.
- 14.26. The process will be reviewed to identify lessons that can be learned.
- 14.27. Historical allegations against a member of staff or volunteer of the gospel partnership will be handled in accordance with the allegation procedure outlined above in ( 14.8 onwards)

## **15. Complaints about South West Gospel Partnership processes or actions**

### **Anonymous complaints**

- 15.1. Complaints that are made anonymously cannot be handled in the usual way and will generally be filed without full investigation.
- 15.2. Complaints that request a level of confidentiality that would compromise the integrity of an investigation, or its outcome will not be investigated, but may be considered in general terms. They will generally be filed without full investigation
- 15.3. South West Gospel Partnership will not respond to complaints made in public space such as social media or other online or in-print publications. All complaints should be addressed to South West Gospel Partnership directly using this complaints process
- 15.4. Although anonymous complaints cannot, by definition, be handled in the usual way, South West Gospel Partnership will
  - 15.4.1. Log the complaints
  - 15.4.2. Seek to establish whether any pattern or consistency can be identified
  - 15.4.3. Consider whether any form of investigation or action can and should be taken

### **External investigations**

- 15.5. Concerns, complaints, and allegations will generally be investigated internally
- 15.6. In exceptional circumstances such as where South West Gospel Partnership have concerns about the independence or competence of staff, or their capacity to conduct a timely investigation, South West Gospel Partnership will consider whether it is appropriate to involve an independent external individual or organisation to assist with the investigation
- 15.7. Unless directed by a statutory or regulatory body to involve an independent, external body, South West Gospel Partnership will make such decisions. Advice can be sought from CSS or other sources, but this decision rests solely in the hands of South West Gospel Partnership Trustees and senior leaders

### **Making a complaint**

- 15.8. Complaints about South West Gospel Partnership's processes or actions should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees
- 15.9. The Chair of Trustees will assess whether and immediate action is required
- 15.10. The Chair of Trustees will inform the Trust Board of the complaint and an initial plan of action will be developed.
- 15.11. Consideration will be given by the Trust Board as to whether a Serious Incident Report needs to be filed with the appropriate charity regulator
- 15.12. The Trust Board will identify and appoint an investigation team consisting of:

- 15.12.1. An Overseeing Officer (who must be a Director or a Trustee or, in exceptional circumstances, an external specialist) to provide scrutiny and accountability
- 15.12.2. An Investigating Officer who will lead the investigation
- 15.12.3. If additional resource is required / desirable, the investigation team can be expanded and will be led by the Investigating Officer

### **Preliminary actions**

- 15.13. The Investigating Officer may consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency
- 15.14. The Investigating Officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and will notify the complainants of the initial plan of action which will include:
  - 15.14.1. Discussing the complaint with the complainants to confirm and clarify the details of the complaint
  - 15.14.2. Details of the complaint process and of key contacts will be provided to the complainants.
  - 15.14.3. The Investigating Officer will establish whether the complainants wish to start the process at stage 1 (informal resolution) or stage 2 (formal complaint)
  - 15.14.4. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the Investigating Officer and signed off the Overseeing Officer

### **Stage 1 – Informal resolution**

*Where possible, South West Gospel Partnership prefers to commence at this stage; believing this to be best aligned to the biblical principles, however, this will be a decision for the complainants, and if they request commencement at stage 2, that decision will be fully respected by South West Gospel Partnership.*

- 15.15. The Investigating Officer, supported by a relevant person if required will arrange to discuss the matter with the complainants
  - 15.15.1. Relevant in this context would include someone with in-depth knowledge of the area of ministry being investigated, a notetaker, a staff member, a nominated trustee etc
- 15.16. The aim at this stage is to establish whether agreement can be reached about action that is required
- 15.17. South West Gospel Partnership will make a written record of the discussion that includes:
  - 15.17.1. The key points discussed, and views expressed
  - 15.17.2. Areas of agreement
  - 15.17.3. Areas of disagreement
  - 15.17.4. Conclusions and actions agreed
- 15.18. The written record of the meeting will be provided to the complainants who will have opportunity to request amendments or clarification
- 15.19. Once agreed, the complainants will be asked to confirm the accuracy of the notes of the discussion

### **If resolution has been agreed**

- 15.20. Once South West Gospel Partnership have completed the agreed actions, they will notify the complainants of the action taken
- 15.21. The complainants will be asked to confirm that they are happy that the matter has been addressed
- 15.22. The complaints log will be updated, and the notes will be stored securely in the designated archive



### **If resolution has not been agreed**

- 15.23. A record of the closing position of the informal stage will be agreed between this complainants and the Investigating Officer. This will include any progress made and actions agreed / completed and the issues that could not be resolved
- 15.24. The closing report will be signed off by the Overseeing Officer who will escalate the matter to the formal stage

### **Stage 2 – formal investigation**

- 15.25. Complaints at the formal stage will be reviewed by the Trust Board to ascertain whether there are sufficient grounds to justify a full investigation
- 15.26. The Overseeing Officer and Investigating Officer/Team for this stage will be appointed by the Trust Board
- 15.27. A detailed investigation plan will be developed by the Investigating Officer/Team and will then be communicated to the complainants
- 15.28. The matter will, thoroughly investigated and a final (Stage 2) report will be delivered to the Overseeing Officer for sign off
- 15.29. Once signed off, the outcome will be communicated to the complainants and the Trust Board. The complainants will be notified of their right of appeal and of the process and timescales for so doing
- 15.30. All records will be stored securely and confidentially in the designated archive

### **Stage 3 - Appeal**

- 15.31. If the complainants believe that the process or findings of the formal investigation is incorrect, they can raise their concerns using the appeal process
  - 15.31.1. The complainant must outline clearly the basis of the appeal and the justification for appealing the process and / or outcome.
  - 15.31.2. The Trust Board (or a nominated subgroup thereof) will consider the grounds of appeal and decide whether the appeal is justified
  - 15.31.3. The appeal will be conducted by suitably skilled individuals who were not part of the stage 2 process and who are not involved in the complaint
- 15.32. An appeal report will be produced and submitted to the Trust Board (or the subgroup thereof) for final signoff
- 15.33. The complainants will be notified of the outcome of the appeal and their options of further action (e.g. referral to the Charity Regulator, the police, or the Local Authority etc) will be communicated

- 16. The process will be reviewed to identify lessons that can be learned

### **17. Concerns about practice and whistleblowing**

South West Gospel Partnership wishes to create an open and transparent environment where staff, volunteers or others who act on our behalf can raise concerns about practice or any other matter related to safeguarding

- 17.1. It is the responsibility of each member of staff or volunteer to identify and respond to aspects of our work that need to be improved
- 17.2. In the first instance, concerns about the culture or practice within South West Gospel Partnership should be raised with your line manager. If for some reason you do not feel able to

do so, or if you feel that your concerns are not being taken seriously, the concern should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 17.3. Those concerns will be carefully considered, and a formal response will be provided to the individual, either in writing, or in a meeting that is minuted
- 17.4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they should formally raise the matter with the Chair of Trustees explaining their concerns about the adequacy of the initial response.
  - 17.4.1. Details of how this can be done will be communicated at the same time as the initial response
  - 17.4.2. The Chair of Trustees will inform the Trust Board of the concerns/complaint
  - 17.4.3. After the Chair of Trustees and/or the Trust Board has considered the matter, they will formally respond to the complainant in writing, explaining their findings and the rationale for their decision
  - 17.4.4. Details of how to raise the complaint externally will also be provided as part of the response, including contacts details for the Charity regulator, details of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline and any other measures that the Trustees wish to offer

### **18. Concerns about member churches**

- 18.1. The South West Gospel Partnership does not investigate complaints against member churches
- 18.2. Concerns about churches that belong to the South West Gospel Partnership should be raised with the leadership of the church in question according to the church's own policies and procedures
- 18.3. If the matter is not resolved, it should be referred to the Charity Regulator and/or other relevant church authorities/bodies
- 18.4. If the complainant believes that the Trust Board of the South West Gospel Partnership should consider disaffiliation of the church in question, they can refer the matter in writing to the Chair of Trustees for consideration explaining why disaffiliation should be considered and providing appropriate evidence of grounds for disaffiliation.

### **19. Requests for informal mediation**

If both a member church and an individual or group who are raising concerns or complaints against the member church wish to involve South West Gospel Partnership in informal mediation between the two parties, they may request that support by contacting the Chair of Trustees and/or the Director of the South West Gospel Partnership

- 19.1. The Chair of Trustees and/or the Director will consider whether South West Gospel Partnership have the capacity, skill and mandate to provide informal mediation support
- 19.2. If South West Gospel Partnership agree to provide informal mediation support, the scope and nature of that support will be defined and agreed by all the parties involved prior to commencement of any involvement

### **Basis of policy and legal framework**

This policy is consistent with:

- Current legislation
- National guidance
- Local arrangements
- Our charitable objectives, governing documents, and doctrinal statements

Full details are available in appendix C

Related policies and procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Our Statement of Faith

- Our governing documents

Policy due for review:	Policy last reviewed	Last review conducted / approved by:

**Appendix A**  
**Key safeguarding contacts**  
**To be completed by the relevant Gospel Partnership**

<p><b>Organisational</b></p> <p>Phone: 01225 427428 (Thursday 9am-4.30pm)</p> <p>E-mail: jane@swgp.org.uk</p> <p><b>Chair of Trustees: Spencer Shaw and Ian Lewis</b></p> <p><b>Operations Director: Tom Underhill</b></p> <p><b>Designated Safeguarding Lead: Simon Dowland</b></p> <p><b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: TBC</b></p> <p>Our policies and other useful information about safeguarding can be found at:</p> <p><a href="https://www.swgp.org.uk/vision/safeguarding">https://www.swgp.org.uk/vision/safeguarding</a></p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of those involved in safeguarding can be found in appendix A</p>	<p><b>Statutory services</b></p> <p><b>Local Authority details</b></p> <p>Bath and North East Somerset</p> <p><b>Safeguarding children</b>  <a href="https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/">https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>Report concerns:  <b>01225 39 61 11</b> or <b>01225 47 79 29</b> (weekdays, 8.30am to 5pm, except Fridays from 4.30pm)</p> <p>Or via website:  <a href="https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-concern">https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-concern</a></p> <p>Allegations against staff or volunteers should be reported to: <a href="mailto:LADO@bathnes.gov.uk">LADO@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Safeguarding Adults</b></p> <p>Report concerns to Adult Social Care  Phone: 01225 394200</p> <p>Or via website:  <a href="https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-concern">https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/form/report-a-concern</a></p> <p>Safeguarding Partnership  Website: <a href="https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/">https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/</a></p>
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## Appendix B

### Safeguarding responsibilities

#### Governance of safeguarding

The Trustees will ensure that they provide leadership of safeguarding across the organisation by:

- Ensuring that legally compliant policies, procedures, codes of conduct and systems are implemented
- Ensuring that a suitably skilled and knowledgeable Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one deputy are appointed, supported, and resourced
- Providing accountability for those responsible for various aspects of safeguarding
- Reviewing the safeguarding arrangements to ensure that an effective and proportionate approach is thoroughly implemented and consistently enacted across the church
- Ensuring that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy provide regular updates to the Trustees
- Ensuring that Charity Regulator requirements, including the responsibility to report any serious incidents are fully met

#### Leadership and management of safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy, will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed, updated and any changes signed off by the Trustees
- Safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely and proportionate manner, including making referrals to statutory agencies as required, working with partner agencies such as the Local Authority and the Police and the maintenance of accurate records and systems
- Leading the implementation of the safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensuring that those engaged in ministry on behalf of South West Gospel Partnership are provided with proportionate and appropriate training and that they are competent to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensuring that regular reports are provided to the Trustees and that any urgent issues are communicated to the Chair of Trustees in a timely manner
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and promoting its importance across the organisation

#### Individual responsibilities

Everyone working on behalf of South West Gospel Partnership is required to:

- Act in accordance with the policies, procedures and codes of conduct provided
- Adhere to local legislation, guidance and procedures
- Ensure that they remain vigilant to the risks of harm, especially to children and vulnerable adults

## Appendix C - Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework

- Subscribe to our statement of faith if involved in Bible Teaching on behalf of the South West Gospel Partnership
  - This policy reflects the organisation’s fundamental biblical beliefs and should be read in conjunction with the statement of faith
- Where relevant, act in accordance with our governing documents (e.g. constitution / Memorandum and Articles of Association etc)

Safeguarding Children	Safeguarding Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Children Acts (1989 &amp; 2004)</li> <li>○ Children and Families Act 2014</li> <li>○ Children and Social Work Act 2017</li> <li>○ Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)</li> <li>○ What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015)</li> <li>○ Protection of Children Act 1999</li> <li>○ Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006</li> <li>○ Protection of freedoms Act 2012</li> <li>○ Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2018 amended)</li> <li>○ Prevent duty guidance 2016</li> <li>○ Sexual offences Act 2003</li> <li>○ The Safe Network Standards (available from the NSPCC website)</li> <li>○ The policy also takes account of the principles outlined in:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021</li> <li>▪ FGM duty guidance</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Care Act 2014</li> <li>○ Human Rights Acts 1998</li> <li>○ Care Standards Act 2000</li> <li>○ Mental Capacity Act 2005</li> <li>○ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007</li> <li>○ Sexual Offences Act 2003</li> <li>○ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984</li> <li>○ Fraud Act 2006</li> <li>○ Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998</li> <li>○ Health and Social Care Act 2008</li> <li>○ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)</li> <li>○ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)</li> <li>○ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)</li> <li>○ LSAB Multiagency Policy and Procedures</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local guidance and procedures               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures</i></li> <li>○ <i>Local authority guidance</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local guidance and procedures               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures</i></li> <li>○ <i>Local authority guidance</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## **Appendix D**

### **Standard Document Samples**

	Application to volunteer
	Concerns reporting form
	Confidential file chronology
	Confidential file record of conversations and actions
	Template report from DSL to Trustees

# South West Gospel Partnership

## Volunteer application form

<b>About You</b>		
Full name	Address	
Phone number		
Mobile number		
E-mail address		
<b>About the role</b>		
Event/Course/Ministry	Role applied for	
Is the role subject to a DBS check? <i>(To be completed by a Partnership staff member or the line manager for this role)</i>		
Children only	Adults only	Children and adults
<b>Personal statement</b>		
Please briefly describe your reasons for applying for this role and any appropriate experience in similar roles.		
Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?		



Please supply details of 2 people who are able to comment on your suitability for this role.

Reference 1	Reference 2
Name	Name
Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them	Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them
Address	Address
Phone	Phone
E-mail address	E-mail address

### Self-declaration

	Yes	No
Do you have any criminal convictions that would affect your ability to perform this role?		
Is your state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health adequate to fulfil this role?		
If the role involves working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, are you, or have you ever been barred from such work?		
For roles involving Bible teaching, are you in agreement with the Partnership's statement of faith?		
Do you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, codes of conduct, risk assessments etc that are relevant to this role?		
Is there anything that you wish to add or that you wish us to take into account in relation to this self-declaration?		

I confirm that the information supplied in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

**For office use only: Form reference / volunteer reference as per Single Central Record.**

**South West Gospel Partnership**

**Incident / concern reporting form**

<b>About this form and the person completing it</b>			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate box(es)</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Event/Course/Ministry			Date completed
<b>About the person or people you are concerned about or involved in the incident</b>			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details (if known)	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / carer (where appropriate)

**Details of the incident / disclosure / concern**

*What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?*

**Context of the incident / disclosure / concern**

*Where / when / who else was present etc.*

Date of incident / disclosure

Time of incident / disclosure

Action taken to ensure immediate safety

Other action taken or advice sought

Signature

**For office use only: Form reference –**

## Notes for completion

### **About this form and the person completing it**

Please complete all sections

### **About the person or people we are concerned about or involved in the incident**

When reporting a concern involving a child or young person, please complete all sections.

When reporting a concern about an adult, the parent / carer details may not be required. Where this is recorded, please include the relationship to the person involved. Please insert additional lines as required.

### **Details of the incident / disclosure / concern**

Please include as much relevant detail as you can

When reporting a disclosure, please quote the individual where possible. Please also comment on their body language or any other non-verbal communication that might be useful.

When drawing conclusions, please include the evidence that has led to that conclusion.

### **Context of the incident / disclosure / concern**

Please include as much relevant detail as you can

### **Action taken to ensure immediate safety**

Please provide details. If no action was required, please indicate by writing "None".

### **Other action taken or advice sought**

If any advice was sought, please provide details including who you spoke to, their contact details and what advice was given or action that was taken.

### **Signature**

Please ensure that you sign the form.



## South West Gospel Partnership

### Record of safeguarding conversations and actions

Date of action / conversation	Document reference
Description of record	
Information given	
Advice received	
Actions to take	
Outcomes	
Recorded by	Date recorded

**South West Gospel Partnership**

**Safeguarding report to the Trustees and officers**

<b>Report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy covering the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 20.. to 31<sup>st</sup> March 20..</b>	
Report completed by:	Date
Summary of safeguarding activity	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to children	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to adults	
Number of cases referred to Children's Social Care	
Number of cases referred to Adult Social Care	
Number of allegations received	
Number of allegations investigated by Local Authority	
Number of reportable incidents reported to charity commission	
Were there any common themes or issues in the reports submitted?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
Do you have any concerns about the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
What training or informal update activity been completed this year?	
Any recommendations to or requests of the Trustees?	

Declaration from Safeguarding Leads	Yes	No
Has the policy been reviewed for legal compliance and effectiveness? <i>(CSS can be consulted to check whether any significant changes have occurred)</i>		
Are DBS checks up to date for all staff and volunteers?		
Is the Single Central Record up to date?		
Is staff and volunteer training up to date?		
Is DSL training up to date?		
Is the training log up to date?		
Any other comments		



## Appendix E

### Codes of Conduct

#### Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with children or young people

##### **Those working with children and young people will**

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented
- Attend safeguarding training as required
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the leadership of the Partnership in relation to ministry conducted on behalf of the Partnership and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from parents
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of the children in their care
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or authority as adults and leaders within the group
- Only take responsibility for children if physically and mentally fit and able to do so
- Treat them with respect and dignity
- Treat them in an age appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice
- Treat them as individuals
- Respect their views and wishes
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- Ensure that age appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented
- Ensure that any age appropriate physical contact is child led
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual child or other children
- Refrain from any physical chastisement
- Refrain from making any social media connections with them
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them
- Act with fairness and treat children equitably; avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding

## **Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with Vulnerable Adults at Risk of Abuse**

Those working with vulnerable adults including adults at risk of abuse will:

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented
- Attend safeguarding training as required
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the leadership of the Partnership in relation to ministry conducted on behalf of the Partnership and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from others
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of those with whom they are working
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit
- Ensure that support is led by the person being supported and that their views, wishes and choices are respected
- Treat them with respect and dignity and as individuals
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another
- Ensure that any physical contact is led by the person being supported
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or group
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably; avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding

## **Code of conduct for staff and volunteers providing pastoral care**

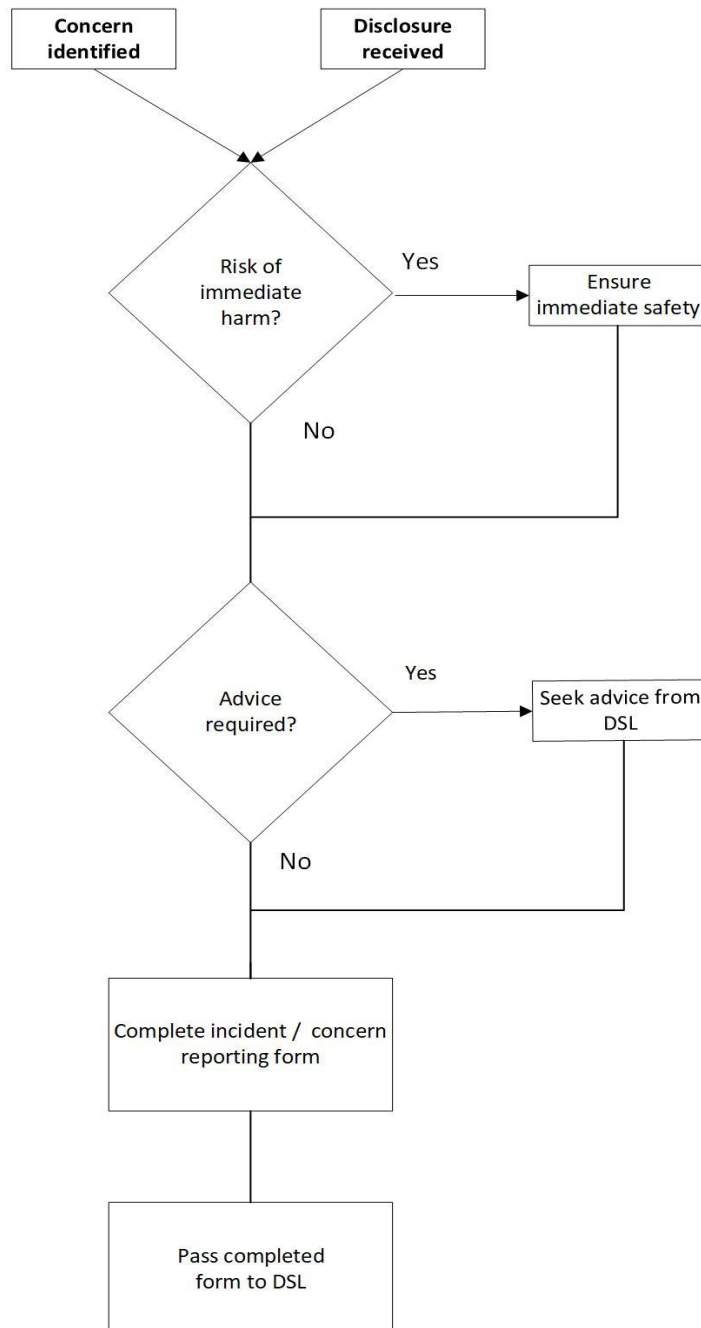
*(please note: this code of conduct is not intended to cover disciplinary issues, although the broad principles would still apply)*

Those involved in providing pastoral care will:

- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support
- Ensure that the dignity and wishes of the individual are respected at all times
- When delivering challenge or difficult messages, will do so in a respectful, compassionate and gentle way that is in line with their best interests (including their emotional and spiritual wellbeing)
- Will seek to ensure that the individual's right to question or ignore any advice or suggestions is fully understood
- Attend safeguarding training as required
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the leadership of the Partnership in relation to ministry conducted on behalf of the Partnership and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from others
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained
- Ensure that any physical contact is led by the person being supported
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or group
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably; avoiding discrimination or favouritism
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding

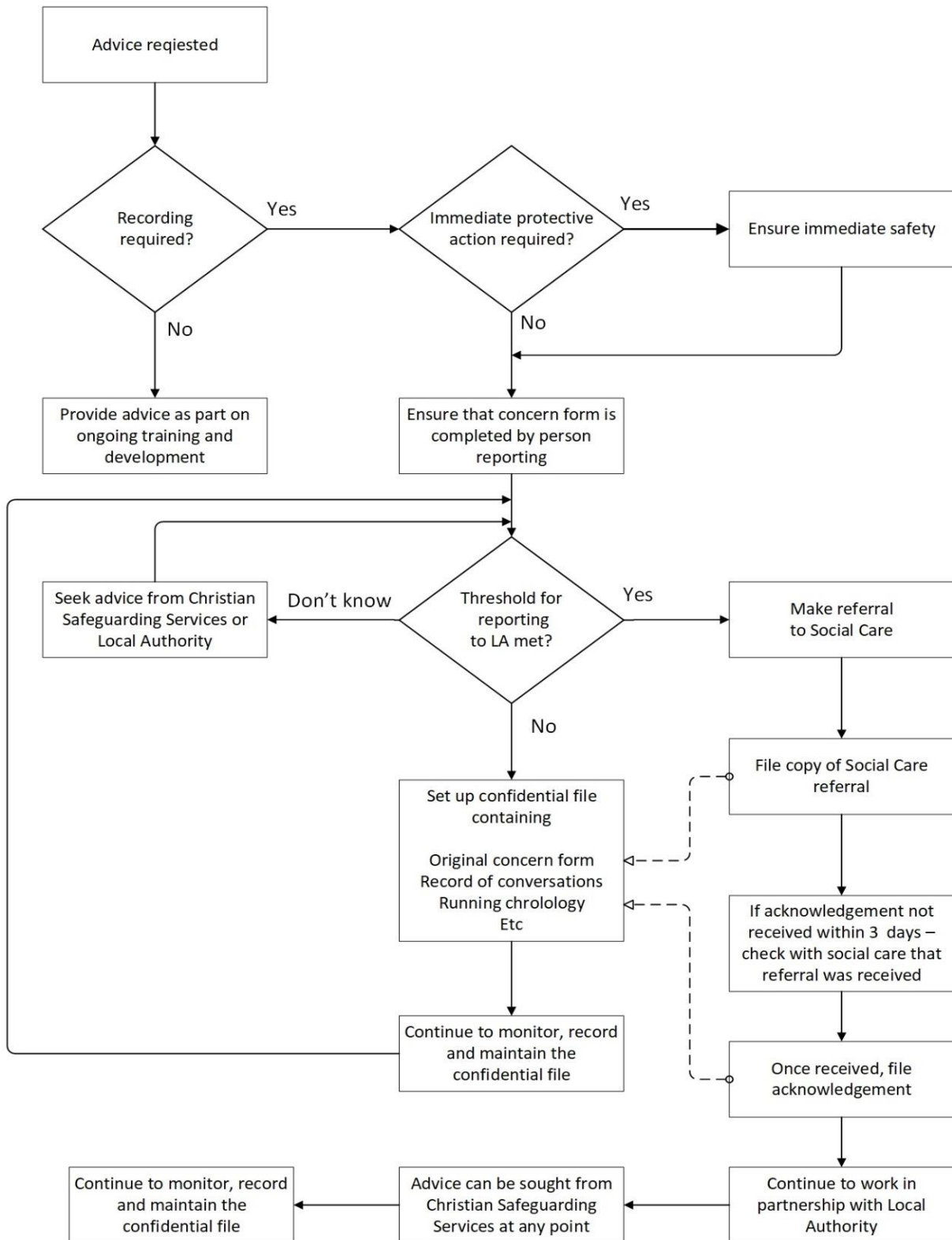
## Appendix F process flowcharts

### Reporting concerns or disclosures



*Christian Safeguarding Services can be contacted for advice at any point in the process  
Phone 07960 751778 or e-mail [advice@thecss.co.uk](mailto:advice@thecss.co.uk)*

# Processing concerns or disclosures: the role of the DSL



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