



# Safeguarding Policy and Procedure



**Approved by:**

**Date:**

**Last reviewed on:**

**Next review due by:**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding means protecting people's right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's or child's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Smethwick Churches Action Network is committed to practices that protect from harm regardless of a person's age, gender, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or any other characteristic as covered by the Equality Act 2010.

This policy, taken together with Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policies, represents commitment in working together to safeguard children and adults from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It clarifies the roles and responsibilities of employees, trustees and volunteers in relation to developing their own awareness and skills as well as the policies and procedures that must be followed.

The policy outlines:

- The practice and procedure for staff, volunteers and trustees of Smethwick Churches Action Network to contribute to the prevention of the abuse and neglect, and
- A clear framework for action including information sharing when abuse or neglect is suspected.

## 2. PURPOSE & AIMS

**2.1** The purpose of Smethwick Church Action Network's safeguarding policy is to ensure every adult and child is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:

- Protect adults, children and young people from maltreatment.
- Prevent impairment of adults, children and young people's health or development.
- Identify adults, children and young people who may be in need of extra help.
- Ensure that our services assist adult, children and young people to be safe.

**2.2** This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, those in receipt of our services and parents about expected behaviour and our responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all adults, children and young people.

**2.3** Smethwick Church Action Network fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect adults and children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of those coming into contact with our organisation. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.

**2.4** This policy applies to all those receiving services from or providing services on behalf of Smethwick Church Action Network.

### 3. LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

We comply with the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children and adults board.

This policy is also based on the following legislation/guidance:

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

- [The Children Act 1989](#) (and [2004 amendment](#)), which provides a framework for the care and protection of children
- [The Care Act 2014](#), which provides a framework for the care and protection of adults
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#),
- [The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims \(Amendment \) Act 2012](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- Schedule 4 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- The [Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009](#) and [Childcare Act 2006](#).
- [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'](#), DfE (March 2015)
- [Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services \(July 2018\)](#)
- [Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation - procedural information'](#) (October 2015)
- [The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers'](#)
- [Child Sexual Exploitation: A definition and guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers DfE \(2017\)](#)
- Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership procedures

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.

**Adults** includes everyone aged 18 and over.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults** means:

- Protecting adults, children and young people from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's or adult's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all adults and children to have the best outcomes

**Child protection** is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child or adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect an adult or child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Adults and children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Neglect** is a form of abuse and is the persistent failure to meet a child or adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of material substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child or adult from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or adult's basic emotional needs.

**Self-neglect** covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**Physical Abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual Abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subsection to

pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Modern Slavery** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Capacity** refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack capacity under the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#).

**Organisational Abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Discrimination** – discrimination is abuse, which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

**Financial or Material Abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Emotional or Psychological Abuse** – this includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Cyber Bullying** - cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person. It can be used to carry out many different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities) but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

**Forced Marriage** - forced marriage is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 make it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

**Mate Crime** - a 'mate crime' as defined by the Safety Net Project is 'when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take

advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.' Mate Crime is carried out by someone the adult knows and often happens in private. In recent years there have been a number of Safeguarding Adult Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were murdered or seriously harmed by people who purported to be their friend.

**Radicalisation** - the aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

## 5. OUR ETHOS

### Children:

5.1 The welfare of children and adults is of paramount importance. Smethwick Church Action Network will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff if they are worried or concerned about something.

5.2 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. We recognise that staff at Smethwick Church Action Network play a particularly important role as they are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent concerns from escalating. All staff are advised to maintain an attitude of *'it could happen here'* where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members must always act in the best interests of the child.

5.3 All staff, volunteers and trustees will, through induction and training, know how to recognise emerging needs and indicators of concern, how to respond to a disclosure from a child and how to record and report this information. They will not make promises to any child and will not keep secrets. Every child will know what the adult will have to do with any information they have chosen to disclose should it outline a safeguarding concern.

### Adults:

5.4 Smethwick Church Action Network supports the six principles of adult safeguarding as outlined by [The Care Act 2014](#). These principles underpin our safeguarding policy in relation to adults.

**Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

"I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens."

**Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help."

**Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

"I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed."

**Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

"I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take



part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”

**Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities.

Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse  
“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”

**Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”

5.5 All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

5.6 Smethwick Church Action Network will seek to ensure that we are inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment, we will also commit to continuous development, monitoring and review.

5.7 The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.

5.8 We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.

5.9 We recognise that a disabled adult may or may not identify themselves or be identified as an adult ‘at risk’.

5.10 We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults and will act appropriately and report concerns.

At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#), The Care Act 2014, and Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Amy Allan	0121 517 0140
Deputy DSL	Janine Bowers-Wild	
Senior Lead for Safeguarding	Rev Prof Nicholas Ross	07881825319

6.1 It is the responsibility of every member of staff and regular visitor to ensure that they carry out the requirements of this policy and, at all times, work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults. This includes the responsibility to provide a safe environment.

### The Senior Lead for Safeguarding

6.2 The Senior Lead for Safeguarding at Smethwick Church Action Network is accountable for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy and our compliance with it.

6.3 The Senior Lead for Safeguarding will ensure that:

- The safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually, is available to the public and has been written in line with statutory guidance and the requirements of Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Adults Board's procedures.
- A senior member of staff is designated to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding.
- All staff receive a safeguarding induction and are provided with a copy of this policy and the staff code of conduct.
- All staff undertake appropriate safeguarding training relevant to their role.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers who work with children in line with statutory guidance.
- Safer recruitment practices are followed to prevent individuals who may pose a risk to children from having access to children within the organisation.
- Any weakness with regard to safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention will be remedied without delay.
- Policies and procedures, particularly concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse and neglect, are followed by staff.
- All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice and such concerns are addressed sensitively in accordance with agreed internal procedures.
- Liaison will take place with the Designated Officer for the Local Authority (commonly known as 'LADO') in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff where their role involves working with children.

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

6.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is a member of staff who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at Smethwick Church Action Network. The DSL will carry out their role in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) and the Care Act 2014

6.5 The DSL will provide advice and support to other staff. Any concern for a child/adult's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL.

6.6 During operating hours, the DSL and/or a deputy will always be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. If a DSL is not available in person, we will ensure that they are available via telephone and/or any other relevant media.

6.7 Through appropriate training, knowledge and experience our DSL will liaise with Police, Adult's or Children's Services where necessary, and make referrals of suspected abuse.

6.8 The DSL will maintain written records ensuring that they are kept confidential and stored securely.

6.9 The DSL is responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow. They will ensure that all staff and volunteers have received appropriate safeguarding information during induction and that appropriate training needs are identified.

## 7. TRAINING & INDUCTION

7.1 When new staff join our organisation, they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of Smethwick Church Action Network's safeguarding policy along with the staff code of conduct and told who our Senior Lead for Safeguarding and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) are. All staff are expected to read these key documents.

7.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer that comes into regular contact with children and vulnerable adults will receive safeguarding training during their induction period. This programme will include information relating to how to manage a disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult, how to record concerns, and the remit of the role of the DSL. The training will also include information about whistle-blowing in respect of concerns about another adult's behaviour and suitability relating to their work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

7.3 Guidance about acceptable conduct will also be given to all staff during induction. These are sensible steps that every adult should take in their working practice with children or vulnerable adults. All staff are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this guidance and will be made aware that failure to do so could lead to disciplinary action or being asked to leave.

7.4 In addition to the safeguarding induction, we will ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities. In order to achieve this we will ensure that:

- All staff members undertake appropriate safeguarding training based on their role
- All staff members receive safeguarding updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively

7.5 All regular visitors, temporary staff and volunteers will be given a set of our safeguarding procedures. They will be informed of whom our Senior Lead for Safeguarding, DSL and what the recording and reporting system is.

7.6 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance accessible via Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Adults Board.

7.7 Our Senior Lead for Safeguarding will also undertake appropriate training to ensure they are able to carry out their duty to safeguard all of the children or vulnerable adults coming into contact with Smethwick Church Action Network.

## 8. PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING PATHWAYS TO HELP AND SUPPORT

Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people, is fundamental to good practice in safeguarding. Smethwick Churches Action Network will share safeguarding information with the right people at the right time to:

- Prevent death or serious harm
- Coordinate effective and efficient responses
- Enable early interventions to prevent the escalation of risk
- Maintain and improve good practice in safeguarding
- Reveal patterns of abuse that were previously undetected and that could identify others at risk of abuse
- Identify low-level concerns that may reveal children or vulnerable adults at risk of abuse
- Help families, children and vulnerable adults access the right kind of support to reduce risk and promote wellbeing
- Help identify people who may pose a risk to others and, where possible, work to reduce offending behaviour
- Reduce organisational risk and protect reputation

**8.1** Smethwick Church Action Network adheres to safeguarding procedures that have been agreed locally with Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Adults Board. Where we identify vulnerable adults or children and families in need of support, we will carry out our responsibilities in accordance with Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and Adults Board guidance.

**8.2** Every member of staff (including volunteers) working at Smethwick Church Action Network are advised to maintain an attitude of '*it could happen here*' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, staff members should always act in the interests of the child or vulnerable adult and have a responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy.

**8.3** All staff members are encouraged to report and record any worries and concerns that they have and not see these as insignificant. On occasions, a referral is justified by a single incident such as an injury or disclosure of abuse. More often however, worries and concerns accumulate over a period of time and are evidenced by building up a picture of harm over time; this is particularly true in cases of emotional abuse and neglect. In these circumstances, it is crucial that staff record and pass on worries and concerns in accordance with this policy to allow the relevant authorities to build up a picture and intervene with support at the earliest opportunity. A reliance on memory without accurate and contemporaneous records of concern could lead to a failure to protect.

**8.4** It is *not* the responsibility of staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff, however, have a duty to recognise concerns and pass the information on in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

**8.5** The DSL should be used as a first point of contact for worries, concerns and

queries regarding any safeguarding concerns at Smethwick Church Action Network. Any member of staff or visitor who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm must report it immediately to the DSL. In the absence of a DSL, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Senior Lead for Safeguarding.

8.6 All concerns about a child or vulnerable adults should be reported without delay and recorded in writing using the agreed procedures.

8.7 Following receipt of any information raising concern, the DSL will consider what action to take. All information and actions taken, including the reasons for any decisions made, will be fully documented.

8.8 The DSL will decide whether to make a referral to the Police, Adults or Children's Services when there are safeguarding concerns.

8.9 If a referral to Adults or Children's Services has not met the threshold for support or statutory intervention, the DSL will make a full written record of the decision and outcome.

8.10 If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to an adult or child, a referral should be made to the Police. Anybody can make a referral.

8.11 Staff should always follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy in the first instance. However, they may also share information directly with Children's Services, Adult's Services or the Police if:

- The situation is an emergency and the DSL and the Senior Lead for Safeguarding are unavailable
- They are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the adult or child's safety.

8.12 Any member of staff who does not feel that concerns about a child or vulnerable adult have been responded to appropriately and in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy should raise their concerns with the Senior Lead for Safeguarding. If any member of staff does not feel the situation has been addressed appropriately at this point, they should contact Adult's Services or Children's Services directly with their concerns.

8.13 We recognise that children are also vulnerable to physical, sexual and emotional abuse by their peers or siblings. Abuse perpetrated by children can be just as harmful as that perpetrated by an adult, so it is important to remember the impact on the victim of the abuse as well as to focus on the support for the child or young person exhibiting the harmful behaviour. Such abuse will always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult and staff must never tolerate or dismiss concerns relating to peer on peer abuse.

8.14 We recognise that children and adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. These additional barriers can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the adult or child's disability
- Adults or children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

8.15 At Smethwick Church Action Network we recognise that our staff may be in a position to identify concerns regarding child sexual exploitation and have a vital role in identifying signs that sexual exploitation may be taking place. Any staff member that has a concern regarding sexual exploitation should inform the DSL who will liaise with Police and Children's Services.

8.16 At Smethwick Church Action Network we recognise that our staff may be in a position to identify concerns regarding children from becoming victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other forms of so-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV). If staff have a concern regarding a child or adult that might be at risk of HBV

they should inform the DSL who will liaise with the Police and Children's Services.

8.17 We recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other form of vulnerability in today's society. At Smethwick Church Action Network, we will ensure that:

- Through training, staff and volunteers have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism is, why we need to be vigilant and how to respond when concerns arise.
- The DSL has received relevant training in this area and will act as the point of contact for any concerns relating to radicalisation and extremism.
- DSL will make referrals to Adults and/or Children's Services and will represent our organisation at meetings as required, unless this is done by the Senior Lead for Safeguarding.

8.18 When Dealing with Disagreement and Escalation of Concerns, the DSL or other appropriate member of staff will:

- Contact the line manager in children's social care if they consider that the social care response to a referral has not led to the child being adequately safeguarded and follow this up in writing
- Contact the line manager in children's social care if they consider that the child is not being adequately safeguarded by the child protection plan and follow this up in writing
- Use the Local Authority Escalation Policy if this does not resolve the concern



## 9. RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING

9.1 If staff are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child or vulnerable adult at Smethwick Church Action Network, they will record their concern on the agreed reporting procedure. Any worries or concerns should be passed to the DSL without delay.

9.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a secure cabinet or electronically. These files will be the responsibility of the DSL/Senior Lead for Safeguarding. The information will only be shared on a basis of 'need to know in the adult's or child's interests' and on the understanding that it remains strictly confidential.

## 10. MONITORING

Information about safeguarding cases and how they were dealt with will be reviewed and reported on regularly to the Board of Trustees. Areas to focus on include:

- How quickly the concern was reported to the Safeguarding Lead
- Whether a concern was reported to statutory agencies
- How quickly a concern was made to the police/Children's/Adults Services (where relevant)
- Accuracy of information recorded.
- The quality of the input into the safeguarding process (feedback from police/Children's/Adults Services)
- Outcomes of safeguarding process
- Whether any incidents highlighted training issues or a need to amend in-house procedures
- Whether the incident should be notified to the charity commission under Serious Incident Reporting procedures

Reports to trustees should focus on the issues and the organisation's response to an incident **not** the specific details of an individual case. Reports made to the trustees should be captured in a Safeguarding Incident Register. This is to enable the organisation to reflect on and improve its practice in developing an effective safeguarding culture.

The policy and procedure will be reviewed and audited regularly or if legislation changes.

## 11. SAFER RECRUITMENT

11.1 At Smethwick Church Action Network we will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates. Where relevant, we require evidence of original academic certificates / record of training. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview. We will question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them, we will undertake Disclosure and Barring Service checks where required to do so and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with vulnerable adults or children that receive services from our organisation.

11.2 We will maintain a record of all safer recruitment checks carried out in line with statutory requirements.

11.3 We will ensure that those responsible for recruiting staff have completed appropriate 'safer recruitment' training. At all times we will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed in accordance with our statutory requirements.

11.4 For those staff and volunteers who have new or historical entries on their DBS that may raise concerns of a safeguarding nature but not exclude them from being able to undertake their role, a risk assessment will be completed and kept on file outlining any measures that will be in place to manage any assessed risk.

## 12. MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

12.1 Our aim is to provide a safe environment which secures the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in receipt of a service from our organisation. We do, however, recognise that sometimes allegations of abuse are made.

12.2 We recognise that allegations, when they occur, are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that some allegations are genuine and that there are individuals who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children or vulnerable adults.

12.3 We will take all possible steps to safeguard vulnerable adults or children and to ensure that those working for or on behalf of our organisation are safe to work with children and vulnerable adults. We will always ensure that the procedures outlined by [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Designated Officer for the Local Authority or Adults Safeguarding Contact for the Local Authority where appropriate.

12.4 If an allegation is made or information is received about any member of staff (or volunteer) who works with children (both within our organisation or outside our organisation) who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.\*

the member of staff receiving the information should inform the DSL and/or the Senior Lead for Safeguarding immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff, trainees and volunteers.

We may also seek consultation with the LADO where we believe that an individual has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not need to directly relate to a child.

Should an allegation be made against the DSL, this will be reported to the Senior Safeguarding Lead.

12.5 The Senior Lead for Safeguarding will seek advice from the Designated Officer for the Local Authority or Adults Safeguarding Contact for the Local Authority where appropriate within one working day. No member of staff will undertake further investigations before receiving further advice.

12.6 Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns within the Organisation should contact the Designated Officer for the Local Authority or Adults Safeguarding Contact for the Local Authority directly.

12.7 Smethwick Church Action Network will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to

children or vulnerable adults. This referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from our Human Resources department.

### 13. LINK WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy forms part of an overall set of policies and procedures that fall under our safeguarding umbrella. Please see below the additional policies in place that underpin our safeguarding practice:

Whistleblowing

Complaints

Staff Code of Conduct

Safer Recruitment

Management of Allegations

Lone Working

Health and Safety

Equality and Diversity

Complaints

Behaviour Policy

## LOCAL AUTHORITY DETAILS

### Designated Officer for the Local Authority:

Name:	Uzma Bhatti
Email Address:	uzma_bhatti@sandwell.gov.uk
Phone Number:	0121 569 4770

### Adults Safeguarding Contact for the Local Authority:

Name:	No Named DASL in this area
Email Address:	sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk
Phone Number:	0121 5692266

### MASH/ Children's Services Details

Email Address:	access_team@sandwell.gcsx.gov.uk
Phone Number:	0121 5693100
Out of Hours Number:	0121 5693100