



POLICY STATEMENT on

Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church

BLUNTISHAM BAPTIST CHURCH (referred to as “the church” in the Policy Statement)

SAFEGUARDING MISSION STATEMENT

The Deacons recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We also acknowledge that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The membership of the church has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this policy document.

In fulfilling this mission statement the church:

- Has a programme of activities with children and young people
- Welcomes children and young people into the life of our community
- Makes our premises available to organisations working with children and young people.

CHURCH POLICY

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, and other subsequent statutory legislation, *Safe from Harm* (HM Government 1994) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2010).

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to be aware of the safeguarding policy. It is the duty of all to raise any concerns about the well-being of children and young people to the Safeguarding Deacon or Designated Person. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse.

The Deacons recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We also acknowledge that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The membership of the church have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this policy document. We also recognise the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The Deacons undertake to file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with Thirtyone:Eight and Cambridgeshire Children’s Services.

The Deacons are committed to on-going child protection training for all children/youth workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines that accompany this policy.

A safe community

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with children and young people that promote their safety and well-being. The church adopts a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them.

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children and young people. The church will ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

The church exercises proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

Support to those affected by abuse

The Deacons are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse.

Working with offenders

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, the Deacons will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its commitment to the protection of children, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE

The church has appointed **Lucy Thatcher** as the **Safeguarding Deacon** to:

- Advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and young people
- Oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees. (The Minister and the Deacons).
- Take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

The church has also appointed **Helen Thatcher and Tim Williamson** as **Designated Persons for Safeguarding**.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Deacon, or if the suspicions/allegations in any way involve the Safeguarding Deacon then the report should be made to a Designated Person.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a church worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Deacon:

Mrs Lucy Thatcher Tel No: 07891 866119

Email: safeguarding@bluntishambaptist.org or safeguarding.deacon@bluntishambaptist.org

The Safeguarding Deacon has been nominated by the church membership and the Deacons to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities. As already stated, in the absence of the Safeguarding Deacon, or if the suspicions/allegations in any way involve the Safeguarding Deacon then the report should be made to a **Designated Person:**

Either

Mrs Helen Thatcher **Tel No: 01487 841887** **Email: designated.person@bluntishambaptist.org**

or

Rev. Tim Williamson **Tel No: 01487 843538** **Email: tim@bluntishambaptist.org**

The role of the Safeguarding Deacon/Designated Person is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion as disclosed and pass this information on to the Cambridgeshire Children's Services Department. It is Cambridgeshire Children's Services Department's task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with church procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Deacon or other Designated Person, the absence of these appointed persons should not delay referral to the Cambridgeshire Children's Services.
- The Deacons will support the Safeguarding Deacon and Designated Persons in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

If the suspicions implicate any of the above named persons, then advice may be taken, in the first instance from:

Thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Telephone : 0303 003 1111

or alternatively contact **Cambridgeshire Children's Services**.

During 8.00am – 6:00pm- contact Cambridgeshire Contact Centre on **0345 045 5203**

Email: ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Or referralcentre.childrens@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk.

At all other times (all through the night, at weekends and over Bank Holidays) contact the

Emergency Duty Team: 01733 234 724

If you think you or a child is in immediate danger and needs urgent help, please call the police on **999**.

The Cambridgeshire Police Child Protection Unit can be contacted on **101**.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Deacons hope that those with concerns or allegations will use our internal procedures. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Deacon or Designated Persons have not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with those appointed by the Deacons to those roles as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly.

However it is the opinion of the Deacons that this policy and the procedures contained therein demonstrate the seriousness of our commitment to effective child protection.

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the notice board in THE CHURCH HALL.

Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary is given a full copy of the policy and procedures and is required to follow them. A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request through the church administrator or online. The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed at least annually by the Safeguarding Team. The policy statement will also be ratified annually by the Deacons and at the Church Meeting together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

Signed

Date 30th July 2021

Lucy Thatcher
Spiritual and Pastoral Oversight Deacon / Safeguarding Deacon