



Bessacarr Evangelical Church

Safeguarding adults

BEC Good Practice Guidelines

September 2022

Who do I pass information on to?

BEC Safeguarding contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead –

Kathryn Mair - 01302 535022 / 07587 184942

Deputy Safeguarding Leads –

Angela Webster (adults) 07764 616643

Katie McConway (children and youth) 07538 783829

Bessacarr Evangelical Church

01302 531040 • bessacarrevangelicalchurch@gmail.com

Other useful contacts:

Thirtyoneeight

0303 003 1111 • info@thirtyoneeight.org

If no-one is available you should contact an Elder on a ***need to know*** basis.

Remember that ***confidentiality is key***, as this could be part of a criminal investigation.

A framework

At BEC we take seriously our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of every person. This Good Practice Guide sets out the way in which everyone at BEC is expected to work. This provides increased safety for adults, particularly those with care and support needs, as well as giving additional safeguards for workers and volunteers.

Policies and procedures are there to provide a framework within which to work on most occasions, and it is important we are able to be flexible in order to put the best interests and safety of adults with care and support needs first. If a volunteer or worker becomes aware or sees that someone's safety may be compromised due to suspected abuse or neglect, it is that person's legal and moral responsibility to report the incident in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy. This Guide gives further information on the why, how and when of doing that.

Common sense and Accountability

We should do what is **reasonable** and **sensible** and be prepared to **be accountable** for the decisions and actions we have taken by reporting to our activity leader or a Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

Legislation and good practice shouldn't conflict with ministry.

Safeguard the person, yourself, the church.., and the gospel.

Definition of Adults with care and support needs

Previously the term 'Vulnerable adults' was used to describe those who might need extra intervention or assistance, maybe the elderly or those with disabilities, but the Care Act has widened the remit to those with 'Care and Support needs'. It should be remembered that any of us may be in need of extra care and support during our lives, sometimes for brief periods or longer (thirtyoneeight.org).

The NHS helpfully talks about people "who for any reason are unable to take care of themselves" or "protect themselves from exploitation". That definition encompasses those who are elderly or have a disability, but also people in other categories too.

NB: We have used the term 'adults with care and support needs' interchangeably with 'vulnerable adults', 'adults at risk' or even simply 'adults'.

Recognition and Responsibility

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect, and is about working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while ensuring an adult's wellbeing is promoted. Abuse and neglect may arise from the active infliction of harm to a person, or by a failure to prevent harm or a failure to meet basic needs.

Anyone may be abused, whether by someone known to them, or a stranger, in person or online. Often the abuser is someone the

person knows well and has a trusted relationship with. Abuse can and does occur in Christian settings.

*See **Appendix 1** for categories of abuse, and who may be at risk.*

Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse

If you become aware of, hear, observe or are told about an incident of abuse, you must act promptly rather than allowing the situation to escalate or the person to be put at further risk of harm.

- Listen well, keep calm and never push for information.
- Show acceptance of what is being said. Don't pass judgment.
- Report exactly what was seen, heard, or disclosed. Make clear and careful notes, including the date, time, place, and people involved. Record what was said, word for word as far as possible, without opinion or judgement.
- Do not promise confidentiality. Be clear that you may need to speak to someone who can help.
- Be honest. Tell the person what you are going to do.
- Pass on the information to a Safeguarding Lead who will contact the appropriate authorities – adult services, the police, Thirtyone:eight.

*See **Appendix 2** for model report form.*

Blank A4 forms are kept in the Safeguarding file in the church office, along with the safeguarding log book (which is kept securely).

Code of conduct

Basis:

Churches and faith communities should be safe places for all, where everyone is made to feel welcomed, valued, respected and cared for.

When working with adults in any context – whether that be visiting, providing church-based activities, running errands or pastoral care (including one to one and small groups) - we seek to promote good working practices, in order to run activities safely and appropriately, develop good relationships and minimise the risks of abuse or allegations of abuse.

Our expectations of good working practice should help to protect volunteers and workers from wrongful reports of inappropriate behaviour, and enable our interactions with others to be transparent to all. At BEC we assume that every volunteer, member or worker will use good judgement and be accountable in following and applying these guidelines within each activity setting.

Practicalities:

The next few pages outline some of the practical ways to conduct activities and pastoral care, and minimise risk in all our interactions.

If in doubt about a course of action or possible risk of abuse, or allegation of abuse, please do speak to a Safeguarding Lead.

Good working practice at BEC includes:

- **Treat everyone with dignity and respect.**
Be kind and patient; listen and value another person's opinions and habits; show interest; don't take away independence; allow a person to decide whether they need help.
- **Respect personal privacy and use touch appropriately.** Touch should never be intrusive or abusive. It may be worth asking if it is ok to give a hug.
- **Be accountable** particularly with one-to one contact, whether that is face to face or virtually. It is important that anyone seeking pastoral care should know exactly what to expect in terms of good conduct, that those caring for them are accountable and that any boundaries set are respected at all times.
- **Be aware of own limits and competencies** and be ready to refer a situation or problem for someone more experienced to deal with.
- **Be sensitive** to needs, likes and dislikes. Don't make assumptions – ask for clarification or permission as necessary.
- **Report all allegations or suspicions of abuse.** Concerns should always be reported to a Safeguarding Lead.

Advice for 'informal' activities

Visiting at home

It is often helpful to phone ahead and arrange a visit. Always ask if it is convenient.

Be sensitive and interested but without prying. Take time to listen and chat.

Don't stay too long – it may be helpful to say how long you will visit for beforehand.

Be sensitive and look out for their welfare. Be aware of any distress or home situation which becomes evident as you visit.

If you become aware of anything which may be causing distress, (eg. reference to finances; visible bruises; a dirty or messy home...) resist prying or assuming, but perhaps ask for clarification.

Transporting people

Make clear arrangements for transport as necessary, and ideally in advance.

Help them into the vehicle if helpful and appropriate.

Ensure the person is comfortable and correctly fastened in.

Dealing with finances

Ensure financial integrity. Be transparent if it is necessary to handle money on someone else's behalf. This is important when, eg. collecting a person's benefits or pension, or doing the shopping for an adult with care and support needs.

Make clear arrangements whenever helping with shopping or medication.

When delivering shopping, it is advisable to hand over the receipt. Use an envelope and indicate the amount before and after, including both parties' signatures, if that is helpful.

If appropriate, liaise with the person's family.

Pastoral care

Walking alongside someone, whether for a specified time, or to work through a particular issue.

Pray; listen; apply God's word; signpost to other organisations or support as necessary.

Be accountable to someone, both for your own well-being (not to share issues) and transparency. It is advisable to keep a record of meetings and any specific concerns or developments.

For formal, ongoing care and support for someone with extra needs or where 'capacity' is impaired, a DBS check is required.

For formal groups and activities:

- **Risk assessments**

Each group should carry out a written **risk assessment** of their regular weekly activity and keep a copy on file. Special activities (including visits or outdoors) would require an additional risk assessment.

- **Record keeping for formal activities**

Maintaining a record of visits or activities protects both workers and others. Allegations of abuse may be made years later so it is worth keeping a secure record of any formal activities.

Checklist for safe working with adults

Have leaders completed DBS applications and been cleared if necessary?

Have leaders read the Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice guidelines, and signed the BEC Code of Conduct?

Has a risk assessment been carried out, if necessary?

Do leaders know what to do if an allegation is made?

Appendix 1 – Categories of Abuse

The Care Act gives guidelines on the types of abuse associated with adults

Physical abuse is to inflict pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Examples include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, hair pulling, misuse, or using inappropriate restraint or sanctions and the misuse of medication.

Sexual abuse is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented, or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent. It may occur where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses it to override or overcome lack of consent or to which they felt pressurised into consenting such as rape, or sexual assault, being made to watch pornography would also be within this definition.

Domestic Abuse Includes physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse for those in family or close relationships as well as so called 'honour' based violence.

Psychological or emotional abuse is acts or behaviour which causes mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult's emotional health and development - or any other form of mental cruelty. This includes verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, blaming, the use of threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, or being prevented from receiving services or support.

Financial or material abuse is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions including theft, fraud, exploitation, applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

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

Discriminatory abuse is the inappropriate treatment of an adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individual.

Organisational abuse includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or a specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice, or ill treatment.

Neglect or acts of omission are the repeated deprivation of help that an adult needs which, if withdrawn, will cause them to suffer. This includes failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult, or to others.

Self-Neglect includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

Who might be at risk?

Some adults might be more at risk than others. The following factors could increase the risk of abuse:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty, especially if creates dependency on or needing help from others
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Severe illness
- Alcohol or illegal substance dependency

Who may abuse?

- A partner, child, relative or friend
- A paid or volunteer carer
- A health, social care or other worker
- A church worker, or minister of religion



Model Safeguarding Report Form – Worker, Bessacarr Evangelical Church

To be completed by the worker to whom the disclosure was made.

Workers name:

Day, Date, Time and Place of disclosure:

Context of disclosure:

Content of disclosure (child/young person/adult to worker; worker to child/young person/adult – record as nearly as possible the exact words used in the conversation):

Signed:

Date:
