

**BEC**

BESSACARR EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Bessacarr Evangelical Church Anti-Sexual harassment policy

Policy:

It is policy at Bessacarr Evangelical Church (BEC) to promote a work place that is free of sexual harassment or conduct that might reasonably be perceived as constituting sexual harassment or creating./contributing to a sexually hostile work environment. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere, which promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including sexual harassment. At BEC sexual harassment, whether verbal, physical, or environmental, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Definition:

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Examples of sexual harassment include *but are not limited to*:

- Unwanted physical advances;
- Requests for sexual favours in exchange for favourable treatment or continued employment;
- Offensive comments, jokes or other sexually oriented statements or depictions;
- Unwelcome flirtation, advances, or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- Graphic, verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies;
- Leering, whistling, touching or pinching; suggestive insulting, or obscene comments or gestures of a sexual nature;
- Display in the workplace of sexually-suggestive objects or pictures;
- Transmitting or forwarding e-mails containing offensive, suggestive or lewd attachments, statements or jokes; and
- Uploading, downloading, or viewing inappropriate pictures or material onto organizational information systems.

The above list is only illustrative of types of conduct that would violate this policy and by no means represents an exclusive list of conduct that could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

All employees and volunteers must comply with this Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy and take appropriate measures to ensure that such conduct does not occur.

In addition to discipline by BEC, individuals who engage in acts of sexual harassment may also be subject to civil and criminal penalties.

Guidelines:

- This policy covers all employees and volunteers of BEC. BEC will not tolerate, condone, or allow sexual harassment, whether engaged in by fellow employees, supervisors, managers, outside clients, volunteers or other non-employees who conduct business with BEC. BEC encourages the reporting of all sexual harassment incidents, regardless of who the offender may be.
- While BEC encourages individuals who believe they are being harassed to firmly and promptly notify the offender that his/her behaviour is unwelcome, we also realize that the power and status disparities between the person allegedly harassing and the person harassed may make such a confrontation unlikely. In the event that such informal, direct

communication between individuals is either ineffective or impossible, a member of the Safeguarding Team should be contacted through the procedures outlined below.

- BEC will not retaliate in any way against any individual making a report of sexual harassment, nor will BEC permit any supervisor, officer, employee or volunteer to do so. Retaliation is a serious violation of this anti-sexual harassment policy and should be reported immediately.

Procedures:

- 1) A report of an alleged violation of this policy should be made to a member of the Safeguarding Team. Usually, the sooner the report is made, the better the resolution will be.
- 2) An investigation of the alleged harassment will be handled through the Safeguarding team in a confidential manner so as to protect the privacy of persons involved. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances. In pursuing the investigation, the Safeguarding team will seek to consider the wishes of the complainant, but will thoroughly investigate the matter as appropriate under the circumstances. The alleged offender will be made aware of the report and will be given an opportunity to respond and present witnesses. The Safeguarding team will keep the complainant informed as to the status of the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, the Safeguarding team will recommend to the Elders the appropriate action to be taken. If BEC concludes that harassment occurred, the harasser will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, as described below. The complainant will be informed of the disciplinary action taken.
- 3) In the event harassment cannot be substantiated this finding will be communicated to the complainant in an appropriately sensitive manner. The complainant is always free to provide additional evidence for investigation.
- 4) If any party directly involved in a sexual harassment investigation is dissatisfied with the outcome or resolution, that individual has the right to appeal the decision to Lee Potts (designated Elder). The dissatisfied party should submit written comments in a timely manner to Lee Potts.
- 5) Employment conditions of the complainant and witnesses will be in no way adversely affected through use of this procedure, subject to paragraph 7 below.
- 6) Individuals found to have engaged in misconduct constituting sexual harassment will be disciplined, up to and including administrative leave and/or termination. Appropriate sanctions also may include written reprimand and referral to counselling.
- 7) If an investigation clearly reveals that the complainant knowingly and intentionally made a false accusation of sexual harassment, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 8) The Safeguarding team shall forward to the Elders any sexual harassment complaint filed against an employee or worker of BEC. The Safeguarding team shall follow the procedures set forth above and shall keep the Elders apprised of the investigation and findings that arise from the complaint. The Safeguarding team shall keep confidential the identities of all parties involved pending completion of the investigation.

Safeguarding Team:

Kathryn Mair (Lead)	kathryn@bessacarr.church
Angela Webster	a_webster_001@yahoo.co.uk
Katie McConway	ktmccconway@hotmail.co.uk

Designated Elder	lee@bessacarr.church
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Reviewed on 1 April 2026 (Date of Elders meeting)