



Community Church Eastbourne

Adult Safeguarding Policy

Updated: November 2024

by: Ian Bamforth

signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Bamforth", written over a horizontal line.

Next Review date: November 2025

Community Church Eastbourne has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of adults they come into contact with. The need for guidelines and procedures is important to ensure that this is done with understanding and clarity.

The person(s) with lead responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation is (are):

Ian Bamforth

Safeguarding Lead

Tel: 07842 367077

Adrian Hewitt

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Jo Oakley

Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Children)

All staff and volunteers are made aware of this policy and the process for reporting concerns by issuing the policy at induction.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

1: Introduction

Community Church Eastbourne consider the welfare of any child, young person or **adult 'at risk'**, who engages with Community Church Eastbourne to be of paramount importance, and we are committed to ensuring that they are valued, listened to, and respected within the work that we do.

Community Church Eastbourne believes that all adults, no matter their sex, disability, racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs or sexual orientation, have the right to be in a safe, caring environment.

Everyone working with Community Church Eastbourne, including its trustees, employees and volunteers, are responsible for ensuring that any **adult 'at risk'** is safe.

1.1 Aims and Principles of Adult Safeguarding

Community Church Eastbourne will adopt and uphold the Local Safeguarding Adults Board recommended policies and will reflect the East Sussex County Council Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.

The six principles of adult safeguarding are

- **Empowerment** - presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** - it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** - proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** - support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** - local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

- Has a severe physical illness

This may include a situation where a person receives care or is currently unable to protect themselves, for instance, someone who:

- Is misusing substances
- Is someone who is homeless
- Is in an abusive relationship (this can include women who are being sexually exploited by a partner)
- Is vulnerable due to context or experience e.g. bereavement, poverty.

2.2 Person led safeguarding

Organisations are often wary of intervening in abusive situations if the adult does not want them to do so because of human rights and other issues. These dilemmas are very real for staff and volunteers but can lead to an approach of non-intervention which conflicts with a need to ensure a "duty of care".

Person led adult safeguarding follows the principle of '**no decision about me without me**' and means that the adult, their families and carers are working together with agencies to find the right solutions to keep people safe and support them in making informed choices.

As a member of staff or volunteer with Community Church Eastbourne we will always ask that you strive to listen to and support the needs and requests of any adult who uses our services. For those adults who may struggle with additional needs and vulnerabilities, who may also be at risk of harm or abuse, this needs to be at the forefront of our care and support.

This person led approach to safeguarding leads to services which are: person-centred and focused on the outcomes identified by the individual; planned, commissioned and delivered in a joined-up way between different organisations, including Community Church Eastbourne which are responsive, and which can be changed when required.

3: Recognising Adult Abuse

3.1 Recognising Adult Abuse

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more. Patterns of abuse may vary and include:

- serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse
- long-term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse; or
- opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

sexuality, physical or learning disability, or mental-health needs. Discriminatory abuse can also be called 'hate crime'.

- **Personal exploitation** - involves denying an individual his/her rights, to forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- **Violation of rights** e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions.
- **Institutional abuse** e.g. when the routines, systems and norms of an institution compel individuals to sacrifice their own preferred style and cultural diversity to the needs of the institution
- **Neglect and acts of omission** e.g. ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, hate crime, adequate nutrition and heating. *Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wilful neglect and ill treatment become a criminal offence.*

3.4 Other forms of abuse to consider:

Hate crime

Hate crime is defined as any crime that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic, trans-phobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability. It should be noted that this definition is based on the perception of the victim or anyone else and is not reliant on evidence.

Mate crime

Mate crime happens when someone is faking a friendship in order to take advantage of a vulnerable person. Mate crime is committed by someone known to the person. They might have known them for a long time or met recently. A 'mate' may be a 'friend', family member, supporter, paid staff or another person with a disability.

Self-Neglect The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance Chapter 14 recognises self-neglect as a type of abuse. It describes self-neglect as a wide range of behaviours; neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Where self-neglect persists the risks to the individual may increase and could have a significant impact on the person's wellbeing. The Care Act emphasises the importance of early intervention and preventative actions to minimise risk and harm. Central to the Care Act is the wellbeing principle and focusing on decisions which are person-led, and outcomes focused. These principles are important considerations when responding to self-neglect cases.

Carers at risk of harm Carers experiencing abuse by the person they offer care to, can expect the same response as any person at risk of abuse. Carers also have a legal right to an assessment of their needs. A carer's assessment should be seen as part of the overall assessment process. Sometimes both the carer and the supported person may be at risk of harm.

severe short-term and long-term term physical and psychological consequences. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Trafficking & Modern Slavery Human trafficking is essentially the recruitment, movement or receipt of a person by deception or coercion into a situation of exploitation, this may include:

- prostitution (or other forms of sexual exploitation)
- forced labour
- slavery
- servitude, or
- the removal of organs

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking. Practice guidance relating to the national strategy to respond to Modern Slavery and human trafficking includes details of the Duty to Notify and how to refer victims into the National Referral Mechanism. In 2017, 1,694 potential adult victims were referred via duty to notify, bringing the total number of potential victims identified in 2017 to 6,837, although there are thought to be many more thousands of victims who are currently being held in slavery throughout the UK.

Exploitation by radicalisers who promote violence involves the exploitation of susceptible people who are drawn into violent extremism by radicalisers. Violent extremists often use a persuasive rationale and charismatic individuals to attract people to their cause. The aim 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. The Prevent Strategy, launched in 2007, seeks to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is the preventative strand of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

Cuckooing is a form of crime in which drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for criminal activity. Organised criminal groups are increasingly targeting adults with care and support needs in this way, and the level of coercion and control involved with cuckooing often leaves the victims with little choice but to cooperate with the perpetrators.

County Lines is the police term for groups who are supplying drugs to suburban areas and market and coastal towns using dedicated mobile phone lines or "deal lines". It can involve child criminal exploitation and using adults who are vulnerable to move drugs and money. Groups establish a base in the market location, typically by taking over the homes of local adults by force or coercion in a practice referred to as 'cuckooing'. The Home Office County Lines guidance describes County Lines as a major, cross-cutting issue involving drugs, violence, safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and missing persons. County Lines activity and the associated violence, drug dealing and exploitation have a devastating impact on young people, adults at risk of exploitation and local communities.

- Report the incident to your line manager straight away and/or Safeguarding Lead.

5. Referring a concern

5.1 Referring a concern or a disclosure

These procedures inform all staff and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected vulnerable adult abuse, i.e. response actions.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case or suspected abuse is **not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred**.

However, staff and volunteers do have a duty of care to the adult to report **any suspicions or concerns** you may have to a line manager/ Safeguarding Lead.

Referring or reporting to other agencies - Alerting Authorities

An alert is a concern that a 'person at risk' is suffering, or at risk of, or may be being, abused, neglected or exploited by a third party, or where a person at risk may be being harmed by others usually in a position of trust, power or authority.

Alerts can be made to Adult Services by anyone and should be made when:

- the person is a person at risk and there is a concern that they are being or are at risk of being abused, neglected or exploited
- the person is a person at risk and there is a concern that they have caused or are likely to cause harm to others
- the adult has capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wants this to happen
- the adult has been assessed as not having capacity to make a decision about their own safety, but a decision has been made in their best interests to make a referral
- a crime has been or may have been committed against an adult who lacks the mental capacity to report a crime and a 'best interests' decision is made
- the abuse or neglect has been caused by a member of staff or a volunteer
- other people or children are at risk from the person causing the harm
- the concern is about institutional or systemic abuse
- the person causing the harm is also vulnerable / adult at risk

The Safeguarding Lead will ultimately decide whether to alert Adult Services in each case.

If you have any concerns about an adult who may be at risk of harm, contact:

call: 0345 60 80 191

- Help people to 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.

Frontline staff and volunteers should always report safeguarding concerns in line with Community Church Eastbourne's policy – this is usually to your line manager or safeguarding lead in the first instance, except in emergency situations.

It is good practice to try to gain the person's consent to share information but if the situation is urgent and high risk and as long as it does not increase risk, staff and volunteers should inform the person if they need to share their information without consent.

5.4 Consent

Wherever practicable, the consent of the adult affected should be sought before reporting a suspected crime to the police. There may of course be circumstances where consent cannot be obtained because the adult lacks the capacity to give it, but it is in their best interests to contact the police.

Whether or not the adult has the capacity to give consent, the police will need to be informed if other people are already or would be at risk. The police should also be informed where it is in the public interest due to the seriousness of the alleged criminal offence. In certain circumstances an adult's right to confidentiality is overruled.

Information about a suspected crime should be shared with the police in the following circumstances:

- If others are, or may be, at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Where there are legal or professional responsibilities of staff who have become aware of the concern, for example, if this relates to a breach of regulation, professional code of conduct, or an offence appears to have been committed.
- Where the adult to whom the concern relates lacks capacity and in this situation the Mental Capacity Act should be followed.
- If the adult is believed to be subject to undue influence such that they are unable to exercise free will, for example Modern Slavery, controlling and coercive behaviour or domestic violence and abuse.
- If an adult is disclosing potential criminal offences, any initial questioning should be intended only to elicit a brief account of what is alleged to have taken place. This brief account should include where and when the alleged incident took place and who was involved and should be recorded in writing at the time or as soon as possible afterwards. A more detailed account will be obtained by the police at later stage.

6.2 Internal investigation for staff or volunteers

When a complaint or allegation has been made against a member of staff he/she must be made aware of their rights under employment legislation and internal disciplinary procedures. It is the responsibility of trustees, to conduct a thorough investigation in accordance with Community Church Eastbourne's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

With a complaint/allegation against a volunteer, they must be reported and investigated in a similar way, although they do not have the same rights as an employee.

A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the member of staff/volunteer. This must include whether it is safe for them to continue their role or any other role within the church and its projects whilst the investigation is being undertaken. The consideration of risk must be considered alongside the right of the employee. Decisions not to suspend an employee must be fully documented. Volunteers would be asked to step back from serving whilst the investigation is carried out.

Action to be considered will include the following:

- Is this a supervisory/training issue?
- Is it a matter for discipline/capability issue?
- Does discussion need to take place with other agencies, e.g. the Police and Adult Services?
- Is there a need to refer to Disclosure & Barring Service?

6.3 Disclosure & Barring Service - referrals

Employers and managers of volunteers working with people in regulated activity have a legal duty to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service in circumstances where they have permanently removed a person from the regulated activity through dismissal or permanent transfer (or would have if the person had not left, resigned, retired or been made redundant) because the person has:

- been cautioned, arrested or convicted for a relevant offence, or,
- engaged in misconduct in relation to children or adults at risk – i.e. that an action or inaction (neglect) has harmed a child or adult or put them at risk of harm, or,
- satisfied the 'Harm Test' in relation to children or adults at risk – i.e. that there has been no relevant misconduct but a risk of harm to a child or adult still exists.

Managers/Safeguarding Leads must keep all involved agencies informed of outcomes of any internal investigations and disciplinary proceedings being undertaken alongside any Adult Services own safeguarding investigation.

All agencies will work together and decide on the best possible course of action for both the perpetrator and the victim.

Informing the parent or carers of the adult 'at risk' you may have concerns about, needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with Adult Services.

Any individual under supervision has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with Adult Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation.

Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. the information stored is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. Staff and volunteers should be informed who the relevant designated spokesperson will be, and all enquiries directed through them. Staff and volunteers should reply 'no comment' to all questions/enquiries.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child/person? If so what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details:

Have you consulted anybody? If so give details:

Your name: _____

Position: _____

To whom reported: _____

Date of reporting: ___/___/20___

Signature: _____ Date: ___/___/20___

This form should now be given to the Designated Lead by hand in a sealed envelope marked 'Private and Confidential'.

- **Messaging individuals privately** on social media or mobiles unless there is a policy stating otherwise, or full accountability to another leader is in place.
- **Becoming intimate with anyone you have a position of trust over.** Intimacy can be emotional as well as physical.
- **Carrying out personal care** such as toileting or dressing those you serve. If this type of help is needed someone else will be responsible for supporting them in this area, i.e. their parent/carer.
- **Accepting any type of financial reward or gift** of any kind for any service or ministry provided or enter into any agreement to handle money on behalf of the service user.

Remember you have a position of power and trust serving as a member of a church or Christian project and must remain above reproach. Safeguarding does not stop appropriate care and support for the people you serve. It ensures they receive the best care and activities we can provide and protects your reputation and the projects you volunteer or work in.