



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Blandford Evangelical Church

Version 1.3
February 2024

Contents

Section 1. Details of the place of worship / organisation	3
Section 2. Prevention	7
Section 3. Practice Guidelines.....	9
Section 4. Safeguarding Governance.....	10
Section 5. Responding to allegations of abuse.....	12
Section 6. Pastoral Care.....	18
Section 7. Due Diligence	18
Section 8. Adoption of the policy	19
Document history	20

Section 1. Details of the place of worship / organisation

Name of Place of Worship / Organisation:

Blandford Evangelical Church

Address:

Blandford Evangelical Church
Sunnydale
Albert Street
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT117HZ

Tel No:

01258 450689

General Email Address:

admin@becbygrace.co.uk

Senior Leaders:

Dale Carmichael	07788 860834	dale@becbygrace.co.uk
Emma Carmichael	07511 903333	emma@becbygrace.co.uk

Safeguarding Coordinators (children and adults):

Dale Carmichael	07788 860834	dale@becbygrace.co.uk
Emma Carmichael	07511 903333	emma@becbygrace.co.uk

Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding:

Simon Hester	07753 636141	simon@becbygrace.co.uk
--------------	--------------	------------------------

Church Safeguarding Advisors:

Simon Hester	07753 636141	simon@becbygrace.co.uk
Ken Reynolds	07775 980985	Ken@becbygrace.co.uk
thirtyone:eight	0303 003 1111	

Charity Number:

1105954



Company Number:

05111593 (England and Wales)

Insurance Company:

Congregational. Policy number RC01000829

Description of the Organisation:

Blandford Evangelical Church (BEC) is an Independent Church serving the communities of Blandford Forum and the surrounding villages of North Dorset. The Church seeks to minister to all age groups without prejudice in reference to ethnicity, gender, age, capabilities or beliefs.

BEC is a membership organisation although openly welcomes non-members to participate in day-to-day church activities. The members appoint a Leadership to manage the activity and strategy of the church.

The organisation is registered as a charity and the members appoint a Board of Trustees to direct the charity. All of the Leadership are required to be Trustees. In addition, other Trustees are appointed by the members by virtue of professional experience which they can provide. At least one Trustee is an external person who is not a member of the church.

The church facilitates the running of a large number of different ministries which cater for a wide range of people, such as parents with babies and young children, single people, older people, children and young people. A network of discipleship groups meets regularly for the mutual encouragement of all, in which participants have opportunity to develop relationship, experience fellowship and grow in their understanding of God and spiritual life. There are regular services on Sundays, which offer an opportunity for attendees to engage in contemporary worship, hear Bible-based teaching and preaching, to be encouraged in dealing with everyday issues and discovering how to live a life of faith.

The church also funds the upkeep and improvement of the church's buildings and facilities for the benefit of all users as well as providing financial support for specific overseas mission work.

The church would not be able to provide the range and number of groups and activities that it offers without the work of a dedicated team of volunteers. Volunteers are drawn from those who attend the Church and are subject to the appropriate checks when working with the adults at risk, children or young

people. Each activity or ministry has its own leader and supporting team, with a line management structure for accountability, overseen by the Trustees.

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.



This policy is based on the template “england-model-safeguarding-policy-t08-2019” provided by Thirtyone:eight.

Section 2. Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers (this includes all staff and all volunteers) will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

Section 3. Practice Guidelines

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Section 4. Safeguarding Governance

The Leadership

We will foster an open and transparent environment where everyone in the church has the opportunity to speak up and speak out where there is a suspicion of abuse. We will put structures in place with clear lines of accountability. We will provide multiple options for people to raise concern.

Safeguarding Coordinator(s)

The Leadership will ensure that there is always a person or persons nominated in the role of safeguarding coordinator for children and adults.

The role of the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) is to:

- be a visible and accessible person for anyone in the organisation to contact to raise concern about abuse; and,
- to act on concerns, seek advice, and escalate concerns to external agencies as necessary.

Where there is no suitable member of the organisation available to undertake this role then the Leadership will contract an external professional service.

Church Safeguarding Advisors

The Leadership may approve named individuals to undertake the role of Church Safeguarding Advisor. These individuals are members of the organisation who, by virtue of their professional experience, have the current competence and experience to be able to provide advice on the management of risk to the Safeguarding Coordinators and are willing to provide this service voluntarily. The Leadership will ensure that the Church Safeguarding Advisors are provided with indemnity for the advice they provide.

The role of a Church Safeguarding Advisor is to:

- provide risk management advice to the Safeguarding Coordinators.

Where there is no suitable member of the organisation available to undertake this role then the Leadership will contract an external professional service. Currently the Leadership retains membership with the organisation thirtyone:eight so that advice can be accessed when a Church Safeguarding Advisor is not available.

The role of the Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding

The Trustees will ensure that there is a named Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding.

The role of the Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding is to:

- seek professional advice on current best practice for safeguarding governance;
- ensure that the organisation has up-to-date safeguarding policies and procedures; and,
- hold the Leadership, the Safeguarding Coordinators and the Church Safeguarding Advisors to account in matters of safeguarding governance.

The People Sub-Group of the Trustees

The People Sub-Group of the Trustees will review safeguarding strategy and operations as a standing agenda item at all meetings. The People Sub-group is accountable to the Board of Trustees.

Section 5. Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

Reporting a concern

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse of a **child** should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Dale Carmichael

Tel: 07788 860834

Email: dale@becbygrace.co.uk

or

Name: Emma Carmichael

Tel: 07511 903333

Email: emma@becbygrace.co.uk

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse of an **adult** should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Dale Carmichael

Tel: 07788 860834

Email: dale@becbygrace.co.uk

or

Name: Emma Carmichael

Tel: 07511 903333

Email: emma@becbygrace.co.uk

The above are nominated by the Leadership 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.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinators or, if the suspicions in any way implicate the Safeguarding Co-ordinators, then the report should be made to a Church Safeguarding Advisor and/or the Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding:

Name: Simon Hester
Tel: 07753 636141
Email: simon@becbygrace.co.uk
or
Name: Ken Reynolds
Tel: 07775 980985
Email: Ken@becbygrace.co.uk

If anyone wants to raise a concern which implicates a person in a position of trust in the organisation and they feel that the concern might not be managed with impartiality then they can contact the organisation thirtyone:eight. This is an independent charity which provides safeguarding advice. The church pays a subscription to access services from them. The contact details are:

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.
Tel: 0303 003 1111.
Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

Responding to a concern

If there is an immediate concern of imminent harm to a child or adult at risk then call 999.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring a Church Safeguarding Advisor or the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social care in the area the child or adult lives.

Concerns about children

Children's Advice and Duty Service 01305 228866
(advice line for professionals 01305 228558)

Concerns about adults

Adult Social Care
Tel: 01305 221016
Out of hours Tel: 01305 858250

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:

- Trustee with Responsibility for Safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident; and / or,
- the Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s), the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) 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.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight or a Church Safeguarding Advisor) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by a Church Safeguarding Advisor or thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively a Church Safeguarding Advisor or thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact a Church Safeguarding Advisor or thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s), will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

Section 6. Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

Section 7. Due Diligence

Projects and missionaries funded by BEC

It is vital that the principles of protecting children and adults at risk of abuse are applied, not only in the direct church activities undertaken in the Blandford area, but also in indirect activities sponsored or funded by BEC. The due diligence checklist used by BEC includes an assessment of safeguarding governance. The due diligence process must be completed before sponsorship or funding of any project or individual is agreed, and repeated annually for as long as sponsorship or funding continues.



Section 8. Adoption of the policy

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on the 20th January 2024

Document history

Version	Date	Revisions
1	October 2019	First edition. New document to replace previous safeguarding policy.
1.1	January 2021	Reviewed and republished with no changes.
1.2	October 2021	Added section on due diligence.
1.3	February 2024	Minor updates only.