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Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

16 March 2021

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Hillfields Church Coventry (HCC) Safeguarding

Section 1

Policy and Procedures

A) General Policy Statement

This document is the Child Protection Policy for Hillfields Church Coventry (HCC). It will be followed by all church members and those working with children and young people. It will be followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within HCC.

HCC has a moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Throughout this policy reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”. Some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, therefore the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults. There is also reference made to “ministry workers”. This term is used to refer to those over the age of 16 who are involved in leading or supporting a ministry.

The eldership team and church members are aware that all they do is seen by God, to whom they ultimately must give account. Their aim is to bring glory to God in demonstrating Jesus’ genuine and pure love to children and young people in all interactions with them. As such, they are committed to ensuring that HCC

- Provides a safe environment for children and young people
- Identifies children and young people who are suffering
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe from harm

HCC is privileged to have many opportunities to share the love of Jesus and the truths of the Bible with children and young people. We take seriously our responsibility to protect and safeguard the children and young people entrusted to our care. We also recognise and appreciate the great effort that many make in working with the children and young people. This policy is in place to

- Ensure all ministry workers are aware of the importance of child protection issues and HCC’s child protection procedures
- Reassure the wider community of the practices we adopt in order to protect children.

HCC provides a variety of ministries for children and young people, some in the absence of their parents/carers and some with parents/carers present. During ministries where the parents/carers are absent, the adults running the ministries are responsible for the children and young people’s welfare.

We understand that being a child or young person can make them vulnerable to abuse by adults. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult, in the context of the work carried out by HCC, are transparent and safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people. Additionally, we recognise that potential abusers seek to cultivate close relationships of trust with children (and/or their families) and to get opportunity to be alone with an individual child. We therefore need to be alert to inappropriate befriending of families and/or children.

Principles upon which the Child Protection Policy is based

- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount.
- The welfare of families will be promoted.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to.
- HCC's elders, members and ministry workers will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people and follow the policy outlined below.
- The elders will ensure that the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between individuals will be treated with respect.

B) Designated person with child protection responsibility

Laura Stevens is the designated person with special responsibility for child protection issues at HCC. Her contact details are 07533 900733 and safeguarding@hillfields.church

She has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within HCC of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people. She has received appropriate training and will keep up to date with developments in child protection issues. She will also have responsibility for ensuring new volunteers are aware of the existing child protection policy. She is the main contact point for Child Protection issues.

C) Designated person with child protection responsibility

Deputy Child protection officer

Simon Hook is the deputy child protection officer responsible for providing overall support to the designated person with child protection responsibility at HCC. His role is outlined further on page 8.

D) Adults serving in children and youth ministries at HCC

Suitable Ministry Workers

No 'new-comer' to the church will be immediately involved in children or youth work. When any person from another church transfers membership to HCC, or joins in HCC's activities, and wishes to be involved in children or youth ministries, a reference will be obtained from the pastor, or someone of similar seniority, in of the other church.

If the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or may pose a risk to vulnerable people, a Risk Assessment will be undertaken and their ministry service will be restricted in accordance with the Management of Ex-Offenders and Those Who Pose A Risk document (see Appendix 6).

Appropriate training

All adults working with children and young people at HCC will receive appropriate training in order to familiarise them with child protection issues and responsibilities and HCC's child protection policy and procedures. Refresher training will take place as necessary, and not less frequently than every 3 years. New adults involved in children and youth ministries will receive training.

Regulated Activity and obtaining Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks

Under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, an individual working unsupervised with children is considered to be engaged in Regulated Activity and must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will involve a check of the children's barred list, in order to perform their duties.

However, an individual working in a directly and permanently supervised position is not considered to be engaged in regulated activity but should still have an enhanced DBS disclosure check. However because they are working in a supervised role the enhanced check will not include a check of the children's barred list.

Note that applications for a DBS enhanced check can only be submitted where the applicant is aged 16 or over at the time of making the application.

We will ensure a Single Central Record of recruitment checks - including DBS checks - and a training log will be maintained. DBS certificates will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be kept. All DBS data will be handled confidentially and the Single Central Record is the only record that will be retained by the church.

E) HCC's Shared Attitudes

To those who have experienced abuse: The church family at HCC are committed to supporting those who have experienced abuse and encouraging them in the Christian faith.

To perpetrators of abuse: Should someone previously convicted of child abuse offences attend HCC, whilst extending friendship to that individual, the church officers (in their commitment to the protection of all children and young people) will meet with the individual (and, where appropriate, the relevant probation or police officer, or representative of the Youth Offending Service) to discuss the boundaries that the person will be expected to observe.

F) Duty to refer to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS))

The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 both make it mandatory to refer anyone known to pose a threat of harm to a child or vulnerable people to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This means that the designated person responsible for safeguarding (Laura Stevens) will not knowingly allow anyone who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to work with children at HCC. This includes anyone who is believed to have committed a relevant conduct while working with children at HCC or who has a record of such conduct.

HCC has a legal duty to refer an employee or ministry worker who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to the DBS, failure to do so can result in a fine and/or up to 5 years imprisonment. There must be sufficient and solid evidence that the employee or ministry worker poses a risk of harm before they can be referred to the DBS. The DBS will not consider evidence based on rumour or unsubstantiated reports. HCC should also inform the police and other relevant authorities if they believe a relevant conduct has occurred.

Referral forms can be downloaded from the DBS's website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs

G) The DBS's barring process

Whenever new relevant information (such as a conviction or caution) becomes known, the information will be sent to the DBS. The DBS will consider this information, together with other information known on the individual, and decide whether it indicates that the individual poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups. If so, the DBS will commence its barring process and the DBS will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant with the barring information.

The applicant should be advised by the designated person to make a representation to the DBS regarding the barring information. The DBS will assess the barring information and representation and decide whether to bar the applicant. If there is sufficient barring evidence, the applicant will be placed on either the Children's Barred List or the Vulnerable Adults Barred List or both depending on the offence. The applicant must then be removed from regulated activity.

The applicant has the right of appeal to a tribunal and must be advised of this right.

Serious offences committed against vulnerable people will lead to automatic barring and the applicant will have no right to make representations or to appeal against a barring decision.

H) Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Ministry Workers

The procedures set out in this document apply to all adults at HCC involved in work with children and young people. Due to their frequent contact with children and young people, ministry workers may have allegations of child abuse made against them. HCC recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a ministry worker may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

HCC recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a ministry worker can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within HCC will do so in a Christian and prayerful way, with sensitivity, acting carefully. The church will not tolerate anyone whose intentions toward children are harmful.

I) Dealing with Ministry Workers' 'Inappropriate Behaviour'

If you consider a ministry worker's behaviour to be 'unwise' but not serious, HCC encourages those who notice it to gently point out to them what was thought to be inappropriate so that the individual may be wiser in future. It is important to be open to giving and receiving feedback in this area. If you feel it is inappropriate to speak directly to the person concerned, speak to the leader of the relevant ministry. Do not discuss with others who do not need to know. The leader however may wish to discuss the situation with the designated person (Laura Stevens) or the supporting church officer (Simon Hook).

If you consider any behaviour to be serious or constitute child abuse, speak immediately and directly to Laura Stevens or Simon Hook. They will then discuss the matter with you and decide on the

appropriate course of action e.g. contacting the police or social services. Do not discuss with others who do not need to know.

Section 2

Child Protection Policy (How to act on child protection concerns)

The following part of this document explains how a ministry worker should act (HCC's procedures) if they have any child protection concerns, including what to do if a child or young person makes a child protection 'disclosure'.

1. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

It is important to understand that in **all cases** it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the children. For example:

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection Order.

2. Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Abuse or neglect of a child is caused by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger.

There are four recognised areas of abuse:

1) Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms, of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as, fabricated illness by proxy or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy.

2) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations

being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child though it may occur alone.

3) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

4) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Individuals at HCC need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources, including abuse by people at HCC.

The church should know how to **recognise** and **act upon** indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children. There is an expected responsibility for all members of HCC to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns.

However, you must not discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- where sexual abuse is suspected
- where organised or multiple abuse is suspected
- where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected
- where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

3. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns

It is recognised that a child may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously, individually or in groups, when you are present. In these situations you must:

- Listen carefully to the child.
- DO NOT directly question the child.
- Give the child time and attention.
- Do not give the impression that you do not believe the child. What they say may be true, partly true, or completely false.

- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child’s presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child’s own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.
- Reassure the child that:
 - ✓ you are glad they have told you;
 - ✓ they have not done anything wrong;
 - ✓ what you are going to do next.
- Explain that you will need to get help to keep the child safe.
- **Do not** ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- You should not investigate concerns or allegations yourself, but you should consult immediately with the Designated Person (Laura Stevens 07533 900733.)

4. Consulting about your concern

The purpose of consultation is to discuss your concerns in relation to a child and **decide what action is necessary**. You may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to you, based on your observations or information you have received about that child. For example, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If you are concerned about a child you must share your concerns.

Initially you should talk to the designated person responsible for child protection within HCC (Laura Stevens - 07533 900733). Additionally, Simon Hook is the church officer responsible for providing support to the designated person. He can be contacted on 07866 314686. Or you can email safeguarding@hillfields.church

However, as there are many different ministries operating at HCC there are child protection ‘link people’ who you can speak to if you have a concern and are unable to speak directly to Laura Stevens or Simon Hook.

The child protection ‘link people’ for HCC’s ministries are listed below with their contact details. If you have any child protection concerns, specific to a child involved in one of these ministries, and are unable to reach Laura Stevens or Simon Hook, these are the people to contact (either by phone or face to face)

Ministry ‘Link People’

Crèche	Janet Cordle 07707 352 958	
Bible Explorers	Dawn Mosley 07828 506 061	
Stay and Play	Louise Gudgeon 07731 465538	Rachael Barber 07708 227 253

Mini Explorers	Rachael Barber 07708 227 253	Bethany Barnes 07913 168 693
Young Explorers	Sarah Edwards 07527 028 129	
Uprooted	Rebecca McLean 07422 529476	
Uprooted boys bible study	Alex McLaren 07715 830 551	
Uprooted girls bible study	Sarah Edwards 07527 028 129	
Connected	Sophia Browne 07923 236785	
Connected boys bible study	Joel Malam 07799 460783	
Connected girls bible study	Sophia Browne 07923 236785	

If the relevant 'link person' (see above), 'designated person' (Laura Stevens) or 'supporting church officer' (Simon Hook) is implicated in the concerns, you should discuss your concerns with one of these people who are not implicated in the concern.

When the concerns relate to any member of the Eldership team, Laura Stevens will consult with Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS), as part of the process.

If an individual is unsure about what to do and cannot get in contact with the 'link person' or with Laura Stevens or Simon Hook, then they can use the CSS helpline. CSS will be able to give useful advice regarding the specific concern. The number is 0116 218 4420 and can be called 7 days a week between 8am and 10pm.

(Christian Safeguarding Services is a 'provider of specialist training & consultancy and support service, driven by a passion to help churches and faith based organisations to develop best practice in safeguarding. More information is available on their website www.thecss.co.uk)

You should consult externally with your local Social Services Department in the following circumstances:

- when you **remain unsure** after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
- when there is **disagreement** as to whether child protection concerns exist
- when you are **unable to consult promptly or at all** with the designated person responsible for safeguarding (Laura Stevens) or the supporting church officer (Simon Hook) or a ministry 'link person' for a child

Consulting with your local Social Services department is not the same as making a referral. Consultation with Social Services is when you discuss the situation with them, but no specific details are given, to enable you to make a decision as to whether an official referral to Social Services or the Police should progress.

5. Making a referral

If, after consulting with the designated person for child protection or a ministry 'link person', it is felt that a referral to Social Services needs to be made, this will be dealt with by Laura Stevens.

Laura Stevens will normally consult CSS before making a referral to either Social services or the Police.

A referral involves giving Social Services or the Police information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency, followed by any necessary action.

In certain cases the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined below*. However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Social Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the police. The number to call is 101. If you wish to report an emergency matter always dial 999.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the child, in this instance*, you should not inform the child's parents/carers that you are making a referral. To make a telephone referral to your local Social Services Office: Social worker the number is (out of office hours): 024 7683 2222. If there is no immediate danger or you need advice or information, you should call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub on 024 7678 8555.

6. Information required

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number and position, and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family eg: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concerns and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appear to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made

Action to be taken following the referral

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s).
- Put your concerns in writing to Social Services following the referral (within 48 hours).

- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

7. Confidentiality

It is important that HCC keeps a record of **any** child protection matters. Different, seemingly small concerns, noted by various people over time can build up a picture of abuse which may otherwise be missed.

If there are any concerns for a child or you notice any unusual behaviour, write down all of the information mentioned above and then pass the information on to Laura Stevens for recording any child protection matters that arise. These should be filled in as fully as possible and then passed to Laura Stevens. These records are kept confidentially with Laura Stevens.

Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a “need to know” basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child’s need for protection. If in doubt, consult.

Appendix 1

LEADERSHIP SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Jesus has a pure and genuine love for all; this is what we seek to emulate.

The Leadership recognises the importance of its ministry and work with children, young people, and adults in need of protection, and our responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care. We are committed to creating and enabling a healthy culture in order to minimise any coercion and control within our church.

Hillfields Church Coventry (HCC) is committed to the safeguarding of all children and adults and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse, exploitation and neglect of children and young people and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child, young person and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that everybody we have contact with knows this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have the responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every part of HCC unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- We believe in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our church where the value of all people is recognised and challenges are responded to appropriately.

We are committed to:

- Supporting parents and families and adults with additional needs
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Safeguarding Team in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and guidelines.

- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all who undertake this work.
- Supporting all at HCC affected by abuse or exploitation.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

We recognise that:

- Child, young person and vulnerable adult safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.
- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police will be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to Christian Safeguarding Services.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns either for a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or in relation to any safeguarding matter, then speak to one of the following who are the Safeguarding Team for HCC.

- Simon Hook

- Laura Stevens

- Matthew Stevens

Signed (by the Leadership)

Date 23 March 2021



Simon Hook

Appendix 2

Signs of Possible Abuse (Children and Young People).

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in the context of the child's whole life:

Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation *
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse *

Sexual

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse.
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia *

Emotional

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying

Neglect

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses.
- Inadequate care, etc.

*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

Appendix 3

Signs of Possible Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)

Physical

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended.

Sexual

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse.
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour.
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse.
- Self- harming.

Psychological

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a carer.
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes.
- Unexplained paranoia

Financial or Material

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents.
- Sudden inability to pay bills.
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf.
- Recent changes to deeds or title to property.

Neglect or Omission

- Malnutrition, weight loss and/or persistent hunger.
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores.
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition.
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care.
- No callers or visitors

Discriminatory

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect.
- Poor quality or avoidance of care.

Institutional

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc.
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication.

- Inappropriate use of restraint.
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids.
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans.
- Public discussion of private matter.
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity.

Appendix 4

Hillfields Church Coventry (HCC) Safeguarding

Code of Conduct for Children's and Youth Group Leaders and Workers

including Ministry Worker Agreement

A) Introduction: We are very grateful to all those who lead and help with our children's and young people's groups, for their commitment and service, and the way in which they freely give their time and energy for the good of serving others.

The way this Christian work is carried out is of tremendous importance. In the Bible Paul urges Timothy to...

“set ...an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” 1 Tim 4 v12

It is with this attitude in mind that we set out the Code of Conduct below.

B) Mission Statement

Jesus has a pure and genuine love for all; this is what we seek to emulate.

The Church Leadership recognises the importance of its ministry to children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all young people entrusted to the Church's care.

As part of its Mission, the Church is committed to;

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all ministry leaders and workers within the Church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse, exploitation and inappropriate behaviour/relationships.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse, exploitation and inappropriate behaviour/relationships.

C) What do we mean by 'safeguarding of children and young people'?

As a Church we see the question of Safeguarding as wider than just the sexual exploitation of those under 18. The HCC leadership have adopted the view of Child Safeguarding Services, that all young people, whether under 18 or not, are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation at times by virtue of age, character, circumstances, experiences, sensitivities, trauma, etc. and that abuse and exploitation can be in various forms, ie. Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Neglect, Financial, Institutional, Discriminatory.

The Safeguarding threshold at HCC is set significantly below criminal activity. If young people are made to feel uncomfortable due to any ministry worker's behaviour, then that falls within the scope of **Safeguarding**.

D) Key Standards

- Having a Policy and implementing the Policy.
- Developing Safeguarding Awareness Training for young people's leaders.
- Management of ministry workers.
- Communicating between ministry workers, ministry workers and young people, and their parents effectively and appropriately.
- Responding to concerns.
- Provision of pastoral care.
- Managing those who may pose a risk.

E) General Guidelines for Ministry Workers involved in children's and young people's work

All ministry workers must comply fully with HCC's Safeguarding Policy and this Code of Conduct. This includes having an up-to-date DBS check.

General Behaviour: Ministry workers should always seek to behave in a manner that is honouring to God; they should never do or say anything that could bring the church into disrepute and they should never undermine the church's teaching, leaders or other church members.

Aware of needs: All ministry workers should be sensitive to the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults. They must ensure the safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst they are in their care.

Be alert: Workers should be alert to the possibility that a child, young person or vulnerable adult could be suffering from emotional, physical, or sexual abuse outside the church. They must avoid leading or persistent questioning and must record their concerns with as much detail as possible and must discuss the matter with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or a member of the Safeguarding Team

False accusations: ministry workers should avoid putting themselves in a position where false accusations could be made about their behaviour, even years or decades later.

Leaders & Registers: Ensure that there are always at least two leaders present at any activity, that a dated record (register) is kept of all leaders and attendees (including visitors) at each event and that any accident or mishap is logged on this register.

Parental Consent: Parental consent must be sought in order for children and young people to attend a youth group, group Bible study, 1:1 Bible study or similar activity, where their parents are not present. Ideally, this should be written consent (e.g. signing a reply slip) rather than verbal consent.

F) Specific Guidelines for Ministry Workers involved in children's and young people's work

These guidelines are issued to those who, in their work for the church, will have substantial contact with children and young people:

1. **Physical contact:** Physical contact should be appropriate to age and gender. Be careful to avoid any physical contact which may be misunderstood or unwanted by a child or young

person. If involved in games where physical contact is inevitable, be willing to lose the game rather than be at risk of a false accusation. Never use physical discipline on a child or young person. Inappropriate physical approaches by children or young people must be rejected kindly but firmly. Try to convey that the individual is not being rejected, only the inappropriate physical contact.

2. **Physical contact; specifically relating to young children:** Ministry Workers should keep physical contact with children and vulnerable adults to a minimum, but if comforting is necessary by reason of upset or minor injury a hand on the shoulder or an arm around the shoulders may be appropriate. Assuming children are toilet trained and capable, they will be allowed to go to the toilet alone, and their absence monitored. In terms of the specific needs of babies and toddlers, a practical, common-sense approach is required with minimal physical contact but sufficient to ensure they are safe and comfortable. More personal care, eg. nappy changing etc. must be carried out by the parent or a person specifically agreed by the parent.
3. **Electronic communications (e.g. texting, social media):** Keep 1:1 electronic communications with children and young people to a minimum. Be alert and sensitive in order to avoid anything that is over-familiar, or inappropriately complimentary, or could be misunderstood in any way as innuendo, or possibly misleading in terms of romantic interest. There is to be no late-night communications and no exchange of images 1:1 with children or young people. Explicit images and messages shall not be shared in any context. All social media contact is to be by group communications as far as possible.
4. **Being alone with groups and individuals:** Take all reasonable precautions to avoid being alone with a child or young person. Use a 'team approach' when running activities, ensuring there is sufficient mixed gender leadership. If a child or young person specifically requests to talk in private, make sure that another leader is aware of the meeting and keep it as short as possible. Try to arrange such a meeting in a 'public place' where others are within sight, or if that is not possible, leave the door open.

Sometimes it will be beneficial for a young person to meet up with a youth leader for **1:1 Bible studies**. This will need to be arranged with the consent of the young person's parents and in conversation with the elders and safeguarding team. It is good practice to meet somewhere that is not entirely private e.g. at the young person's home while other family members are at home or, for example, at a café or at HCC. If in a room alone, the door should be left open. 1:1 Bible studies should be arranged male-male or female-female.

Additionally, sometimes, it will be beneficial for a young person to belong to a **group Bible study**. This will need to be arranged with the consent of the young person's parents and in conversation with the elders and safeguarding team. It is often helpful to have two Bible study leaders present. However, when only one Bible study leader can be present, it is good practice to meet somewhere that is not entirely private e.g. at one of the young person's home while other family members are at home or, for example, at a café, or at HCC.

If there is a very small group for **Bible Explorers** the main teacher that week can lead the class alone and the supporting adult can return to the service, if they both agree. The adult

who is returning to the service should let the creche team know what there is only one adult in that classroom, so that they are aware. The remaining teacher should sit so that they are visible through the window in the door and wedging the door open would be ideal. If there is only one child in the class either both teachers need to stay or they can join with the other class.

5. **In your own home:** Be very careful about inviting a child or young person to your home. If you propose to do this, ensure that it is with the knowledge of HCC's eldership team and that the parents are aware and give their consent.
6. **Giving lifts:** Avoid being alone in a car with a child or young person, if possible. Where this is unavoidable try to make certain that they are sitting in the back seat. Escorting a child or young person on their own should only be done with the knowledge and approval of the ministry leaders and, where appropriate, the child's parent(s). Drivers who are not leaders or parents are not permitted to transport under 18s on young people's activities unless specifically approved by the ministry leaders. If, for any exceptional reason, these standards cannot be met, ensure you make another leader aware.
7. **Tone and Language:** Be watchful that the tone of humour (of ministry leaders, workers and those they are supervising) is in keeping with purity. Do not allow a child or young person to use inappropriate language without showing your disapproval.
8. **Drug/Alcohol Use:** Leaders must refrain from alcohol and illicit/recreational drug use at all times when working with children and young people.
9. **Relationships:** Ministry leaders and workers who provide pastoral counselling or spiritual direction must avoid developing inappropriate relationships with children, young people or other leaders. All sexual intimacies, verbal or physical, must be avoided including consensual and non-consensual contact. Keep all physical contact to a minimum, especially anything that could be construed as suggestive or sexually inappropriate. Ministry leaders and workers will assume the full burden of responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all relationships, including counselling and counselling-related activities. Of course, single leaders are free to seek romantic Christian friendship with another Christian single of the opposite sex who is 18+. In order to be clear and avoid misunderstanding, if that interest was with someone over which they are a leader, the leader should make his/her intention clear, be open and honest at all times, being careful and sensitive to the feelings of all. The leader should let a senior leader/elder and one of the Safeguarding team know of the situation as soon as possible.
10. **Personal Conversations:** Conversations and/or advice given on personal, spiritual or relationship matters is preferably to be given by people of the same gender. Referring to or involving another suitable person as soon as possible is best practice. All personal communications are to have the purpose of developing positive, trusting and caring relationships.

11. **Mixed Gender groups:** Leaders are to keep in mind that most, if not all, groups will have a mixture of male and females. At team leaders' meetings, decisions which are made about the running of the group should reflect this fact. For example, make sure you have male / female leaders at group events where there will be mixed genders, and, for example, if it is suggested that a leader 'catches up' with a lad about a spiritual issue, make sure it's a male leader assigned to that task.
12. **Telephone Conversations:** Keep phone conversations with young people focussed on the issue or arrangement in hand and also brief, to avoid misunderstandings.
13. **Behaviour Management:** Avoid showing favouritism to any group or individual. Ministry leaders and workers are to develop a culture where anyone can feel comfortable to point out any unacceptable or inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
14. **Group/Event Leadership:** The leadership of all HCC children and young peoples' groups is reviewed from time to time, to ensure an optimum balance of gender and maturity. The safeguarding team is to be kept updated regarding who the ministry leaders and workers are for each group.
15. **General Practice for 'overnight events':** All leaders of each overnight event will need to follow these guidelines. There may also be other rules/guidelines that are specific to that event, which will be in addition to those shown here.

- All leaders on a camp are to be adults. Though where appropriate, those under the age of 18 can serve as helpers.
- No leaders or campers are to go in bedrooms or bathrooms designated for use by the opposite sex
- No leaders to go in a bedroom / bathroom alone with a camper.
- Leaders are to have separate bedrooms/tents to campers. If, on the rare occasion, it is unavoidable/safer for a leader to share a bedroom/tent with the campers, two leaders should be in the room/tent to provide accountability for each other. It is recognised, that on some of the camps, because of the age range of the campers, some of the campers will be 18 years old and technically adults. Where practical, adult campers should have separate bedrooms to child campers.
- All campers aged 18 or over, must have a DBS check
- Sensible precautions are to be taken and clear instructions are to be given to the campers if they are being allowed to go out of the sight of leaders (i.e. around a town on a wide game). This should include the sharing of phone numbers, ensuring the campers stay in pairs or groups, ensuring there is a leader located in an agreed central place who can easily be found in an emergency and ensuring the children know the boundaries of where they are allowed to go.

G) **Raising concerns** – If anyone has concerns about the appropriateness of any leaders' or workers' conduct or communication, it is important they feel free to raise it at any time with the Safeguarding Team and the elders.

All Safeguarding matters are to be passed in confidence to the Safeguarding Designated Person (Laura Stevens) who will respond to concerns seriously and sensitively, will show care and compassion and endeavour to have appropriate Pastoral care available.

- H) **Conclusion** -The safety and well-being of all children and young people at HCC’s activities is extremely important. We must strive to uphold principles of justice and righteousness and ensure the protection and support of all involved in this work, in accordance with Christian teaching.
- I) **End note**- Parts of the above Code are largely focussed on the need for safeguarding with members of the opposite sex. If a leader struggles with same sex attraction in any significant way that may affect the way they relate to people of the same gender then they should discuss this with a senior leader and realise this Code may apply to the way they conduct themselves with those of the same gender.

Declaration

I have an enhanced DBS check

I have carefully read the ‘HCC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures’ document and the ‘Code of Conduct for Children’s and Youth Group Leaders and Workers’ document.

I will abide by the ‘HCC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures’ and the ‘Code of Conduct for Children’s and Youth Group Leaders and Workers’.

I will act with sensitivity when dealing with children, young people and adults and will avoid anything that could be construed as neglectful, exploitative or abusive behaviour.

I will also do all I can to avoid situations in which I could be falsely accused of inappropriate behaviour.

Date _____ Signed _____

Appendix 5

Hillfields Church Coventry Safeguarding Policy:

Video Conferencing with Children and Young People

This document explains the measures we have put in place in order to safeguard both the young people and leaders whilst video-calling for the purposes of youth ministry at HCC.

- We are avoiding the use of Skype / Facetime – these are social media tools and as such share contact details with all users. We do not want to inadvertently connect young people up with other people as an unintended consequence.
- We are instead using the video conferencing platform Zoom: users only need to have an email address for account setup.
- Use of this is beyond the normal running of our group and we have therefore obtained explicit permission from Simon Hook (pastor with youth work oversight) as well as specific parental consent for this activity.
- We are to clearly communicate to parents and young people the times and days the groups are meeting and we will refrain from using Zoom in contact with the young people outside of these dedicated times, with the exception of extreme circumstances in conversation with the parents.
- We have requested parents set up a Zoom account for their young person to use, but young people may have their own Zoom account at the discretion of the parents.
- We will always have at least two leaders live on the call for the entire duration, including in each breakout group during the call (see next two points). At least two leaders will be live before any young people join, and until all young people have left the call.
- For Bible Explorers (reception to year 5), just one teacher can teach the class via Zoom, if they have the agreement of the parents, and have communicated to the parents, the clear expectation that a parent will be in the room with the child, while the class is taking place.
- For 1:1 studies and conversations over Zoom, the same safeguarding principles apply, as for a normal 1:1 meet up (as detailed in the main HCC safeguarding policy). These include the leader arranging this with the consent of the parent and in conversation with the elders and the safeguarding team. Studies and conversations to be arranged male to male or female to female. And for the leader, where possible, to be in a place which is not entirely private.
- The leaders on the call will be our usual group leaders. New leaders will be recruited safely in line with the standard HCC safeguarding policy in place for physical groups.
- Codes of conduct – appropriate behaviour for leaders and young people should be followed as we would expect in the usual youth group setting.

- We will seek to continue to support, where possible, young people who may not be able to access the Zoom calls for various reasons.
- We have locked-down the settings on our HCC Zoom account from which we always host the meeting. Participants are not able to share their screen, change their background, take control of anyone else's camera, or private message anyone in the group except the host. Messages in the chat are visible to the whole group and cannot be saved.
- The Meeting ID used for all the youth calls are only circulated on the emails to parents and not on any public platforms.
- All HCC youth interaction over Zoom, should be done via the church Zoom accounts. These meetings should be noted on the HCC Zoom meeting schedule.
- All participants are held in a waiting room when connecting to the call and can only be admitted by the host (youth leader). Therefore, no strangers will be able to access the call. If young people are inviting friends to join with the call, they are to make the youth staff aware beforehand so they can look out for their name.
- We will never record any part of the meetings and have disabled the ability to do so in the settings. One of the staff may take a screenshot for the purposes of publicity if all of the parents have given consent for that to be done. We will not take a screenshot without prior knowledge and permission from the young people.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything outlined in this document, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Si Hook (pastor with youth work oversight):

simon.hook@hillfields.church

"Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:24-25

Appendix 6

Hillfields Church Coventry Safeguarding Policy:

Management of Ex-Offenders and Those Who Pose A Risk

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

- 1.1. Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the church leaders will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks
- 1.2. The church will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate
- 1.3. The leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated
- 1.4. A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up if appropriate and will be signed by both the individual and the church leaders. The agreement will include:
 - 1.4.1. The church's commitments to the individual who poses the risk
 - 1.4.2. The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community
 - 1.4.3. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the church
 - 1.4.4. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement
 - 1.4.5. When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed
- 1.5. All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored
- 1.6. The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the leaders either:
 - 1.6.1. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk
 - 1.6.2. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared
- 1.7. If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on