

CREDITON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Section 1

Details of the organisation

Crediton Congregational Church

98 High Street, Crediton EX17 3NQ

Tel No: 01363 772577

Email: churchofficeccc@gmail.com

Pastor: James Gregory

Pastor Contact Telephone / Email: 01363 772577 cccmanse@gmail.com

Protection Verifier Name: Guy Cochran

phone: 07891 898487 **Email:** gncochran@btinternet.com

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Chris Parsons

Phone: 07968237305 **Email:** christinelparsons30@gmail.com

Charity Number if registered: 1175015

Insurance Company: Congregational & General Insurance Plc. Policy No.
RC01002685

The following is a brief description of our organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

This is a church which meets collectively for worship on a Sunday at 9.30am on the first Sunday of the month and at 10.30am every week.

Our mission statement:

As a church we exist to worship God, to bring people to know Jesus, to be a Christian family, to help people grow in their Christian faith, to serve the community, to serve and support our children and young people.

The church's involvement falls into three categories:

- a) the informal fellowship of people of different ages and capabilities in the worshipping community.
- b) groups organised specifically for children, young people or adults.
- c) groups organised by other agencies on the church premises.

Groups run by the church are:

Group Name	Leader Name/s
Fishtank parent and toddler Coffee Morning	Sue Keogh
Mainly Music for pre-schoolers and their carers	Kez Taylor
Causeway Coffee Morning	Caroline Smith
Causeway Life Group	Caroline Smith
Coffee & Company	Irene Madders
Sunday Creche (0-4)	Kez Taylor
Sunday Fusion (5-11)	Kez Taylor
Core – Sunday Youth Church	Dave Poulson
Wonder (Girls group Y7 to Y13)	Dave Poulson
Halo (Youth drop in)	Dave Poulson
Outburst (primary school age)	James Gregory
Weekly/fortnightly life groups	various

Other groups using church premises

Group Name	Leader Name/s
The Rowell Centre	Sallyann Botting
JM Acrobatics	Jess Anez
Contact Sessions	Devon County Council
Crediton Foodbank	Steve Gill
CHAT	Denise Henson
Citizens Advice	Dan Burton
Music Makers	Paul Vincent
Crediton Choir	Tim Matthews
U3A	Jane Innes
Crediton Youth Orchestra	Alison Golby
Journey Counselling	Francesca Raymont

The Church advises holders of the positions above that all work on its premises must meet the standards set down in this Safeguarding policy. They are advised to have sufficient insurance cover appropriate for the activity carried out on church premises. Leaders must sign an agreement that they will follow safeguarding and other relevant processes. See Appendix 1.

Our Commitment

The Leadership Team recognises 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 Governing body 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. Thirtyone:eight is the only independent safeguarding charity offering organisations a complete safeguarding solution.

The Leadership Team undertake 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.
- 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 of the church agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

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 to vulnerable people but if you are aware or witness or fail to protect someone and do not report it then that will increase the chances of the abuse continuing too. 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.

Definitions and further definitions and signs and symptoms of children:

- See Appendix 4 - Statutory Definitions of Abuse.
- See Appendix 5 - Signs of possible abuse (Children and Young People)
- See Appendix 6 - Statutory Definitions of Abuse (adults) .
- See Appendix 7- Signs of possible abuse (Adults)

Safer Recruitment

The Leadership Team or DSL will ensure all workers 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 and the panel was satisfied the principles were understood and any training needs were highlighted.
- Written references have been obtained and followed up where appropriate.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) for England and Wales or Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme for Scotland 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 will complete a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.
- Necessary background checks will be made on those applying to work from outside the UK with children/adults with care and support needs e.g., individuals have obtained 'fit person' checks from their home country as well as references from there.

Safeguarding Training

The Leadership Team 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 foundation induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training every 5 years.

The Leadership Team 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.

Supervision of Volunteers – Codes of Conduct

The Leadership Team is committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers/volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs. *See Appendix 1.*

Section 3

Practice Guidelines

As a church 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. The practise guidelines are found in Standard 5. of the Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding manual and includes information on bullying, first aid, ratios, outings and photography. The activities they cover include swimming, outings, residential holidays etc. Consent forms are always completed and are attached as *appendices 14 and 15*.

Reference to Standard 5 - Working Safely Guidance (attached below appendices)

- *See Appendix 8 – Praying with Children and Young People*
- *See Appendix 9 - Guidance on touch*

For guidelines for working with adults see guidance Standard 8 – Pastoral Care Guidance (attached below).

Working in Partnership with Churches

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 are affiliated to the Congregational Federation and we hold a Safeguarding certificate which is valid to May 2025.

This check covers:

- Premises e.g., Fire equipment and First Aid
- Practise e.g., risk assessment and security of the building
- Policy
- Safer recruitment

A nominated Safeguarding Checker visits the church and liaises with the DSL and National Safeguarding Officer of the CF to ensure agreed standards are maintained and a certificate to display on premise is presented. 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. The other ways in which we have promoted Safeguarding include: Displaying our Safeguarding Poster in the Fishtank and the manse and Childline posters in appropriate church rooms. The safeguarding policy is displayed in the church and is on the church website.

Section 4

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 and refer to flow charts for action if necessary:

See - Flowchart-for-action-children.pdf (attached below).

See - Flowchart-for-action-adults.pdf (attached below).

1. Document the concern

Use the example in Appendix 10 – Reporting a Concern Form

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

2. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the DSL:

Name: Chris Parsons

Tel: 07968237305

Email: christinelparsons30@gmail.com

The above is 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 Lead (DSL) or, if the suspicion in any way involves the DSL, then the report should be made to the Protection Verifier:

Name: Guy Cochran

Tel: 07891 898487

Email: gncochran@btinternet.com

If the suspicions implicate any of the above listed, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

The Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) telephone number is 0345 1551 071 (24hrs) or e-mail: mashsecure@devon.gov.uk giving as much detail as possible.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should contact the appropriate agency for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

Name of local authority: Devon County Council

Children's Social Care (Devon Children and Families Partnership):

Tel: 0345 1551 007

Website Address: <https://www.dcfp.org.uk/contact/>

Adult Social Care (Care Direct):

Tel: 0345 1551 007

Email: csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk

Website Address: <https://www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/>

Domestic Violence & Abuse:

Tel: 0345 155 1074

Email: admin@devonsplitz.org

Website: www.splitz.org

Victim Support:

Tel: 0808 168 9111

Email:

Website: <https://www.victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/>

<https://saferdevon.co.uk/>

Police Protection Team Tel: 101 or 999

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Tel: [01392 384964](tel:01392384964)

Email: childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Info and Notification

Form: [https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-](https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-protection/managing-allegations-against-adults-working-with-children)

[protection/managing-allegations-against-adults-working-with-children](https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-protection/managing-allegations-against-adults-working-with-children)

- The DSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern and whether there was any action to protect i.e., Suspension
 - I. Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- 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 lead, the absence of the Safeguarding lead should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

- The Pastor will support the Safeguarding lead 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 Pastor and Leadership team hope that members and staff of the church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding lead has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding lead 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 Team demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding lead 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 lead will:

- Contact MASH 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 MASH.
- 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 MASH direct for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding lead will:

- Contact MASH or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult needs 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 lead will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, 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 lead will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact 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 lead, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

- Liaise with Children's Social Services regarding 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 lead 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 5

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership Team 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 Crediton Congregational Church.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending Crediton Congregational Church is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Pastor / Leadership team or designated safeguarding lead 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, who they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. Refer to:

Appendix 11 - Sex Offenders and Church Attendance

Appendix 12 - Contracts and Agreements

Appendix 13 – Someone I care about may be a sex offender