



swindon  
**evangelical**  
church

Swindon Evangelical Church

Child Safeguarding Policy

September 2025

Registered Charity No. 1129912

---

## Contents

<b>1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFEGUARDING</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1 Summary of Groups & Activities.....	4
3.2 Group Membership .....	4
3.3 Contact with Parents and Guardians .....	4
3.4 Other Group Records .....	5
3.5 Health and Safety .....	5
3.6 Transport Arrangements.....	5
<b>4. RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE AND APPOINTMENT OF WORKERS</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Responsible People .....	6
4.2 Appointment & Vetting of Workers .....	6
4.3 Supervision and Training.....	6
<b>5. CONDUCT, COMMENTS AND CONSULTATION</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1 Behaviour & Conduct of Workers .....	7
5.2 Comments, Complaints & Consultation .....	9
<b>6. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES</b>	<b>10</b>
6.1 Definitions of Abuse & Recognising Abuse .....	10
6.2 Talking to children in cases of suspicion and allegation .....	10
6.3 Process after talking to a child.....	10
6.4 Procedures to be followed in the event of abuse being suspected or a disclosure .....	10
6.5 Procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made.....	10
6.6 Working with outside authorities.....	11
6.7 Confidentiality .....	11
6.8 Responding to infiltration .....	11
6.9 Commitment to provide pastoral care and support to everyone affected by an incident or allegation of abuse.....	11
6.10 Working with offenders .....	12
<b>APPENDIX A: LEADERS OF CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: APPLICATION &amp; DECLARATION FOR WORKERS WITH CHILDREN</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDIX D: Procedure to be followed in the event of disclosure or abuse being suspected</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>APPENDIX E: SAMPLE CLAUSES FOR AN OFFENDER’S CONTRACT</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>APPENDIX F: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM</b>	<b>22</b>

## **1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Swindon Evangelical Church seeks to instruct children and young people in God's Holy Word, the Bible, which contains wisdom to make them wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3: 15).

We regard each child (anyone under 18 years old) who attends the church and its groups as precious in the sight of God. We will endeavour to teach and explain the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a loving and gracious manner using Biblical methods, and to offer a variety of activities to stimulate their interest.

## **2. COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFEGUARDING**

We believe that nothing that causes harm to a child can ever be justified. The church is committed to comply with Government guidance on safeguarding and to provide, in so far as it is in our ability to do so, a safe environment for the children who attend the groups. When we work with partners/mission organisations we will ensure they have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.

Richard Foster, an Elder of the church, and Victoria Collins who is our DSL are committed to the needs of children who attend the church groups. Victoria will act as their advocate; report concerns of abuse to the statutory authorities and oversee implementation of this policy in the church.

Government statutory guidance on safeguarding, says "anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority children's social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so." (Reference: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>, September 2025).

### 3. CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1 Summary of Groups & Activities

The church aims to provide specific activities for children across all ages. The following is a summary of the activities organized on a regular basis or from time-to-time by the church:

Name of Activity	Age range	When?	Where?	Comments
Scramblers	Pre-school	Sun am + occasional	Church building	During morning service Occasionally at other meetings
Ladies Bible Study Crèche	Pre-school	Thurs am	Church building	During ladies Bible study
Stepping Stones	Pre-school	Wed am	Church building	Parents/guardians & pre-school group (parents/guardians are responsible for children)
Adventurers	3-7	Sun am	Church building	During morning service
Explorers	7-11	Sun am	Church building	During morning service
One-Way Club	4-11	Thurs pm	Church building	
Pathfinders	11-14	Thurs pm	Church building	Occasional trips, e.g. sports-centre
Ignite	11-14	Sun am	Church building	
Rooted!	14-18	Wed pm	Church building, or private homes	Occasional trips, e.g. sports-centre
Teen Girls Group	11-18	Fri pm	Church building	Once a term
Holiday Club	4-11	School holiday, week days am	Church building	One week, each year
Light Party	4-11	Annually around 31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Church Building	
Christmas Unwrapped	7-8 (yr 3)	Week days term-time late Nov / early Dec	Church Building & by exception local school	Annual events hosting local primary schools. Only occasionally delivered in the school
Easter Cracked	8-9 (yr 4)	Week days term time pre Easter	Church Building & by exception local school	Annual events hosting local primary schools. Only occasionally delivered in the school

#### 3.2 Group Membership

A child can join a group only with the consent of their parent or guardian. Membership of the group is at the discretion of the group leader(s) or Elders. Those wishing to join a group must contact the leader(s) and provide information on a consent form (see Appendix F), which will be kept confidential. Parents or guardians can view this information on request at an agreed time with the group leader(s). Parents will be asked to update the information regularly, at least once per year.

#### 3.3 Contact with Parents and Guardians

When a child first joins a group the parent or guardian should be given details of:

- the group’s activities;
- any rules that apply;
- group leader’s contact information (which can be via the church office).

Signed consent must be sought from parents or guardians for travel by minibus or coach and additional consent should be obtained for special events e.g. swimming or for weekends away. Parents should be informed of the arrangements well in advance, in writing on the church's headed paper or by electronic communication.

Parents and guardians may be invited to join a secure messaging application e.g. WhatsApp, but they must only be added with their consent, following the requirements in the church's Social Media Policy. Only group leaders should have admin rights to add or remove parents from the group, apart from parents themselves. There will be no direct social media contact between any group leader and child who attends the group (see 5.1.2).

Opportunities should be taken to build relationships with parents and guardians, which will help identify any specific problem areas.

Any home visits should involve two church personnel. The Elder with oversight of the group should be informed before the visit.

### **3.4 Other Group Records**

Attendance Register - a register will be kept on every occasion that a group meets, wherever the meeting takes place and will include group leaders and helpers.

Group Diary - group leaders should complete a diary of events for all occasions on which the group meets.

All documents will be held securely in line with GDPR policies.

### **3.5 Health and Safety**

All activities will be carried out with due regard to health and safety, as laid out in the church's Health and Safety Policy. This includes procedures for dealing with accidents and food hygiene.

Any accident or incident, however slight, must be recorded in the church's accident book and reported to the parent or guardian either verbally, or in critical situations in writing, and the signature of the parent or guardian obtained to confirm they have been informed.

### **3.6 Transport Arrangements**

Any transportation for children's groups must follow the Transport Policy of the church. In particular there should be two DBS checked adults in the vehicle; but under exceptional circumstances if this is not possible then one adult may be permitted and they should inform the DSL.

All drivers and assistants should have read this child protection policy and agree to be bound by it.

## **4. RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE AND APPOINTMENT OF WORKERS**

### **4.1 Responsible People**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Victoria Collins.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Chris Savageo.

The DSL will not be an Elder of the church.

The group leaders, Elders with oversight of each group and assisting Deacons are detailed in Appendix A and they can be contacted through the church office.

#### **4.2 Appointment & Vetting of Workers**

Those who are identified by the Elders or who volunteer to help in the groups must:

- a) be interviewed by the group leader and an Elder;
- b) be given a copy of this policy and made aware of the Code of Practice for DBS Disclosures;
- c) complete & return a declaration form (Appendix B) which includes referee details;
- d) have references taken up by the DSL and;
- e) if deemed suitable for the work by the DSL or DDSL be submitted for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. An existing DBS certificate may be accepted.

Group leaders must check with the DSL when they wish to appoint any new helpers.

The exception to the above procedure is if a person is asked to help for a one-off meeting or if they are under 18 years old. This person must be supervised at all times and must not be responsible for any children. If under 18 years old they must not be counted as an adult for any adult-to-child ratio that is required, but rather as a child.

New workers will have a probation period of six months, after which they will be reviewed by the group leader. This will normally take the form of a meeting where the worker can raise any problems or training requirements. The group leader will then decide if the worker continues in the group, but if there are any concerns then this will be discussed with the Elder.

Leaders of any group must be members of the church and have proved themselves to the Elders of the church as being capable of such leadership. Only in exceptional circumstances may a person become a leader if not a member. In this case they must agree with the church's Basis of Faith and may only be appointed for one year, after which their appointment must be reviewed.

DBS checks will be renewed every three years.

#### **4.3 Supervision and Training**

Each worker will be trained in Child Safeguarding. Suitable training will be arranged at least annually by the DSL or DDSL and a record kept of the training.

The leader for each group is responsible for explaining the role of the worker, any rules within the group and for supervising their work. Any training for the worker "on-the-job" will be supervised by the leader.

The Elder & Deacon responsible shall meet the leaders of each group at least annually to review the group's activities and the workers. Any training needs identified should be brought to the attention of the Elder and Deacon for them to arrange.

The leaders and workers of each group shall meet at least annually to plan activities and a programme. A copy of the programme and notes of the meeting should be given to the Elder and Deacon, as well as the workers in the group.

### **5. CONDUCT, COMMENTS AND CONSULTATION**

## 5.1 Behaviour & Conduct of Workers

All children and young people will be treated with respect and dignity befitting their age; workers being mindful of language and tone of voice. The following clauses are not comprehensive but provide guidance for workers which should be followed wherever possible.

### 5.1.1 Children in groups

- Ensure you have the correct adult to child ratio for the age group, with at least two leaders present, ideally a male and a female.
- Never leave a visitor alone with children.
- Ensure you prepare well before each session, taking into consideration the children who are likely to attend. Think of any learning or language difficulties or disabilities that a child may have and ensure they can take part.
- Seek to have a range of different activities so that you cater for different abilities (physical, mental and emotional) and learning preferences, e.g. some learn by hearing, some by doing, some by reading.
- Keep children busy with a full programme to avoid boredom and potential disruption. Have extra activities, such as games, quizzes or stories, in case your programmed activity finishes sooner than expected.
- If bullying is suspected then deal with it quickly and fairly. If necessary remove the bully from the group and speak to the parent/guardian as soon as possible.
- Peer-on-peer abuse, such as violence, sexual harassment and indecent imagery shared between children, will not be tolerated and if suspected take action by speaking to the parent/guardian and reporting to the DSL or deputy.
- Ensure you include the quiet and timid children and do not focus on the ones who always give an answer to your questions.
- Do not show favouritism and avoid making comments which may distinguish one child from the others.
- Do not allow children to gather in toilets in small groups. It is preferable to allow only one child to go to the toilet at any one time.

### 5.1.2 Social Media and Messaging Applications (refer to the church's Social Media Policy)

- Leaders and helpers must not communicate with children (under 18s) on social media or messaging applications.
- If a child initiates communication, the leader or helper must inform the parent/guardian and remove their account from the application.

### 5.1.3 Photographs and videos (refer to the church's Social Media Policy)

- No photographs or videos of children should be taken without parents' or guardians' permission and should only be used for display on church social media accounts or website, or on church premises, and never be uploaded or shared on personal social media accounts.
- Children should not be shown on livestream without the express permission of parents and guardians.

### 5.1.4 Alone with children

- Be extra vigilant if you need to spend time alone with children
- Keep everything in public as much as possible
- Be aware of the child who demands a lot of individual attention after a session. Create situations so that other children are at least in the background.
- Avoid seeing children in small confined areas which overstep the boundaries of appropriate social distance. Use rooms with glass in doors where possible.

If you have to spend time with a child, then:

- have another worker in the room with you, where appropriate, or
- choose a room with unobstructed internal windows, or
- leave the door open, or
- ensure there are people nearby who know what you are doing and, where possible, how long the session is likely to take.

#### 5.1.5 Toileting

- Children under six may need help using the toilet.
- Independence should be encouraged as much as possible, but if assistance is really necessary then this should be carried out by two adults, preferably of the same sex as the child.

#### 5.1.6 Touching

Be aware that touching can be misunderstood.

Examples of safe touching:

- when the activity requires it, such as in games, and when a number of different children are openly involved
- when safety demands it, such as with younger children
- brief sideways hugs or pats
- when a child is distressed and seeking comfort, the adult can give physical reassurance in view of others.

Examples when touching would be inappropriate:

- when alone with a child
- lingering touches or hugs face-to-face
- when a child has not made any approach to the adult

#### 5.1.7 Distressed child

- If a child comes to you in distress you will obviously offer him/her comfort. You should try to avoid any unnecessary physical contact but this will depend upon the age and needs of the child.
- If a child constantly comes to you for comfort, you must use your discretion to ensure that what is normal does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact over time.

#### 5.1.8 Restraining a child

- Where a child may be a danger to himself/herself, others, or property, it may be necessary to restrain him/her.
- Sometimes it is possible to do this using the voice, but minimum necessary force can be used.
- If possible seek or send for the help of another adult.
- An option could be to remove other children from the room to keep them safe and allow the child to calm down without restraint.
- Remain calm and try to help the child to calm down.
- Do not enlist the help of other children and avoid sudden movements.
- Whenever you have to restrain someone, the DSL should be informed without delay.

#### 5.1.9 Punishment

- Physical punishment is illegal and must never be used.
- Insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic language should not be used at any time.
- Avoid sending children out of the room without an adult.

### 5.2 Comments, Complaints & Consultation

If comments or complaints are made by a parent/guardian or interested person the church will take them seriously.

First, the leader of the group should deal with the comment or complaint and speak or write to the person making the comment or complaint.

If the person is not satisfied with the response of the leader then the Elder responsible for that group should be informed. The Elder will then contact the person to resolve the issues. The Elder will write to the person to confirm any actions taken as a result of their complaint.

#### For allegations of abuse see section 6.4

The church is committed to keep parents and guardians informed of what is going on in the groups and to give opportunity for comments and suggestions. We respect families and will listen carefully to the views of parents and guardians, particularly in relation to their children.

## 6. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

### 6.1 Definitions of Abuse & Recognising Abuse

Abuse can be caused by someone harming a child, or by someone failing to act to prevent harm. There are different kinds of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, criminal exploitation and extremism and radicalisation.

There are statutory definitions of abuse, which are detailed in Appendix C. This appendix also lists some indicators of abuse.

### 6.2 Talking to children in cases of suspicion and allegation

- Don't ask questions – instead listen carefully to them
- Don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. not telling anyone else

- Accept what you hear without passing judgement or investigating allegations
- Tell the child what you are going to do

### 6.3 Process after talking to a child

- Make careful notes (i.e. what was said and in what circumstances) as soon as possible, preferably within an hour using the reporting form in Appendix D.
- Include dates and times and keep notes safely.
- Contact the DSL or deputy IMMEDIATELY or, in their absence, take action yourself as detailed in 6.4 below, and send the reporting form to the DSL.. See Appendix D.

### 6.4 Procedures to be followed in the event of abuse being suspected or a disclosure

If physical, emotional abuse or neglect of a child is suspected contact the DSL or deputy immediately. Follow the procedure in **Appendix D**, particularly:

- If you are concerned a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the **Police on 999**.
- If sexual abuse is suspected or the child is in danger of significant harm if they return home or they are afraid to return home, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be contacted. Don't discuss with parents or guardians.
- They will start a case file (i.e. notes on what was said and seen, with names and dates).

Any telephone conversation with MASH should be followed up in writing. Ask for confirmation of receipt.

### Children and Families Contact Swindon

#### **MASH contact details:**

For non-emergencies:

Telephone **01793 464646** (during normal office hours, 8.30am to 4.40pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.00pm Friday). Out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) on **01793 436699**

**For emergencies telephone the police on 999**

### 6.5 Procedures to be followed in the event of allegations being made.

When an allegation of abuse is made against a child worker and the church is following up the allegation it must be remembered that the welfare of the child is paramount. The DSL or deputy should deal with the allegation by following the procedure below:

- Do not inform the worker until advice is sought from Children and Families Contact Swindon. Continue to seek advice from Contact Swindon throughout the procedure.
- The worker should be suspended from working with children, as a neutral act and;
- The worker should then be informed of allegations against them as soon as possible but with due regard to protecting evidence and disclosure of information.
- It is not up to the recipient of the allegation to determine its validity so it is not your job to judge if the allegation is true or not.
- All allegations should be treated in the same way, whether historical or current.

- An investigation against a worker may have three related, but independent strands:
  - (i) Child protection enquiries and reporting to local LADO, relating to the safety and welfare of any children who are or who may have been involved;
  - (ii) A police investigation into a possible offence against a child;
  - (iii) Disciplinary procedures by the church where it appears that the allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of the worker.
- Even if no legal action is taken, assess whether action is needed in relation to protecting children or worker discipline. Especially consider how the child and worker be kept separated, e.g. should the worker worship elsewhere whilst the investigation is taking place?
- An internal investigation should not normally take place while the police are investigating allegations. If the church wishes to take possible disciplinary action, agreement from the police must be sought beforehand.

### **6.6 Working with outside authorities**

The church is committed to working closely with outside authorities where appropriate including MASH, the police, the probation service, social services, health workers, headteachers and teachers.

### **6.7 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is very important for the child and the worker. Only the Elders of the church should be informed, apart from those directly involved (including the particular group leaders), whilst investigations are ongoing. If church discipline is required the members of the church should only be told of the general nature of the offence, not the details. All leaders of children's groups should be told of an offender's boundaries but not the detail of any offence.

### **6.8 Responding to infiltration**

To further guard against putting children at risk in the church, any worker or member of the congregation should inform the DSL, or deputy, of any suspicious behaviour immediately. The DSL or deputy will:

- arrange a meeting with the suspected person and another leader to discuss the behaviour
- if abuse is suspected after meeting the person follow the procedure in section 6.4
- if no abuse is suspected, but the person is thought to be a risk follow section 6.10
- if in doubt, contact the police for advice.

Abusers and paedophiles can be manipulative and can lack understanding of normal social or moral boundaries. The DSL must exercise caution and discernment.

### **6.9 Commitment to provide pastoral care and support to everyone affected by an incident or allegation of abuse**

The church will provide pastoral care and support for both victims and suspects of abuse, and their families. In no way must pastoral care for a suspect of abuse be seen as collusion, therefore the appropriate authorities should be informed that pastoral care is being given. If the victim and suspect both belong to the church then different people will provide support; and if allegations are proven to be true then, with liaison with police, the offender should be barred from attending church meetings.

### **6.10 Working with offenders**

If the church is told or finds out that a sex offender or paedophile starts to attend any church meeting they will be monitored and supported by an Elder or someone appointed by an Elder. The person supporting the offender will themselves be supported by an Elder. The person supporting the offender will need to:

- Challenge risky or wrong behavior;
- Not allow themselves to be manipulated and;
- Be relied upon to be supportive to help maintain the offender's self-control.

Behavioural boundaries will need to be explained to the offender. These boundaries will protect children but also help the offender to feel secure and at less risk of false accusations. The boundaries will be set out in the form of a contract that the offender and an Elder sign (see Appendix E) and will include the following:

- An offender will not be allowed to get close to children (physically or emotionally).
- An offender will never be allowed to work with children.
- They will not sit in the vicinity of children at church or attend house group meetings where there are children.
- They will not hold positions of leadership because a child is likely to regard a leader as someone they can trust.
- They will not be allowed to preach or teach.

An offender may be subject to a supervision plan by the police or probation service. The church will work closely with the police and probation service in this case.

The church will inform the police of the initial contact with the person, even if there is no supervision plan.

The Elders of the church may decide it is not appropriate that the person attends any church activities and the police will be informed of the decision.

**APPENDIX A: LEADERS OF CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

<b>Name of Activity</b>	<b>Leaders</b>	<b>Elder</b>	<b>Deacon</b>
Scramblers	Ben & Laura Shephard	Richard Foster	John Baker
Ladies Bible Study Crèche	Emma Mann	Richard Foster	John Baker
Stepping Stones	Rosemary Foster	Mark Trafford	John Baker
Adventurers	Beth Parmenter & Chloe Baker	Richard Foster	John Baker
Explorers	Helen Redhead	Richard Foster	John Baker
One-Way Club	Emma Mann & Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Pathfinders	John Baker	Richard Foster	John Baker
Ignite	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Rooted!	Jeremy & Noémie Foster	Richard Foster	John Baker
Teen Girls Group	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Holiday Club	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Light Party	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Easter Cracked	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker
Christmas Unwrapped	Helen Jackson	Richard Foster	John Baker

**APPENDIX B: APPLICATION & DECLARATION FOR WORKERS WITH CHILDREN**

**All information will be kept in strictest confidence in accordance with GDPR policies**

Full name of applicant: .....

Previous or other names: .....

Date of birth: ..... Email: .....

Address: .....

Address if different within last 2 years: .....  
.....Phone no.: .....

Referee (name, relationship e.g. employer (not a relative), contact details):  
.....

Experience of working with children: .....

Group to join/ position: .....Date starting: .....

I confirm that I am not barred from working with children / vulnerable adults.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Do you have any unspent convictions; or are you at present the subject of a criminal investigation or pending prosecution? **Yes / No**  
If yes, please provide details on a separate sheet and attach it to this sheet on return (include dates and nature of offence or order).

Have you ever been the subject of a police investigation that didn't lead to a criminal conviction (and is not subject to DBS filtering rules)? **Yes / No** If yes, please give details.

To your knowledge have you ever had any allegation made against you, which has been reported to, and investigated by, Social Services/Social Work Department (Children's or Adult Social Care)?  
**Yes / No** If yes, please provide details.

Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding your conduct with children, young people or vulnerable adults?  
Please include any disciplinary action taken by an employer in relation to your behaviour with adults.  
**Yes / No** If yes, please provide details.

**DECLARATION**

I consent to a criminal records check. I am aware that details of pending prosecutions, previous convictions, cautions, or bindovers against me may be disclosed along with any other relevant information which may be known to the police.

I agree to inform the person within the church responsible for processing disclosure applications if I am convicted of an offence after I take up any post within the church. I understand that failure to do so may lead to the immediate suspension of my work with children or vulnerable adults and/or the termination of my employment.

I agree to inform the person within the church responsible for processing disclosure applications if I become the subject of a police and/or a social services/Social Work Department investigation. I understand that failure to do so may lead to the immediate suspension of my work with children or vulnerable adults and/or the termination of my employment.

I have read and understood Swindon Evangelical Church's Child Safeguarding Policy.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

### Definitions

The following definitions of abuse recognised in England are defined in the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023).'

#### **Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child..

#### **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. whizz

#### **Neglect**

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
  - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
-

- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including a) physical or sexual abuse; b) violent or threatening behaviour; c) controlling or coercive behaviour; d) economic abuse; and e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse. Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members.

All children can experience and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children. Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children (0 to 18), as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of domestic abuse (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

### **Criminal Exploitation**

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### **Indicators**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in 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\*

---

### **Emotional**

Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.

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

### **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\*

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

### **Neglect**

Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food

Untreated illnesses

Inadequate care, etc

### **Domestic**

In addition to the above indicators:

Children may be living in fear of one or both parents

They may be scared to tell anyone about their abuse for fear of what may happen to them or their parent.

They may try to maintain secrecy about their situation, becoming isolated as a result.

### **Criminal Exploitation**

Control, coercion, intimidation, threats of violence, and violence

Associating with other children involved in exploitation

Suffering from changes in emotional well-being and/or behaviour

Misuse of drugs and alcohol

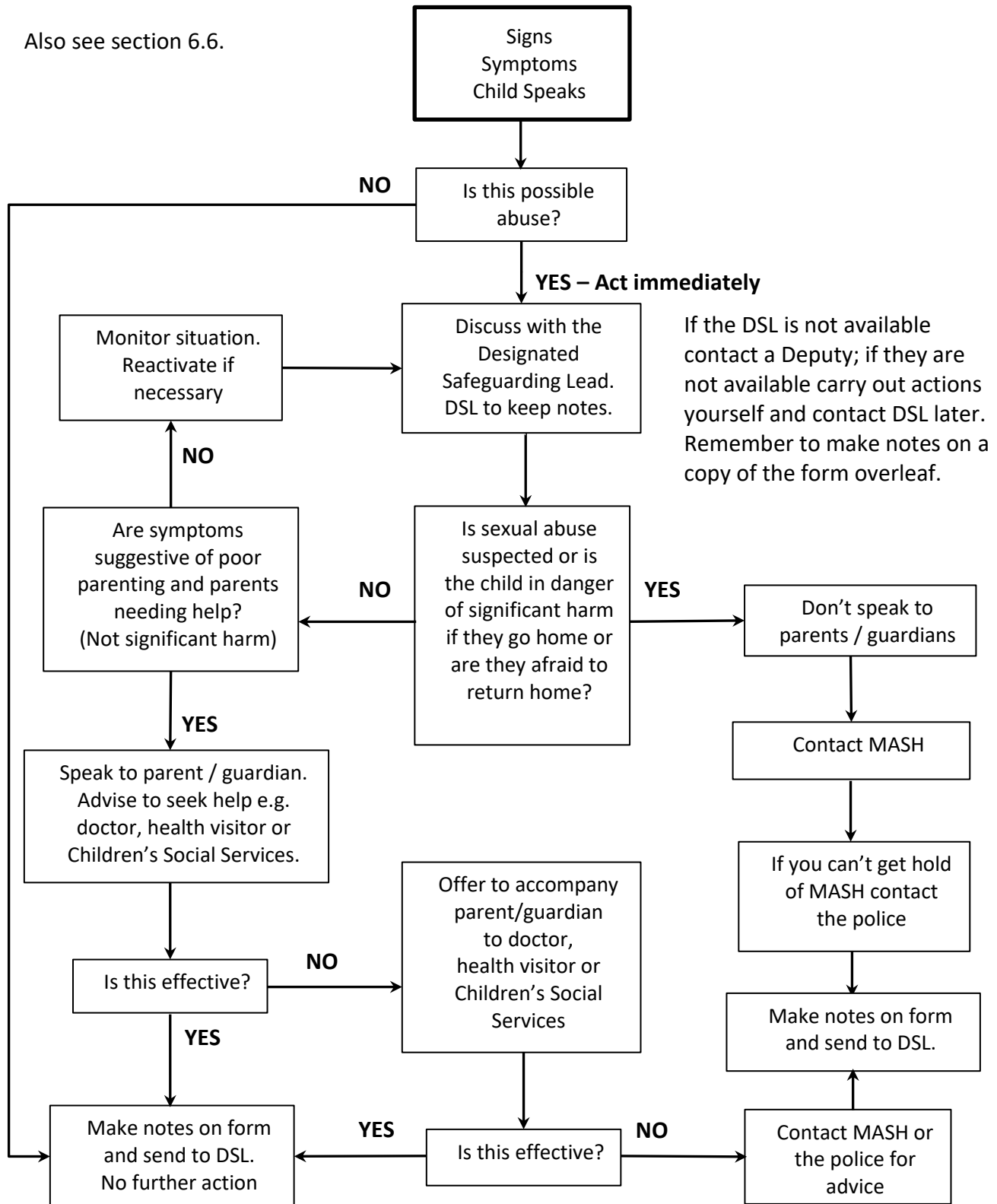
Appearing with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions

Going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late

Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

**APPENDIX D: Procedure to be followed in the event of disclosure or abuse being suspected**

Also see section 6.6.



**MASH** - Telephone: **01793 464646** Mon to Thurs 8.30am–4.30pm and Fridays 8.30am – 4pm.  
Out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) on **01793 436699**

**For emergencies call the police on 999**

See form overleaf for recording notes. Send the form to the DSL.

About this form and the person completing it:			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed
About the person or people we are concerned about or involved in the incident (If an allegation, the details of the person making the allegation):			
Their name(s)	Their address	Their date of birth	Incident or disclosure or concern?
If an allegation, details of the person accused:			
Please provide as much information as possible or necessary to identify them:			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern:			
What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?			
Context of the incident / disclosure / concern:			
Date of incident / disclosure		Time of incident / disclosure	
Where / when / who else was present etc.			
Immediate action taken to ensure immediate safety			
Other action taken or advice sought			
Signature		Return the form to Vicky Collins, Richard Foster or Chris Savage	
Actions taken by Safeguarding Officers:		Signature	Date



--	--	--

## APPENDIX E: SAMPLE CLAUSES FOR AN OFFENDER'S CONTRACT

### Boundaries

I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

I will attend meetings and activities as directed by the leadership.

I will sit where directed at activities (e.g. meetings, social gatherings) and will not place myself near children, young people and vulnerable adults.

I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, nor any area where activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults are in progress.

I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children, young people or vulnerable adults in the home.

I accept that "x" and "y" will sit with me during activities (e.g. meetings, social gatherings) and accompany me when I need to use other facilities. They will know I am a sex offender.

I accept there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children, young people or vulnerable adults for whom they care.

I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with leaders as and when necessary (where appropriate).

I accept that "z" will provide me with pastoral care.

I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, I may be barred from attending activities. In such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (e.g. police, probation, Adult Services, Children's Social Services), and any other relevant organisations, as well as members of the Christian community.

I understand that any other concerns will be taken seriously and reported.

I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every \_\_\_\_\_ months and will remain for an indefinite period.

### Pastoral care

'X' and 'Y' and 'Z' have agreed to provide you with pastoral care and support; as part of that undertaking, they and the leadership of the organisation agree to:

- Support you in finding a suitable employment opportunity which will not bring you into contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- Support you in seeking any specialist help e.g. attendance on any Sex Offender Treatment Programmes, drug or alcohol or psychiatric rehabilitation or any counselling appointments.
- Liaise with any previous Places of Worship you have attended, with the Prison Chaplaincy Team, or any other organisation you have worked with prior to joining us.
- Work closely as a place of worship / organisation with any statutory authorities with responsibility for you, such as your probation officer, police public protection team or children's social services, cooperating with them in helping and supporting you.
- Where appropriate, ask for any risk assessment in order to determine how best we can meet your needs while protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- Attempt to meet any practical needs you may have, including assisting with options for accommodation.
- Support you in joining Circles of Support or any other similar programme.
- Provide pastoral care and support to anyone with whom you are living with. We recognise that partners of known sex offenders need pastoral care, and 'space' to share without judgment.
- Be there for you and will support you.

Contract to be signed by the offender and an Elder of the church.

---

**APPENDIX F: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM**

(Adapt for specific group and put on headed letter. Alternatively point parents/guardians to the online form to register their child at <https://swindon.church/Children>)

**CHILDREN'S GROUPS CONTACT FORM**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any medical conditions we need to be aware of? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any allergies or dietary requirements we need to be aware of? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any learning or behavioural needs we need to be aware of? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you happy for your mobile number to be added to a WhatsApp group? (Only some groups have a parental WhatsApp group)      YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_

We sometimes take photographs of the different children's and youth groups to educate and inform the church and the community about what the groups are doing. The photographs could be used for presentational purposes, for example, shown in a church meeting, on the church website, or for the church OWC Facebook page. Photographs will not be passed on to any other organisations (unless for any reason we are legally obliged to share them with relevant authorities). Please tick to confirm:

- I give permission for Swindon Evangelical Church to use photographs of my child/children for presentational purposes within the church
- I give permission for Swindon Evangelical Church to use photographs of my child/children on their website
- I give permission for Swindon Evangelical Church to use photographs of my child/children on their OWC Facebook page

Please tick which groups your child will attend:\*

- Scramblers
- Adventurers
- Explorers
- Ignite
- Ladies Bible Study Crèche
- One Way Club
- Pathfinders
- Rooted
- Teen Girls Group

Please read our privacy notice about how your personal information will be used and stored:

[www.swindon.church/privacy](http://www.swindon.church/privacy)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

---