



Swindon
evangelical
church

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Registered Charity Number 1129912

Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6.33

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

V 2.0

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Elders: Mark Trafford, Richard Foster, Jonathan Redhead

In partnership with the FIEC and
the South West Gospel Partnership





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VERSION	DATE	NOTES	NAME
v 0.1		Document created	Paula James
v 0.2		First draft feedback from xxx	Paula James
v 0.3	September 2024	Approved by Trustees	Paula James
v 1.0	October 2024	Safeguarding Lead & Deputy contact information updated.	Katie Gurr
v 2.0	April 2026	Changes implemented	Vicky Collins



1. Introduction:

At Swindon Evangelical Church (SWEC) we are committed to creating a safe and secure environment for all individuals who participate in our activities and services, including adults who may have vulnerabilities.

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding any action.

This policy is designed to outline our commitment to the protection and well-being of adults with care and support needs and who may be at risk of abuse, as well as to provide guidance on the prevention and response to any form of abuse. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for everyone in our community for when the abuse of an adult at risk is suspected, disclosed, or discovered.

The church does not provide any activities specifically for adults 'at risk of abuse'. However, we recognise that during the course of our ministry we may come into contact with vulnerable people.

**NB: The main leader of a religious institution is automatically engaged in regulated activity and should always have an enhanced DBS check.*

2. Definition of Adults at Risk:

The Care Act and its guidance states that an "adult at risk" is:

An adult who has needs for care and support, is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

People with care and support needs could be: older people, people with physical or learning disabilities, people experiencing mental health difficulties, brain injury, communication difficulties or cognitive impairment.

Adults with care and support needs, may be seen as an easy target and may be less likely to identify abuse themselves or to report it. Sometimes people may not even be aware that they are being abused.

In this policy, adults are considered to be individuals aged 18 and above.





3. Key Principles for Safeguarding Adults at SWEC:

3.1 Respect: All individuals, regardless of their abilities or circumstances, will be treated with dignity, respect, and kindness.

3.2 Prevention: We are committed to preventing abuse by promoting a culture of openness, awareness, and vigilance.

3.3 Reporting: Anyone who has concerns about an adult or suspects, or has knowledge of, abuse is required to report it promptly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), their nominated deputy or the appropriate authorities. Appendix A of this policy gives examples of abuse, harm and exploitation that adults may be vulnerable to.

3.4 Confidentiality: Information regarding concerns or allegations will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, shared only with those who need to know for the purpose of safeguarding.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- The DSL is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this safeguarding policy. Details of who holds this role can be found at the end of this document. The DSL's contact details are also displayed on noticeboards in the church buildings, to ensure that if people attending church have concerns, they will know who to contact. The DSL will receive and manage all concerns or allegations of abuse.
- The DSL will maintain up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and any relevant regulations or guidance related to such issues.
- The DSL will liaise with external safeguarding agencies and authorities as needed (see section 9 for contact details).

4.2. Deputy DSL:

In the absence of, in the event of an allegation being made against the DSL or under the specific direction, of the DSL, the Deputy DDSL assumes the responsibilities of the DSL excluding accountability for overseeing the implementation of this policy which remains the remit of the DSL. Details of who holds this role can be found at the end of this document as well as displayed on noticeboards in the church buildings.





4.3. Leadership and Volunteers:

- All leaders, volunteers, and staff working directly with adults at risk must undergo appropriate training in safeguarding.
- Although any individuals within the church can report concerns or suspicions of abuse to the DSL, leaders and volunteers are **required** to report any concerns or suspicions that they may have.
- As far as possible, activities involving adults at risk should be planned with consideration of individual needs, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment.

4.4. Pastoral Care:

- Those providing pastoral care must be mindful of the well-being of adults with care and support needs who may be at risk and are required to report concerns to the DSL promptly.
- Pastoral care providers should establish open communication with adults with care and support needs to ensure their needs are understood and met. Where necessary this will be done in conjunction with any person nominated to speak on their behalf (e.g. a member of their family or person with Power of Attorney).

5. Training and Awareness:

Safeguarding is everybody's business; We will provide regular training for all staff, Elders, Deacons and volunteers involved in activities with adults with care and support needs. This training will cover topics such as recognising what abuse is, signs of abuse, appropriate behaviour, and reporting procedures.

6. Safer Recruitment:

The church will ensure that the main leader(s) of groups that work with adults with care and support needs are DBS checked in accordance with national guidance.

Although the church does not engage in regulated activity with adults, reasonable and proportionate assessment of the suitability and competence of staff and volunteers will be made and decisions recorded. The church will provide training for formal roles where required (see section 5 of this policy).





7. Reporting Procedure:

Any concerns or suspicions of abuse should be reported to the DSL (or their nominated deputy) immediately. The reporting procedure includes the following steps:

7.1. Immediate Action: If abuse is suspected, steps should be taken to ensure the immediate safety and well-being of the vulnerable adult. Where there is immediate risk to an individual consider calling the Police on 999.

7.2. Reporting to DSL: The person suspecting or witnessing abuse should report the incident to the DSL, providing as much detail as possible.

7.3. Record-Keeping: The DSL will keep records of all concerns, actions taken, and communications related to safeguarding matters.

7.4. Raising a Safeguarding concern: Where the DSL or Deputy DSL identifies that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of abuse, they will raise a safeguarding concern with the Local Authority. Prior to this, there should be discussion with the person to gain consent to raise the concern. There may be circumstances where the safety of the adult or yourself prevent this from happening. If in doubt, continue with the process and raise a safeguarding concern.

8. Review and Revision:

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently as needed, to ensure it remains effective and compliant with current guidance and/or relevant legislation. Any changes will be agreed with the DSL and ratified by the Trustees of SWEC.

9. Contact Information:

For safeguarding concerns, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead: Vicky Collins vicky@swec.org.uk 07791 839917.

The Deputy DSL is: Chris Savage chris@swec.org.uk 07761 967644.

The following external agencies will be contacted by the DSL / deputy DSL as appropriate:





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Swindon Borough Council Adult Safeguarding:

01793 463555

[Report a safeguarding concern about an adult at risk of, or experiencing, harm | Swindon Borough Council](#)

Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Service:

01793 610610

Depending on the nature of the situation, **after** you have notified the Adult Safeguarding Team at Swindon Borough Council (SBC) you may also wish to contact the Office of the Public Guardian for concerns you have raised to SBC about:

- a registered lasting power of attorney
- a registered enduring power of attorney
- a deputy appointed by the Court of Protection
- a guardian for someone who is missing

The concern could be about, for example, the misuse of money or decisions that are not in the best interests of the person they're responsible for.

For more information on how to raise your concern visit www.gov.uk/report-concern-about-attorney-deputy-guardian





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10. VERSION CONTROL:

This policy was first adopted in September 2024.

This policy was last reviewed on: n/a version 1.

This policy should be reviewed annually. The next review is due: September 2025.

Changes since last version: n/a

Policy Approver: Trustees of Swindon Evangelical Church

Policy Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead of Swindon Evangelical Church.

Sources used for compiling the first version of this Policy included:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

<https://churchgrowth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Safeguarding-and-churches-December-2018.pdf>

The template for a Safeguarding Policy available on fiec.org.uk



APPENDIX A - examples of abuse, harm or exploitation.

The Care Act gives guidelines on the types of abuse associated with adults;

Physical abuse is to inflict pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Examples include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, hair pulling, misuse, or using inappropriate restraint or sanctions and the misuse of medication.

Sexual abuse is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented, or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent. It may occur where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses it to override or overcome lack of consent or to which they felt pressurised into consenting such as rape, or sexual assault. This can also involve non-contact activity such being made to watch pornography or sharing of inappropriate imagery

Domestic Abuse Includes physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse for those in family or close relationships as well as so called 'honour' based violence.

Psychological or emotional abuse is acts or behaviour which causes mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult's emotional health and development - or any other form of mental cruelty. This includes verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, blaming, the use of threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, or being prevented from receiving services or support.

Financial or material abuse is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions including theft, fraud, exploitation, applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Discriminatory abuse is the inappropriate treatment of an adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability.

Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individual.



Organisational abuse includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice, or ill treatment.

Neglect or acts of omission are the repeated deprivation of help that an adult-needs which, if withdrawn, will cause them to suffer. This includes failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult, or to others.

Self-Neglect includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviour such as hoarding

In addition to the categories of abuse set out in The Care Act within church settings there is also the potential for:

Spiritual or Religious Manipulation: Some individuals may exploit vulnerable adults by using their position within the church to exert undue influence, claiming special spiritual insight or authority.





Appendix B: Definitions

Abuse

Abuse is a general term that is used to cover a wide range of harm caused to people. It always involves a violation of the person's rights. It can take various forms as described in Appendix A of this policy.

Adult at risk of abuse (sometimes referred to as adult in need of protection)

These are adults who have care and support needs, however, in addition, they are at risk of abuse, and because of their support needs, are unable to protect themselves.

Since these adults are unable to protect themselves there is a legal duty to protect them.

The church does not provide any activities specifically for adults at risk of abuse. However, we recognise that during the course of our ministry we may come into contact with vulnerable people.

Adult with care and support needs

An adult who requires help or support with basic and essential day-to-day tasks such as:

- Getting up, washing, or dressing
- Cooking meals
- Cleaning the house
- Shopping
- Managing their finances
- etc.

Adults with care and support needs have the right to choose whether they want support or not.

Allegation (against a member of staff of volunteer)

An allegation is a claim that a person who has a role that provides access to a vulnerable person has used their position to exploit, abuse, or otherwise harm the person they should have been caring for.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Frequently abbreviated to DSL, this is the person appointed by the church to take responsibility for many aspects of safeguarding, including, receiving safeguarding concerns from staff or volunteers, and passing them on to the relevant authorities where their threshold is met.

Neglect

Neglect is one of the categories of abuse that is characterised by the failure to provide the basic necessities for life where there is a responsibility to do so.





Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a broad range of activities that range from the general duty of care that we have for everyone who comes into contact with the charity, through early intervention and targeted support to protection from significant harm. It relates to both children and adults, but this policy is concerned with safeguarding the adults in our church.

Spiritual Abuse

This term has become widely used, although remains ill-defined and is not a legally recognised category of abuse. We understand this to be a term referring to emotional, psychological or spiritual harm caused within the context of a religious community, often, but not always involving the misuse of power, authority, position or scripture to manipulate, control and abuse others. This policy does not refer specifically to the different categories of abuse since it covers all forms of abuse and harm.

Vulnerable adults

This term is only used as a generic term. It is no longer used as a technical descriptor for a specific group of people. A vulnerable adult is less able to protect themselves and meet their own needs than an adult who has no vulnerabilities.

