



## **Cornerstone Collective of Churches Safeguarding Policy**

### **Section 1 - Details of the place of worship / organisation**

**Name:** Cornerstone Collective of Churches

Includes Cornerstone Church Liverpool, Cornerstone Church Wirral, Liberti Church Lark Lane and Rooted Church South Wirral.

**Address:** Cornerstone Collective of Churches, Ramilies Road Chapel Building, Ramilies Road Liverpool L18 1ED

**Tel No:** 0151 345 8558

**Email address:**

[info@cornerstonechurchliverpool.org](mailto:info@cornerstonechurchliverpool.org) / [info@cornerstonechurchwirral.org](mailto:info@cornerstonechurchwirral.org)

**Membership of Denomination/Organisation:** Independent Local Church and member of the FIEC

**Charity Number:** 1152099

**Company Number:** 8133846

**Regulators details (if any):** N/A

### **The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children / vulnerable adults:**

Cornerstone Collective of Churches is a number of independent local evangelical Churches planted from the former Open Brethren church at Ramilies Road in Liverpool. The church is Elder led, with a number of them paid as full time Preachers and Pastors (although all of the elders have a pastoral role) who are answerable to the Elders and the Trustees of the Collective of Churches. The Elders are the governing body for delivery of worship and responsible for ensuring the Church remains doctrinally correct. The Trustees lease them the premises and provide legal and charitable governance.

We presently offer Sunday services for the whole church family with a Creche Group and Kids Church Groups – (formerly Sunday School with children withdrawn from the family service for a children’s age appropriate lesson). Teenagers remain in the main service where we celebrate communion and preach and teach the Gospel in accordance with our statement of faith. Outside of the events taking place on Sundays, there is a weekly (term time) adult and toddler group in the Liverpool and Wirral churches, groups for men and women and occasionally a drop in coffee morning. We also meet in smaller gatherings as Gospel Communities during the week in homes of people who attend our churches. Our aim is to grow through outreach and evangelisation of the local communities and to plant new churches, which will include the development of further activities for adults, youth and young children.

### **Our commitment:**

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

As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.

- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 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 vulnerable adults.
- respond appropriately to any alleged instances of abuse, linking with the appropriate local authority Safeguarding Board

### **Understanding abuse and neglect:**

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

In addition and relating to adults, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 states:

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

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

Definitions of abuse: See Appendices

Signs and symptoms of abuse: See Appendices

How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse: See Appendices

### **Safeguarding awareness:**

The Leadership is committed to ensuring on-going awareness of safeguarding and will develop training opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and vulnerable adults 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.

### **Responding to allegations of abuse:**

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

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Alan Taylor (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") tel no:0151 722 8480 or 07809 042 104, who 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 where necessary.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:
  - o Liverpool deputy Emily Wingfield or Steven Robinson (07966 793 766) or Paul Elms (07789 630 364)
  - o Wirral deputy Anna Robinson or Joshua Walsh (07912 304 496) or Matthew Newberry (07912482754)
- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and / or the deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to the thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 03030031111. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from CCPAS as above.

- The local Children's Services office telephone number Liverpool City Council (office hours) is 0151 233 3700.
  - The out of hours emergency number is 0151 233 3700
  - The local Children's Services office telephone number Wirral Council (office hours) is 0151 606 2008.
  - The out of hours emergency number is 0151 677 6557
  - The local Adult Services office telephone number Liverpool City Council (office hours) is 0151 233 3800.
  - The out of hours emergency number is 0151 233 3800
  - The local Adult Services office telephone number Wirral Council (office hours) is 0151 514 2222.
  - The out of hours emergency number is 0151 677 6557
  - The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 0151 709 6010.
- Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company and other strategic personnel within the Collective
  - Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
  - Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from CCPAS.
  - The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy 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 CCPAS, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to

effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy 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:**

#### **Allegation of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse**

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

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

#### **Allegations of Sexual Abuse**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

- Seek and follow the advice given by CCPAS if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

**The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:**

**Suspensions or allegations of physical or sexual abuse:**

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively CCPAS can be contacted for advice.

**Allegations of abuse against a person who works with Children"**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **Section 3 - Prevention**

### **Safe recruitment:**

The Leadership will ensure all workers are vetted in accordance with the rules presently in place:

- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained with enquires about their character and suitability for the position,, and followed up where appropriate
- A criminal records disclosure has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information). This will involve the carrying out of DBS checks on all those for whom they are required.
- Qualifications, where relevant, have been verified
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

### **Management of Workers:**

#### **Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision.

## **Section 4 - Pastoral Care**

### **Supporting those affected by abuse:**

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

### **Working with offenders:**

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.



## **Section 5 - Practice Guidelines**

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults 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 accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also wish to have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these will be developed.

### **Working in Partnership**

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse. We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own policy that meets CCPAS' safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding; for those we wish to protect, for everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and for all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

**Signed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

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