

Safeguarding Policy – Hope Community Church Manchester

Last Updated July 2023

1. Definitions and abbreviations

- The term “Safeguarding” in this policy refers to effective management of risk to children and/or vulnerable adults within the context of our church gatherings and outreach.
- The term “Child” in this policy refers to someone under the age of 16 years of age.
- The term “Vulnerable adult” in this policy refers to someone who is 18 years or above, but who due to physical difficulties, needs help with personal care, or who otherwise may lack capacity around consent and general decision making.
- “SG” is the abbreviation for Safeguarding.
- “VA” is the abbreviation used for Vulnerable Adults.
- “HopeCC” is the abbreviation for Hope Community Church Manchester.

2. Safeguarding Principles to Guide all practice within our Church Activities

- Paramountcy Principle – the safety and wellbeing of a child connected to HopeCC activities is more important than any other priority within our Safeguarding policy and practice. That includes any concerns related to GDPR or requests for confidentiality from individuals.
- Clear Reporting System – use of Incident Report Form in the event of an incident or disclosure related to SG of VA’s and/or children.
- Mutual Accountability – this includes within our meetings indoors, use of communal spaces and any transporting of children and/or VA’s.

3. Who’s Who in Safeguarding at HopeCC?

- Liz Askew is the Church SG lead.
- Trustees review SG as a standing item at annual meetings.
- HopeCC is registered with the 31:8 Network which provides SG resources periodically.

4. Control Measures

- Sundays – we do *not* have a separate Sunday School or creche space, but rather babies are with their parents/guardians throughout the meeting, and children of Primary age are invited to sit at a Sunday School table which is at the back of the same space as the rest of the congregation. In both cases the parent/guardian is *in loco parentis* throughout, thus minimizing the risk of harm to children, but also the risk of false and malicious accusations against representatives of HopeCC.
- Kids Work – If we decide to create a separate space for work with babies or children, we will take all candidate volunteers through a DBS process prior to them starting volunteering in such a capacity, and we will also apply all legal SG ratios of adult to child. We will also submit these proposed arrangements before our Trustees and request written sign off prior to starting such separate activities.

- Mid-Week and other activities – these are designed to minimize risk of harm to children or VA's, and to maximise visibility of our activities within the community, where appropriate. This includes:
 - Mid-week Bible Studies which usually take place over Zoom with people aged 16 and above or accompanied by a parent/guardian.
 - Prayer walking and Evangelism outside in the community
 - Mentoring Meetings held in shared and highly visible places like coffee shops with people aged 16 and above.
- Transport – consent forms to be used at all times when transporting any young people for a youth event at which their parent is not present; 2 adults to be in such a vehicle for the duration, for mutual accountability.
- Personal Care – We are not involved in the type of volunteer work which involves helping VA's with personal care.

5. **Proposed Actions**

- Peter Askew to re-develop our Incident Report Form
- Peter Askew to ensure we have a portable Poster which we take with us to our main church gatherings, with Contact details, and basic information related to SG.
- Peter Askew to research refresher online SG training for Liz Askew.

Drafted by Peter Askew 02/07/2023

Reviewed by Liz Askew, SG Lead for HopeCC 02/07/2023

Submitted to HopeCC Trustees DD/MM/YYYY

Approved by HopeCC Trustees DD/MM/YYYY

Deadline for policy review: DD/MM/YYYY *

*Or sooner in the case of an incident, near miss, or disclosure