

Safeguarding at Life Church

We are committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for everyone who visits and attends our meetings. In particular we take safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults seriously.

As a leadership team we have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Person to oversee the administration of policy and good practice, ensuring that all volunteer/workers have been DBS checked where necessary. Anyone wishing to volunteer with children, youth or vulnerable adults will be asked to complete an application form and provide references. Safeguarding training is compulsory when working with these groups. All leadership positions and visible roles in the church complete full checks and commit to attend regular training.

We also have a responsibility to our congregations and visitors to provide resources for people to take away information on a variety of issues connected to recognising the different forms of abuse and how to help in those circumstances. Leaflets are available on the Information Desk and we hope you will find them helpful. We all need to work together to ensure children and vulnerable adults are as safe as possible.

Finally we would like you to contact someone if you have any concerns about a child or adult that you think might be suffering from signs of abuse, neglect etc. If you do have a concern please talk to someone on our leadership team, or Tori Morgan. Who to contact and how are on the back of this leaflet.

If you would like to read the full Child Protection policy document, please ask for a copy.

Life Church Southampton is committed to keeping the welfare of any child or vulnerable adult, who is involved with our activities paramount. We want to ensure that they are valued, listened to and respected.

All children and vulnerable adults, whatever their sex, disability, racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs or sexual orientation, have a right to be in a safe and caring environment when participating in any activities run by Life Church.

Definitions

We consider any individual aged *under 18 to be a child* for the purposes of our Child Protection policy and we have produced policies, practices and guidelines for our staff and volunteers to follow when working with children.

We consider any individual aged *over 18 and coping with any of the following issues to be a vulnerable adult* and covered by our Safeguarding policy.

Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. They may rely on other people to support their day to day living, or require ongoing support emotionally and pastorally. This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless

Our Commitment to the welfare of the vulnerable:

We promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults participating in our activities by:

- following appropriate procedures when recruiting and selecting new staff or volunteers;
- providing training to all who work with us so that they are clear about their responsibilities;
- ensuring that any concerns of possible abuse are referred appropriately and co-operating with the work of statutory agencies as necessary;

- structuring our programmes to help both children and vulnerable adults to protect themselves and understand the importance of protecting others;
- identifying and implementing good practice in relation to the care, protection and welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

Your responsibilities:

Everyone attending Life Church, including its trustees, employees, and volunteers, are responsible for ensuring that any child or vulnerable adult is safe.

As parents or carers looking after the young or vulnerable we can become more informed and aware of what the risks might be to our children or vulnerable adults whilst at church activities.

We would ask you to work with us by watching out for children when they are in-between activities and moving around the building. We can be very trusting of the people who are in our meetings and activities but not everyone who visits may always be safe. Coffee time and any end of service ministry time can be when you need to watch your children the most.

We would also ask that you inform yourselves of what the dangers or potential risks might be, not just at church. These can be areas such as chat room use, perhaps financial abuse of vulnerable adults, and how you might inform and help those whom you are responsible for and care for. Violence within the home (domestic violence and abuse) is also a frightening and damaging situation for anyone experiencing it and we have information and support available for anyone who is experiencing that from a person they live with. Please do talk to us if you would like help exploring your options.

It is important that we teach children and vulnerable adults how they can keep themselves safe. We have information available in the church office to take away should you want to do this. We will endeavour to empower children, young people

and vulnerable adults who attend our activities, with opportunities and space to listen to their needs and wishes. We will seek their views, ensuring choice and the provision of opportunities. It is especially important we ensure that children and vulnerable adults with disabilities are given the tools to communicate their needs too. All children and vulnerable adults will be reassured and informed of their right to talk to someone on our team if they have a complaint or concern.

If you are a member of our church, or a visitor, we are happy to receive feedback regarding concerns you may have with any activities we provide, or if you have a concern about a child or vulnerable adult. We are here to listen and manage your concerns, involving the relevant staff or agencies as necessary.

[What to do if you have a concern](#)

If you have a concern regarding an activity or a person, then please contact our Designated Safeguarding Team:

- Safeguarding Lead: Tori Morgan 02380 981023
- Safeguarding Trustee: Dela Gbesemete 02380 471455

Alternatively, if you have concerns about a child, perhaps outside of church, then you can contact:

NSPCC on their helpline for advice: **0808 800 5000** (24 hours) or call

Southampton Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 02380 833336 during office hours (or **02380 233344** out of hours)

If you are concerned about a Vulnerable Adult then call:

Southampton Adult Services: 02380 833003 (Out of hours **02380 233344**)

If you are an adult experiencing Domestic Violence or Abuse then you can contact **National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247** or dial 999 in an emergency.

If you need help with Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage and FGM call **FMU: 02070 080151**.