



**MAYBRIDGE**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

# **SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK**

## **POLICY & GUIDELINES**

# **ADULTS**

# KEY CONTACTS

**If you think an adult is in immediate danger,  
call the police on 999**

## SAFEGUARDING TEAM

### **Piero Regnante**

Designated Safeguarding Lead

01903 700522 | [safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk)

### **Chris Gray**

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

01903 700522

[safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk)

### **Francis Hodges**

Safeguarding Trustee

## ORGANISATIONS

### **West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board**

Multi-agency service leading on adult safeguarding across West Sussex.

**[westsussexsab.org.uk](http://westsussexsab.org.uk)**

01243 642121



### **thirtyone:eight**

Independent Safeguarding Specialist  
for Churches

**[thirtyoneeight.org](http://thirtyoneeight.org)** | 0303 003 1111



### **Sussex Police**

101 / **[westsussex.gov.uk](http://westsussex.gov.uk)**



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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Preventing harm and reducing the risk of abuse and neglect wherever possible.
- Stopping abuse and neglect wherever possible. Supporting adults in a way that empowers them to make choices and have control over how they want to live. Promoting an approach that concentrates on improving lives for all adults concerned.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, not just leaders or people on the obviously relevant ministry teams. Where abuse is discovered or suspected it must be reported. Our policy statement is annually presented to the church and made available on our website.

## WHO OVERSEES IT?

The Safeguarding Team is made up of a lead, deputies and staff on the Children's and Youth Teams. The team meets every quarter to oversee safeguarding at Maybridge Community Church.

- Ultimate responsibility lies with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who oversees all safeguarding concerns arising within church life.
- Volunteers are overseen by staff members in their relevant roles.
- Volunteers and staff working with vulnerable people are required to have a DBS and attend training provided by Maybridge Community Church.

## WHO DO I CONTACT?

If you have any questions, please contact the Safeguarding Team.

**[safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@maybridge.org.uk)**

*These guidelines have been prepared considering the Sussex Adult Protection Procedures and Thirtyone:eight.*

# **MAYBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT**

**We know that anyone can be a victim of abuse and harm, and so Maybridge Community Church seeks to be a safe and caring environment for everyone. This means:**

- The welfare of the adult is paramount.
- The whole church and all its partners take responsibility for the nurture, protection and safeguarding of all.
- We work to prevent abuse, to respond according to the procedures to all known concerns, and to care for those who have suffered in the past.
- We exercise proper care in the appointment of those working with adults.
- We require all those working with adults to read and observe our procedures.
- We offer training and support for those working with adults.
- We keep safeguarding a public issue within the church whilst maintaining confidentiality about individuals.
- We ensure our procedures are regularly reviewed and kept in line with best practice from statutory and specialist safeguarding authorities.
- We build positive relationships with agencies who support the care of adults.
- We deliberately restrict some behaviours, either for everyone or for specific individuals, in order to minimise risk of harm or misunderstanding.
- We will undertake a risk assessment and draw up a management plan should ex-offenders against adults be attending church.

# RECOGNISING ABUSE

## WHAT IS ABUSE?

**The definition of abuse and neglect includes the maltreatment of an adult, or inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. This can be inflicted in a family, institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.**

## TYPES OF ABUSE

**Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Signs of this abuse include injuries that:

- Are inconsistent with explanation.
- Are in abnormal locations.
- Have not been treated.

**Psychological abuse** is persistent emotional maltreatment. It includes threats of harm, coercion, verbal abuse, cyber bullying and withdrawal of support. Signs of this abuse include:

- Emotional withdrawal.
- Low self-esteem.
- Resignation.
- Fear.
- Defensiveness.
- Self-harm.
- Disturbances to sleep and appetite.

**Sexual abuse** is the involvement of a person in sexual activities without valid consent. It can include rape, indecent exposure, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual harassment, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts. Signs include:

- Significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude.
- Poor concentration.
- Being withdrawn, stressed or depressed.
- Changes to urinary continence.
- Bruises, pain, bleeding or itching in genital area.
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).
- Bruising to thighs or upper arms.

**Self harm and self neglect**

includes all activities where someone intentionally hurts themselves or unintentionally fails to maintain a normal standard of self-care with potential for serious consequences to their health or wellbeing. Signs of this include:

- Neglecting household cleanliness/maintenance that causes potential hazards.
- Poor diet/nutrition.
- Refusing help.
- Poor personal hygiene.

**Neglect** is the consistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. Neglect may include the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical treatment, supervision, or response to emotional needs.

Signs of neglect include:

- Poor physical condition.
- Inadequate physical environment.
- Untreated injuries or medical problems.
- Malnutrition.
- Dehydration.
- Reluctant contact with agencies.
- Unnecessary deterioration.

**Financial abuse** is the main form of abuse recorded. It includes theft, scamming, fraud, coercion in relation to financial affairs or the abuse of property or benefits. Signs of this include:

- Change in living conditions.
- Lack of heating, clothing or food.
- Change in financial situation.
- Sudden changes to a will.
- Unexplained loss of financial documents.
- Recent addition of authorised signatures.

**Domestic abuse** is controlling or threatening behaviour and/or violence by someone who is or has been a partner. It can include psychological, physical, sexual and financial abuse and 'honour'-based violence.

**Organisational abuse** occurs when an organisation's systems and processes, or management of these, fails to safeguard a number of adults and leaves them at risk of or causes them harm. It includes neglect and poor care practice, or when the systems override the needs of those they are there to support. It can be a one-off or ongoing, and can be through neglect as well as poor professional practice. Signs of abuse include:

- Controlling relationships.
- Poor care.
- Lack of adequate procedures.
- Poor communication.
- Lack of respect.

**Spiritual abuse** could be defined as an abuse of power in a faith context. It involves manipulation or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without the right to choose for themselves.

**Modern slavery** is where someone is forced to work illegally against their will, in sectors such as the sex industry, forced labour, domestic servitude, forced criminal activity, cannabis farms, nail bars and agriculture. Signs of abuse are often hidden, but may include:

- Looking malnourished or unkempt.
- Appearing withdrawn, frightened or mistrustful.
- Being rarely allowed to travel alone.
- Living in poor physical environments.
- Not having ID.
- Transport provided for work very early or late at night.

**Abuse of trust** is where those in a position of trust engage in any behaviour that might allow a sexual relationship to develop.



**Discriminatory abuse** exists where values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunities to some groups or individuals, and excludes access to health education and/or justice. It may be on the basis of age, disability, gender, marriage or partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion/belief and sexual orientation. It includes hate crime, unequal treatment, verbal abuse, deliberate exclusion and harassment. Signs of this abuse include:

- Exclusion from rights.
- Substandard services.
- Lack of respect.
- Failure to follow an agreed support plan.

## REMEMBER

The signs of abuse aren't always obvious, and a person might not tell anyone what's happening. Adults might be scared that the abuser will find out, and worried that the abuse will get worse. Or they might think that there's no one they can tell or they won't be believed. Sometimes, people don't even realise that what's happening to them is abuse.

If you have any concerns, speak without delay to the Safeguarding Team (see details on page 2).

# HANDLING AN ALLEGATION

## WHEN YOU HEAR IT

- Keep calm, keep an open mind and be aware of your facial expression (try **NOT** to display shock).
- Listen carefully without passing judgement.
- Reassure them that they are not to blame and their wishes will be taken into account.
- Ask them what they would like to do about what has happened.
- **DO NOT** promise confidentiality; be honest that you will need to let someone know.

## AFTER YOU HEAR IT

### 1. Make notes ASAP. Write:

- Exactly what they said.
- The time, date and place the allegation was made.
- What was happening at the time.
- Who else was present.

### 2. Inform the Safeguarding Team ASAP and within 24 hours.

Please see page 2 for contact details. Please provide them with your notes for safe storage. A pro-forma is available as a guide for your notes. Please see [maybridge.org.uk/policies](https://maybridge.org.uk/policies) for a copy of the 'raising a safeguarding concern form.'

**3. If the allegation or concern is about the Safeguarding Team, church leaders or church staff, inform the Operations Director** (Phil Coram at [phil.coram@maybridge.org.uk](mailto:phil.coram@maybridge.org.uk)) **or contact the Safeguarding Trustee.**

## IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL THE POLICE ON 999.

- **DO NOT** address the issue yourself, contact emergency services and advise the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.
- Keep details confidential.
- If you're not sure, report.

# APPOINTING TEAM MEMBERS

**All those regularly working with adults – whether paid or unpaid – must complete our recruitment and selection process:**

1. Applicant fills in and signs Church Application Form
2. Church obtains references
3. Applicant completes online DBS Form and registers with their update service (certain roles only)
4. Applicant completes safeguarding induction
5. Applicant attends next safeguarding session and refreshes every two years

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- No history of sexual offences.
- No concerns raised about suitability to work with adults.
- Deemed suitable by the Team Leader and the Safeguarding Team.

This decision is final as the welfare of those we serve is of utmost importance.



# CODE OF CONDUCT

## TEAM MEMBERS MUST ALWAYS:

- Abide by and follow our safeguarding policy and guidelines.
- Listen to, respect and value all people at all times.
- Treat all people fairly, without prejudice or favouritism.
- Challenge any unacceptable behaviour in an appropriate way.
- Use appropriate language that is not offensive or discriminatory.
- Behave in a way that is appropriate, can't be easily misunderstood, and that avoids inappropriate relationships developing.

## HANDLING CONCERNS ABOUT OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

If you have any concerns about the actions or behaviour of other team members, you need to report these as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Team (see page 2 for contact details).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will investigate the concerns raised, and take appropriate action where required.

If you do not feel your concerns are responded to appropriately or in a timely way, please contact the Operations Director, Phil Coram, via the Church Office or contact the Safeguarding Trustee.

# **SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES**

## **TRANSPORT**

If you are offering transport to adults as part of our ministries, you must make sure:

- You obtain emergency contact details.
- You make the church office aware of any organised trips in advance.
- Drivers must be suitably qualified.
- The highway code and all legal requirements for road users are followed.
- Drivers are aware of issues of frailty, disability and manual handling when offering transport.
- Drivers wait to ensure that adults are safely inside their home (or alternative destination) before driving away.
- Vehicle owners are aware that they are responsible for road-worthiness and safety of the vehicle in accordance with current law,
- Vehicle owners check with their own insurance policy cover and restrictions of use.
- A guidance sheet for drivers is given for reference (available from church office).

## **VISITING ADULTS IN THEIR HOMES**

Please remember that you are entering someone else's home – it is their space. This means you should knock before entering, identify yourself clearly and wait to be invited in.

When you are inside, do not move personal possessions without permission and avoid reacting to poor personal hygiene or housekeeping. Unless it's part of your volunteer role, you should avoid handling money/financial affairs, personal medication and personal care. You should also avoid becoming a key holder, and crossing any emotional boundaries.

If you are visiting alone, make sure someone knows where you are and be aware of personal safety issues. If you feel uncomfortable, leave the situation and report to the Safeguarding Team (see page 2 for contact details).

## **TAKING ADULTS IN OUR CARE OUT**

As with home visits, you should make sure someone knows where you are and carry the relevant emergency contact information with you. Meet in public places. If meeting after dark, keep to well-lit routes. If your meeting involves manual handling of any description, please discuss the health and safety implications with the Safeguarding Team. Avoid handling any money or financial affairs, including operating a cashpoint machine. If this crops up, speak to the Safeguarding Team immediately.

## **BOUNDARIES**

Before working with adults, you should speak with your Team Leader or Safeguarding Team about appropriate boundaries. This will include things such as:

- Personal details.
- Your contact details and using your phone.
- Specific issues related to you or the person in our care (e.g. disabilities)
- Anything that results in over-dependence on you.
- Physical contact (you should not initiate physical contact, but behave appropriately to ensure that nothing occurs that could be misunderstood).

## **FIRST AID AND MEDICAL ISSUES**

Emergency situations should be dealt with by the emergency services. First Aid should be administered by trained adults if available.

## **PHOTOS**

From time to time, photos are taken of activities and events at Maybridge Community Church. For public use of these photos, you must seek to gain prior consent wherever possible, and make sure everyone knows the purpose for which the photo will be used.

## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

These are routinely undertaken by the leaders of activities involving adults in our care. In addition, you may be asked to carry out your own risk assessment.

## **ONLINE SAFETY AND SCAMS**

Adults, as well as young people, are at risk of online abuse, fraud and scams. It's important that you are aware of the risks and alert to any potential and actual abuse. You must report issues of concern to the Safeguarding Team in the same way as you would any other form of potential or actual abuse.

## **DECISION-MAKING**

All adults should be treated in a way that respects their individuality and does not undermine their dignity or rights. This includes allowing them to make informed decisions and taking the greatest possible control over all aspects of their lifestyle. In the Mental Capacity Act 2005, all individuals are assumed to have capacity to make informed decisions unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, including the right to make what may seem as unwise decisions. We need to avoid making decisions for adults in our care, but if you have concerns about the decisions someone has made, contact the Safeguarding Team.

## PASTORAL CARE

When one person is in a position of authority over another, there is an increased risk of emotional, physical, financial, spiritual or sexual abuse occurring. Where pastoral care and friendship overlaps, there can emerge a conflict of roles and blurring of confidentiality boundaries. If you are involved in pastoral care, you need to:

- Avoid any behaviour that may give the impression of favouritism or a 'special' relationship.
- Clearly define any mentoring or counselling roles. Be aware of the dangers of over-dependency (which can go both ways).
- Be aware of your own limitations.
- Avoid making decisions for the adult in your care.

When an adult in your care displays odd or challenging behaviour, or exhibits obsessional-type interest in spiritual matters, be cautious and carefully discerning before you offer any spiritual advice or prayer ministry.

You can view the Pastoral Care Policy at [maybridge.org.uk/policies](https://maybridge.org.uk/policies).

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Maintaining confidentiality, avoiding gossip and having integrity in relationships are important to Maybridge Community Church.

However, when responding to an adult safeguarding concern, you must make it clear that this overrides all matters of confidentiality to ensure adults in our care are kept safe from harm.

If you have concerns about an adult in our care, you must contact the Safeguarding Team.



# WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT AN ADULT WITH CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS

## A QUICK GUIDE





77 The Strand, Worthing, West Sussex, BN12 6DR

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**t:** 01903 700522

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