

# **THE GATE CHURCH**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**July 2022 Revision**

**This is a working document that is continually reviewed and updated.**

We will review this policy every 3 years. We will therefore raise it for review in June 2025, at the latest.

# THE GATE CHURCH

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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This policy and procedures have been divided into five sections covering all 10 thirtyone:eight safeguarding standards. Along with details of the organisation and a statement of intent and commitment to safeguarding, the policy covers the following sections:

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Signed by:  Pastor, The Gate Church

Date: 20 July 2022

## SECTION 1. PLACE OF WORSHIP / ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name of Place of Worship / Organisation:	The Gate Church
Church Meeting Address:	ER Mason Youth Centre, Irving St, Birmingham B1 1DH
Church Office Address:	9 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Quayside Tower, 252-260 Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2HF
Tel No:	07854700437
Email address:	<a href="mailto:admin@thegatechurch.co.uk">admin@thegatechurch.co.uk</a>
Membership of Denomination/Organisation:	Membership of FIEC and Acts 29
Registered with Charity Commission Charity	Registered Number 1171487
Insurance Company:	Edwards Insurance Brokers underwritten by Ansvar, including public liability insurance (up to £5,000,000), Trustee Indemnity insurance & Employers Liability Insurance.
Safeguarding Co-ordinator:	Nikki Kennett - see <b>SECTION 2</b> for further details
Elder overseeing child protection:	Jonny Richards - see <b>SECTION 2</b> for further details

The following is a brief description of The Gate Church and the activities we undertake with children.

The following is a brief description of our place of worship / organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and adults who have care and support needs:

The Gate Church is an independent evangelical church. Our purpose statement is:

*“We are here because the God of the Bible is real and in Jesus we are a loved people”*

*“We are all about helping people love Jesus more and more”*

The Gate Church was a church plant from Grace Church Dell Road, Birmingham. It was started as a congregation in September 2014 and became an independent church in March 2017. The Gate Church gathers on Sunday’s at ER Mason Youth Centre.

## **Our vision for The Gate Church:**

### **A DIVERSE FAMILY**

We are becoming a diverse church family of people who know and love God as our Father, having been adopted into his family. We want others from a whole range of backgrounds to know and experience God's love like we have. We know our triune God delights in the diversity of those he has made in his image and so we want our church culture to grow to reflect the beautiful diversity in our local community. We will relate to one another as brothers and sisters, and as we grow in diversity we will safeguard the unity we have in Jesus Christ.

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1)

### **A LOCAL REFUGE**

We are becoming a place where local people find their refuge in Christ, as a community of people who have found our refuge in him. We will learn to love and care for one another well, following Jesus' example of humble, sacrificial service of others. As we work out our faith we will also proactively engage with local people around us as we seek to serve them through the trials they are facing, bringing the hope and love of Christ. This will form us into a community of refuge amidst the harshness of life in this world.

Jesus says: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

### **A SHINING LIGHT**

We are becoming a shining light as we live by the Spirit and are sent out by him on his mission into the world around us. We will live distinctive lives in 21st century Birmingham that spread the fame of Christ, by helping each other follow and obey Jesus in all of life and humbly admitting where we struggle to do this.

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." (Galatians 5:25)

### Leadership

Our leadership team consists of 3 elders, one of whom is a full-time paid pastor, (currently Jonny Richards). There are also a number of Deacons who serve and help lead the church in particular ministries. The legal governance and compliance of The Gate Church as a charity is operated by the Charity Trustees, which include the elders, the church treasurer and a deacon responsible for legal and employment matters. Micah Deegan is employed

as a Gospel Worker for Local Outreach, although he is not part of the formal leadership of the church.

See **APPENDIX 1** for current details of the church leadership.

#### Main Meetings

The only weekly public all-age meeting of The Gate Church is currently on a Sunday from 10.30-12.00 for our Sunday Gathering. During our Sunday worship we offer activities for children aged 0-11 years in a separate room. Children over the age of 11 years remain in the service.

See **APPENDIX 2** for a full description of our Sunday gatherings.

#### Midweek activities

Our main midweek activities are Gospel Families, which are small groups that meet in the homes of church numbers. Children may attend these groups under the supervision of their parents/carers.

We may on occasion run other mid week activities specifically for children, young people and their families, as well as meetings for adults including after school clubs and community events.

See **APPENDIX 3** for a full description of our midweek activities.

#### 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 policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

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

- provide ongoing safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached at no greater than a 3 year interval;
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults;
- file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with CCPAS and the local authority and any amendments subsequently published. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

## **SECTION 2. RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

### 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:

1. 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.

2. 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.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which 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 **APPENDIX 4**.

Signs and symptoms of abuse - see **APPENDIX 5**.

How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse - see **APPENDIX 6**.

### Safeguarding awareness

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will undertake safeguarding training on a regular basis. We will provide Safeguarding Training run by our safeguarding Co-ordinator on a yearly basis which our workers will be expected to attend. If a worker fails to attend over 24 months they will not be allowed to continue to work with children/young people.

We will provide a document which summarises our child protection training, which all

new workers will be expected to sign to show their agreement.

The Leadership will also ensure that children 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 volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

Follow procedures as below:

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

Fill out the **Safeguard – Disclosure/Cause for Concern Form** found on the GDrive under Safeguarding. This should then be saved password protected. This should once saved be emailed to Safeguarding coordinator and Safeguarding Elder. With no disclosing information within the saved name or email header.

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

**Name: Nikki Kennett** (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

**Tel: 07923921867**

**Email: [safeguarding@thegatechurch.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@thegatechurch.co.uk)**

The above 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.

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:

**Name: Jonny Richards**

**Tel: 07854700437**

**Email: [jonny@thegatechurch.co.uk](mailto:jonny@thegatechurch.co.uk)**

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

**Christian Safeguarding Services**

Tel: 011162184420

Email: [contact@thecss.co.uk](mailto:contact@thecss.co.uk)

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Coordinator should contact

#### Children's Social Services

Birmingham Children's Trust

Tel: 0121 303 1888

Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pm, Friday: 8:45am to 4:15pm



Out of hours Tel:0121 675 4806

Web Address: <https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/report-a-concern>

Adult Social Services

Tel:0121 303 1234

Out of hours Tel:0121 303 1234

Website Address: [CSAdultSocialCare@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:CSAdultSocialCare@birmingham.gov.uk)

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20018/adult\\_social\\_care/111/report\\_possible\\_abuse\\_or\\_neglect\\_of\\_an\\_adult\\_with\\_care\\_and\\_support\\_needs](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20018/adult_social_care/111/report_possible_abuse_or_neglect_of_an_adult_with_care_and_support_needs)

**Police Protection Team Tel: 999/101**

If required the Safeguarding Coordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company.

Suspensions 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 Coordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator or Elder overseeing child protection should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Christian Safeguarding Services.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Coordinator/ Elder overseeing child protection 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 Christian Safeguarding Services, 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 Coordinator/ Elder overseeing child protection has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. 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 Coordinator/ Elder overseeing child protection 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:

***Allegations 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 Coordinator/ Elder overseeing child protection will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or Christian Safeguarding Services) 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 the 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 direct for advice.

Seek and follow advice given by **Christian Safeguarding Services** (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 Coordinator/Elder overseeing child protection 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 **Christian Safeguarding Services** if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Christian Safeguarding Services will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

### ***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 Coordinator, 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 will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

#### ***For all applicants (voluntary and paid)***

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Safeguarding has been discussed before the successful applicant starts their job and the applicant will sign a declaration form to confirm their agreement with our safeguarding principles
- Written references have been obtained, 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)
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy statement, informed where they can view the full safeguarding policy, and knows how to report concerns.
- Volunteers will only be recruited from within our own church membership.

#### ***For paid staff***

- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant

### Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## **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. As a small locally based community church with a small staff, this pastoral care, support and advice would be provided on an ad hoc basis as the church is able.

### 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 and young people 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 have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached.

Key principles of good practice:

- Always work in the clear sight of another leader. DO NOT work in a room alone with a child.
- Be careful about touching.
- Confidentiality is important:
  - Never promise confidentiality to a child
  - Keep any suspicions you may have about a possible abusive situation between you and the Safeguarding Coordinator
- When activities involving children/young people are taking place, only workers assigned to the group should be allowed free access to the area.

### General guidelines

These are taken from Safe and Secure the Manual standard 5 and are numbered in accordance with this document.

### Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children and young people. 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 safeguarding policy.

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

## **APPENDIX 1. LEADERSHIP SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT**

The Leadership of The Gate Church at the time of this policy comprises Jonny Richards, Toby Giles and Jonny Ivey, hereafter referred to as Leadership, recognises the importance of its ministry and work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the Leadership on 20 July 2022.

This place of worship/organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.

### Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship/organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

### We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.

- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Coordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting parents and families.
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people.
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the place of worship/organisation affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures every three years.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Coordinators for this place of worship/organization:

Nikki Kennett - Child Safeguarding Coordinator

Jonny Richards - Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from Jonny Richards (pastor of The Gate Church).

Signed 

Date 20 July 2022



## **APPENDIX 2. SUNDAY GATHERINGS**

We meet from 10.30-12.00 at ER Mason Youth Centre each Sunday for our weekly gathering. Our corporate worship is held in the Hall, which includes all-age worship before children up to the age of 11 go to the Club Room with leaders in accordance with the OFSTED recommended safeguarding ratios for age appropriate spiritual learning, play and care.

### **APPENDIX 3. MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES**

Our Gospel Families meet once or twice a week, mostly in the homes of church members. Where children attend these groups, they are under the supervision of their parents.

We are also involved in various different projects serving our local community. This includes a partnership with Safe Families through which we offer support to local families. When we partner with another organization we adopt and comply with their safeguarding procedures and processes.

We also run occasional other events, for example community fun days in our local park and Easter and Christmas services and events for people to attend.

#### **APPENDIX 4. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

See relevant **Christian Safeguarding Services** guidance.

## **APPENDIX 5. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE**

See relevant **Christian Safeguarding Services** guidance.

## **APPENDIX 6. HOW TO RESPOND TO A CHILD WISHING TO DISCLOSE ABUSE**

See relevant **Christian Safeguarding Services** guidance.