

Assemblies of the First Born Safeguarding Policy

Ref No. AFBSP160614

Section 1 - Details of place of worship / organisation

Assemblies of the First Born is an established registered charity with churches based throughout the UK in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Croydon, Derby, Luton, Nottingham, Swindon and Walsall. Our activities that we undertake with children include arranging church services, prayer meetings, conventions, conferences, missionary work, Sunday schools, outings and trips and youth retreats.

Head Office Address:

Assemblies of the First Born
Stephen's church
Battersea Bridge Road
London SW11 3AP

Tel: 020 7223 3099

Email: afbsw11@btconnect.com

Website: www.aotfb.org.uk

Details of all our church locations can be found on our website.

We are members of the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) a recognised independent Christian safeguarding charity that provides specialist advice on safeguarding matters. This safeguarding policy applies to the trustees, ministers, officers, members, staff, volunteers, visitors and any other persons involved in the activities of the Assemblies of the First Born.

Our Commitment

As a church 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 victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. We accept the UN Universal declaration of Human Rights and the International Convention of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedom 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". The church leadership has therefore

adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

Section 2 – Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

‘**Abuse** may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.’

(No secrets, Department of Health (2000), Section 2.6, p.9)

Safeguarding awareness and DBS Checks

The church leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all involved with the activities of Assemblies of the First Born to develop a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

The Leadership will also ensure that all staff and volunteers who have direct contact with children undergo Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as legally required.

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should an individual carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The following procedure shall be used:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of allegations should report concerns as soon as possible to Minster Errol Vassell (the Safeguarding Co-ordinator) tel no. 07958320004 who is the lead person on all safeguarding matters including referring the matter 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 Reverend Charles Wright (General Overseer) tel no. 07789050727. If suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the General Overseer, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone

08451204550. Alternatively Social Services or the police can be contacted.

- Where the concern is about a child, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection Adult Social Services should be contacted.
- If an accusation is made against a church worker (whether a volunteer or paid worker) the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Local Authority Safeguarding Vulnerable adult procedures will liaise with Children Social Services and/or Adult Social Services regarding the suspension of the worker and the investigation of the accusation.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written report of the concerns should be made and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or in his absence the General Overseer their absence should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from CCPAS.
- The Church leadership will support any individual who reports abuse as well as the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and accept that any information they have in their possession is confidential and will be shared strictly on a need to know basis.

Section 3 – Pastoral Care

The Church leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship / organisation. The church pastoral teams will provide this support.

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 children or vulnerable adults the church leadership will supervise the individual concern 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 monitor.

This Safeguarding policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Signed E. K. Vassell, Minister E. Vassell, Trustee.

Date 16th June 2014