

Rehoboth Baptist Church

Safeguarding People Policy & Procedures

*A set of agreed policies and procedures
for ensuring a safe environment for
all who visit or join in the activities and worship at our church.*

Rehoboth Baptist Church

New Street, Horsham, West Sussex.

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Who we are

We are Rehoboth Grace Baptist Church, a place of worship that has been ministering to the people of Horsham since our foundation in 1834. We exist solely under the grace of God to allow the gathering of those who are both committed Christians (followers of Jesus Christ) and those who seek to know more about our Christian beliefs from all age groups. We believe that the word of God as we read it in the bible is true in every respect and is the guiding principal by which we must act and by which we treat everyone who joins with us. The following passage from the bible outlines our commitment to ensure that our church is a place of safety for all.

‘Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor.’ 1 Peter 2 verse 12-17.

As you read through this document it is with these words in mind that we desire that our premises and our activities are recognised to be a place of safety where due respect is given to the treatment and safety of all people, adults and children alike.

1 Policy Statement on Safeguarding in the Church

Rehoboth Baptist Church

(referred to as "the church" in the Policy Statement)

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all people and particularly young people under the age of 18 (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, *Safe from Harm* (HM Government 1994) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2010).

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all those associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we pledge ourselves to the following policies and procedures in line with this commitment.

Safe working practices

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for all activities and will adopt ways of working that promote the safety and well-being of all.

A safe community

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children or the ill treatment of any person. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any who may pose a risk to those in the church community is managed appropriately.

Prevention and reporting of abuse

It is the duty of each church member to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children, and the duty of each church member to respond to concerns about the well-being of children or vulnerable adults and to report any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or volunteer. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children. And vulnerable adults and all church members will be briefed on their responsibilities under this policy.

Respect for all

The church will adopt and publicise a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children so that everyone is shown the respect that is due to them.

2 Rehoboth Baptist Church Safeguarding Team

The church has appointed:

Hazel Smith Designated Person for Safeguarding (hazeljoysmith@hotmail.com Tel: Home 01403 255055 Mob 07796 094301) to advise the church on any matters relating to the

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safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

Mr Stuart Beadle Safeguarding Elder (stuart.beadle@sky.com Tel Home 01403 541891 Mobile 07910 204395) to oversee and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church. Where possible the Safeguarding Team will work together if and when issues arise.

3 Policy and Procedures

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the church noticeboard and be available on the church website.

All church members will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be asked to commit to following them.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any other person associated with, the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually.

4 Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes no-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- a child discloses behaviour that is harmful to them
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring

5 Responding to Concerns

What do we do if abuse is suspected or disclosed?

Everyone has his or her part to play in ensuring the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within the church. In this context a vulnerable adult is defined as any individual over the age of 18 who is in need of special care or protection from exploitation.

If the behaviour of a child or vulnerable adult gives any cause for concern –

If an allegation is made in any context about a child or vulnerable adult being harmed –

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children or vulnerable adults causes you concern –

Do not dismiss your concerns

Do not normally confront the adult about whose behaviour you have concerns

Do not take responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse is actually taking place

Do not investigate allegations

Do not act alone

Do not take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have

Do follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns.

If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not available, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

If a child or vulnerable adult is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services.

Procedures for Responding to Concerns

STAGE 1

A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child or the behaviour of an adult

The person who has the concern has a duty to

REPORT to Safeguarding Team

A written record must be made of the concern by the Designated Person as soon as possible.



STAGE 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

then has a duty to

REVIEW AND REFER

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.



STAGE 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Designated Person and the Safeguarding Elder may have a duty to

SUPPORT AND REPORT

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the relevant authorities. (See Appendix.



STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the Designated person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to **RECORD** their concerns in writing and to **REPORT** their concerns to the Designated Person

The report to the Designated Person should be made as soon as possible.

The duty to RECORD & REPORT

As soon as possible after a child tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

The record should

- be handwritten as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately
- include the child's name, address and date of birth (or age if dob not known)
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- include a description of any bruising or other injuries noticed
- include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words
- include what was said to the person to whom the concerns were reported
- include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- be signed and dated
- be kept secure and confidential, available only to: the safeguarding Team, the pastoral elder/eldership team, representatives of the professional agencies.

If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to one of the Safeguarding Team, one of them should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's group, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group leader. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Designated Person.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to report their concerns to the Designated Person.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the workers the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report, and will also themselves have a duty to report the concern to the Designated Person.

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to **REVIEW** the concern that has been reported and to **REFER** the concern on to the appropriate people.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Safeguarding Team:

- should take account of their own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children
- must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- may speak with others in the church (including the Pastoral Elder/Eldership Team) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be made
- such conversations should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action.
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised.

The duty to REFER

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred on to. They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children in question asking for continued observation
- refer to the adult about whom the concern has been raised
 - This may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children's workers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Designated Person should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the police or Social Services. To do so may place the child at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child may be intimidated.
- Make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department

All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

Responsibilities in stage 3 of the process are shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Pastoral Elder/Eldership Team.

The duty to REPORT

Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services the Designated Person should

- report the referral to the Pastoral Elder/Eldership Team

In certain circumstances the Safeguarding Elder may also need to make further reports for example to Association of Grace Baptist Churches (SE).

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If a worker has an allegation made against them they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated.

If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children and young people there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

If a worker in the church has been accused of causing harm to children or young people this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission in the annual return by those churches that are registered with the Charity Commission.

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy.

The duty to SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected.

Child, Other Family Members, Church Worker/Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Elders/Leadership Team

6 Safe recruitment support and supervision of workers

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, whether paid or volunteer. All workers will be fully briefed on their responsibilities to promote the safekeeping of children and vulnerable adults.

Guidelines for the Appointment of Children's Leaders and Helpers

The Church should ensure that the following selection procedures have been followed:

- Prospective volunteers to be interviewed
- Volunteers will normally be drawn from those who have been accepted into Church membership
- DBS will be applied for all in supervisory positions.
- The volunteer should commit to work within the agreed safeguarding policy and procedures
- Briefing of the relevant procedures and ways of working will be undertaken.

Administration of this process will be overseen by the Designated Person.

All leaders and helpers should have a calling to work with children, which should, in turn, be recognised by the Church Leadership Team and have the agreement of existing children's leaders and helpers.

The first priority of leaders and helpers should be their own spiritual welfare, and, therefore, they should receive teaching and be part of a worship service or life group regularly.

All leaders and helpers should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.

Meetings for leaders and helpers will be held at regular periods (at least annually) for support and planning.

When concerns are expressed about the Designated person

Any safeguarding concerns involving the Designated person for safeguarding should be raised with the Safeguarding Elder, Pastoral Elder/Eldership Team

When concerns are expressed about the Safeguarding Elder

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Safeguarding Elder should always be reported immediately to the fellow Elders who will follow the church's normal procedures for dealing with such concerns.

APPENDIX 1

Respecting children and young people

Respecting children

The following are guidelines for a code of behaviour.

Leaders and Helpers should:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and invading a person's personal space.
- Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual child.
- Listen well to children. Be careful not to assume you know what a child is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said.

Leaders and Helpers should not engage in any of the following:

- invading the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering
- rough games involving physical contact between a leader and a child
- sexually provocative games
- making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in 'fun '
- scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child.

When it is necessary to control and discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. (A situation may, however, arise where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.)

Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed. If possible, the child's own parent or carer should be called in to carry out such a task.

Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

Workers should not normally plan to be alone with children, on church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.

On occasions when one to one work with a child is required this should take place with appropriate supervision and accountability structures in place.

Leaders and Helpers should:

- Only invite young people to your home, or on trips, in groups, and always make sure another adult is present. The Designated Person should be notified of any trips for children which take place in the name of Rehoboth Baptist Church. Parental permission must always be sought for such an event.

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- Not give lifts to young people on their own, other than for short journeys. Ensure that if transporting children that you have the correct insurance cover for passengers. When possible, ensure you have parental permission.
- Not share sleeping accommodation with children if you take a group away.
- Be aware of any physical contact they may have with young people and record it when necessary. For instance, if they need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to a child who is distressed, remove a child from danger, or protect themselves or others from attack.
- Not use physical punishment when controlling or disciplining children.
- Keep a log book; if any significant incidents take place a record should be kept in the Church Incident Book. Enter the names of both children and adults present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made by young people, incidences where a child is asked to leave. All workers who witnessed, heard or responded in any way should record details, and sign and date the entry.

Abuse of Trust

Relationships between children and their leaders/helpers can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The leader is someone in whom the child has placed a degree of trust, this may be because the leader has an educational role, is a provider of leisure activities, or even is a significant adult friend.

It is also not acceptable for a leader/helper to form a romantic relationship with a child with whom they have a relationship of trust.

While by no means restricted to young leaders, those who are in their early adult years will need to be particularly aware of the need not to abuse their position of trust in their relationships with other young people who are not much younger than themselves.

APPENDIX 2

Electronic Communication

Electronic communication is an easy way to communicate with young people in particular. However, there are dangers associated with electronic communication that call for vigilance:

- electronic communication is often an extremely informal mode of communication which can create the potential for communication to be misunderstood
- because of the informal style of electronic communication workers can easily cross appropriate boundaries in their relationships with young people
- some adults who are intent on harming children and young people choose to use electronic communication as a way to meet and 'groom' children.

These guidelines are written to try to maintain healthy and safe relationships between adults and children.

- Electronic communication must never become a substitute for face to face contact with young people.
- parents or carers and children and young people themselves have the right to decide if a worker is to have email addresses or mobile phone numbers.
- workers should only use electronic means of communication with those children and young people from whom appropriate consent has been given.
- direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided
- only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of the church or one of the church's organisations
- contact with children and young people by electronic communication should generally be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter
- workers should not share any personal information with children and young people, and should not request or respond to any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role
- workers should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives, clear, unambiguous language should be used and the use of unnecessary abbreviations should be avoided

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- electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 am and 10.00 pm
- Official church e-mails to young people should be sent out with a church header and footer indicating to the young people that this is an official communication, this should also be copied to the church e-mail address.
- Any photos or video taken should not be uploaded to social networking sites or the church website without parental permission
- workers should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phone.

Instant Messaging Services (IMS)

- the use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum.
- where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a worker:
- significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and
- a log kept of who and when they communicated.

Social Networking sites

- Church workers should never add young people to their personal social networking sites.
- Adults should not make 'friend requests' of young people
- It should not become expected behaviour that adults say yes to young person when a friend request is received
- It is the adult's responsibility to ensure that all of the content on their site is appropriate for young people to see (including contents of photos uploaded)
- All communication with young people should be kept within public domains
- All communications with young people should be transparent and open to scrutiny

Remember – never alone and unseen is the basic rule of thumb in Safeguarding young people, what does this mean for your activity with electronic communication?

APPENDIX 3

Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

A policy based upon the following guidelines should be agreed upon by each different section of youth work if and when necessary. It should reflect the age group and general activities of the children.

- Children should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling. Discipline is about our relationship with children **not** our mastery of them.
- Good discipline is built on respect between leaders and children. (This does not imply equality but does have an implication for leaders' attitudes towards children).
- Minor incidents/offences should be dealt with immediately on the spot. This prevents escalation and enables major offences to be seen as major.
- Ways of dealing with discipline:
 - Chastise the individual/group – criticise the behaviour not the person
 - Move the offender to a less volatile situation - change the group activity
 - Remove the child to a calm space away from others. Stay with them until they have cooled down, but keep the time out short.
- If the above mentioned procedures fail to bring about the desired result, refer the issue to the Designated Person or Safeguarding Elder
- Bullying: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally
- Allegations and incidents of bullying should be reported to Designated Person or Safeguarding Elder

Good Practice Guidelines with Colleagues

If you see another member of staff acting in ways, which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to one of the Safeguarding Team about your concerns. Leaders & helpers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety

All leaders and helpers are responsible for being observant for any health and safety issues which may affect their group, for example:

- Ensure there is enough space and appropriate activities for all children.
- Have a First Aid kit and phone available.
- Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs etc).
- Check equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- Fire drills should be carried out at least annually.
- Any food should be prepared carefully and hygienically.

Risk Assessments

A generic written risk assessment will be carried out by the designated Premises Manager annually. This will cover the general week to week activities. A specific risk assessment will be carried out by the Youth Leader responsible for any other one off youth activities which may take place throughout the year.

Risk assessments will be made available to the Leadership Team.

APPENDIX 4

A safe community

When a known offender is present

The church should be a community that is welcoming and open to all. It is a place for people who have failed and for people in need. Those who have abused children in the past are to be included in this welcome. However, the gospel imperative to welcome the sinner needs to be set alongside the gospel imperative that the protection of children must be paramount.

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused.

Where necessary this will include working with other agencies such as the Probation Service and so on.

A contract would consider the following:

- will identify the meetings the person will attend
- will specify that they will always sit apart from children
- may ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises
- will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children are present
- will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children
- will state that the person will never be alone with children while attending church functions
- will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children meet.

Guidance will be sought on who within the church can and should be notified if an offender joins the congregation. It is impossible in a policy such as this to cover every scenario and 'what if'. Further guidance will be taken by the Safeguarding Team from appropriate agencies.

APPENDIX 5

Ratio's

When working with young people the following recommended minimum ratios apply:

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

This does not take into account any special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratio.

In calculating the ratios of workers to children young leaders who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the leaders/helpers.

NB These ratios will not apply where the children remain fully under the care of their parents such as at a parent /toddler group.

Appendix 6

Categorising concerns and complaints (pyramid +yes no chart)

Helpful Numbers

Multi Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH)

8.45am—5pm 01403 229900

Email mash@westsussex.gov.uk

Out of hours

Police

Designated Person

Safeguarding Elder Stuart Beadle 07910204395

Church Elders :

Calix Furus 07501397101

Steve Piggott 07712685336