

Crossways Church Fellowship

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (Created Version 27 May 2026)

Policy Statement

The Trustees and Leaders of Crossways Church Fellowship (referred to collectively as “Crossways leadership”) affirm their commitment to providing a welcoming, safe, and nurturing environment in which children and young people can discover their place within God’s household.

In fulfilling this vision, we:

- Welcome children and young people into the life of our community.
- Provide a programme of activities designed for their growth, enjoyment, and wellbeing.
- Ensure that all premises used for children’s and youth activities are safe and suitable.

Crossways Church Fellowship recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding all children and young people under the age of 18, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or background. This policy is informed by:

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2023)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR**
- **Thirtyone:eight guidance**

As leaders, we commit ourselves to the nurture, protection, and safekeeping of children and young people within the church and will pray for them regularly. We commit to the following policies and to developing procedures to ensure their effective implementation.

1. Prevention and Reporting of Abuse

Every member of the leadership has a duty to prevent physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect, and to respond appropriately to concerns about the welfare of children and young people. All concerns, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse must be reported promptly. The leadership will fully cooperate with statutory agencies in any safeguarding investigation.

2. Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision

The leadership will exercise proper care in the recruitment and appointment of all workers—paid or voluntary—who work with children and young people. All workers will receive appropriate training, support, and supervision to promote safe practice and uphold safeguarding standards.

3. Respecting Children and Young People

A code of behaviour will be adopted for all workers to ensure that children and young people are treated with dignity, respect, and appropriate boundaries.

4. Safe Working Practices

The leadership is committed to providing safe environments for all activities involving children and young people and will adopt working practices that promote their safety and wellbeing.

5. A Safe Community

The leadership is committed to preventing bullying and to managing appropriately the behaviour of any individual who may pose a risk to children or young people.

Safeguarding Team

The church appoints:

Lead Recruiter / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Jan Allen as the DSL with Helen Collins as the Lead Recruiter

Jan advises the leadership on safeguarding matters, takes appropriate action when concerns arise, ensures compliance with the DBS Code of Practice, and Helen acts as the contact for Thirtyone:eight.

Safeguarding Team

Jan Allen and Tracey Whittle

Jan and Tracey oversee and monitor the implementation of safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the trustees.

Where possible, the Safeguarding Team will work collaboratively when issues arise.

Policy and Procedures

- A copy of this policy will be available at all meetings involving children and young people.
 - All workers will receive a full copy of the policy and procedures and must sign to confirm they will follow them.
 - A full copy will be available on request to any church member or associated person.
 - The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually.
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Procedures: Prevention and Reporting of Abuse

Definitions of Abuse

(Aligned with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*)

Physical Abuse

Actual or likely physical harm to a child, or failure to prevent such harm.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts a child's emotional development.

Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including non-contact activities such as viewing sexual images or encouraging inappropriate behaviour.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs.

Indicators of abuse may include (but are not limited to):

- Unexplained injuries
- Injuries inconsistent with explanation
- Disclosure of harmful behaviour
- Sudden behavioural changes
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Signs of neglect such as poor hygiene or untreated medical issues

The presence of indicators does not constitute proof of abuse but must prompt concern.

Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

If you are concerned about a child or young person, or if an allegation is made:

Do not:

- Dismiss concerns
- Confront the alleged perpetrator
- Investigate the matter yourself
- Act alone
- Promise confidentiality

Do:

- Follow the reporting procedures
- Treat all concerns seriously

- Record and report promptly

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, concerns should be passed to the Safeguarding Trustee.

Stage 1 – Record and Report

Anyone who receives information or has concerns must:

- **Record** concerns in writing as soon as possible
- **Report** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours

Records must:

- Be handwritten initially
 - Be factual, accurate, and legible
 - Include child's details
 - Include exact words used in any disclosure
 - Describe injuries observed
 - Include actions taken
 - Be signed, dated, and stored securely
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Stage 2 – Review and Refer

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Review the information
- Consider previous concerns
- Consult with leadership where appropriate
- Seek advice from Thirtyone:eight or statutory agencies
- Decide whether to refer to Social Care or Police

Referrals may include:

- Requesting continued observation
- Speaking with parents/carers (unless this increases risk)
- Making a formal referral to Social Care
- Contacting the Police in cases of immediate danger or sexual/physical abuse

All actions must be recorded.

Stage 3 – Report and Support

When a referral is made:

- The DSL will inform the Safeguarding Trustee and church leadership
- Allegations against workers must be reported to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**
- Workers subject to allegations must step down pending investigation
- Serious incidents must be reported to the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** where required

The leadership will offer support to all affected parties.

Safe Recruitment

Recruitment procedures include:

- Written role descriptions
 - Application forms
 - Interviews
 - Two references
 - Enhanced DBS checks where eligible
 - Six-month probationary period
 - Signing agreement to follow safeguarding policy
 - Induction and safeguarding training
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Young Helpers (Under 18)

- Are considered children in law
 - Must be supervised at all times
 - Cannot be counted as adult leaders in ratios
 - Require parental consent and a work-experience form
 - Do not require DBS checks (as they are not in regulated activity)
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Respecting Young People

Workers must:

- Work in pairs where possible
- Avoid being alone with a child unless unavoidable and known to others

- Use age-appropriate language
 - Avoid inappropriate physical contact
 - Avoid sexualised comments or behaviour
 - Record significant incidents
 - Never form romantic relationships with young people
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Electronic Communication

- Must not replace face-to-face contact
 - Requires parental consent
 - Should be used for information-sharing only
 - Must be transparent and open to scrutiny
 - Should occur only between 8am and 10pm
 - Images must not be taken or shared without parental permission
 - Workers must ensure their online presence is appropriate
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Discipline Guidelines

- No physical punishment
- Discipline should be respectful and proportionate
- Minor issues should be addressed immediately
- Serious or repeated issues require parental involvement
- All incidents must be recorded

Bullying concerns must be reported to the Team Leader and DSL.

Ratios

Recommended minimum staffing ratios must be followed, with adjustments for additional needs. Young helpers count as children, not adults.

Health and Safety

Workers must ensure:

- Safe access and lighting
- Adequate heating and ventilation

- Sufficient space
- First Aid kit availability
- Hazard checks
- Safe food preparation

Annual risk assessments will be completed by group leaders.

Useful Contacts

(Updated numbers should be inserted according to local authority guidance)

- **Children's Social Care** – Local authority contact
 - **Police** – 101 (or 999 in emergencies)
 - **Thirtyone:eight** – 0303 003 1111
 - **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – Local safeguarding partnership
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