



Safeguarding Policy

Including
***Policies and Procedures for
working with children and
young people***

Contents	Page
Section 1	Details of the place of worship
Section 2	Prevention
Section 3	Practice Guidelines
Section 4	Responding to allegations of abuse
Section 5	Pastoral Care
Appendices	
A - Code of Conduct	
B - Child Protection Policy	

Section 1

Details of the place of worship

The Ark Mission at Trinity Ltd

Sunday Meeting Address: St. Mark's Primary School, Aylesbury Rd, Bromley BR2 0QR

Contact email: safeguarding@arkmission.ac.uk

General Email address: office@arkmission.org.uk

Senior Leader Name: Chuks Aniereobi

Senior Leader Contact Telephone / Email: chuks.aniereobi@arkmission.org.uk

Lead Trustee: Edward Otieno

Safeguarding Lead Name: Masha Apostolidu

Safeguarding Lead Contact Email: masha.apostolidu@arkmission.org.uk

Safeguarding Trustee Name: Edward Otieno

Safeguarding secure email: safeguarding@arkmission.org.uk

Membership of Denomination/Organisation: CiC

Denomination / Organisation Safeguarding Officer:

Contact Details for Denomination / Organisation Safeguarding Officer:

Charity Number: 1193973

Company Number: 13145337

Insurance Company: Access Insurance

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

The Ark Mission has an important role in teaching and training children and young people, and as members of the church they will be provided with pastoral care, in a loving safe environment, at a level which meets their needs. The Ark Mission will work along side parents/guardians to provide an ordered children and young people's programme that aims to keep them from physical, spiritual and emotional harm.

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and 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 build 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 on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Lead(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Section 2

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an 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 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:

- 1. States 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:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Safer 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:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed

- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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.

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 and adults with care and support needs. See Appendix A.

Section 3

Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship working with children and young people with care and support needs 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 or unfounded 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 or in the appendices.

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.

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

Section 4

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:

- Documenting a concern

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

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

Name: Masha Apostolidu (hereafter the "Safeguarding Lead")

Email: safeguarding@arkmission.org.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 Lead or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made to:

Name: Gemma Carder (hereafter the "Deputy")

Email: Safeguarding@arkmission.org.uk

Name: Edward Otieno (hereafter the "Deputy")

Email: Safeguarding@arkmission.org.uk

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

thirtyone:eight PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Safeguarding Lead should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

Name of local authority: Bromley

Children's Social Services

Tel: 020 8461 7373 / 7379 / 7026

Out of hours Tel: 0300 303 8671

Email: mash@bromley.gov.uk

Website**Address:**

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200127/safeguarding_children/163/reporting_child_abuse

Adult Social Services

Tel: 020 8461 7777

Out of hours Tel: 0300 303 8671

Website**Address:**

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/731/safeguarding_adults/280/safeguarding_adults_at_risk/2

Police Protection Team Tel:

- The Safeguarding Lead may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern
 - Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
 - Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.
- Suspicions 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 Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy 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 thirtyone:eight, 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 Lead/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(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 Lead/ deputy 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 Lead/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) 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 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 thirtyone:eight (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 Lead/Deputy 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 thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Lead will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Section 5

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.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the place of worship is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the Leadership and will be reviewed at appropriate intervals with amendments as necessary.

Signed by: Masha Apostolidu

Position: Safeguarding Lead

Signed by: Edward Otieno

Position: Safeguarding Trustee

Date: 29.3.2024

Updated: 15.07.2026

A copy of this policy is also shared on the Ark Mission Webpage

Appendix A - Code of Conduct

The Ark Mission behaviour code for working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers). The code of conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers)

When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for **The Ark Mission**. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Good practice

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Listen carefully to those you are supporting
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Seek advice from someone with greater experience when necessary
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the safeguarding co-ordinator
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action

Unacceptable behaviour

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way
- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details and any contact that breaches The Ark Mission's social media policy
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff where the line manager will consult the safeguarding Lead as appropriate). Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave [name of group/organisation]. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's or adult's social care departments or DBS. If you become

aware of a breach of this code, you should escalate your concerns to the safeguarding Lead or line manager (in the case of a paid staff member).

Declaration

I agree to abide by the expectations outlined in this document and confirm that I have read the relevant policies that assist my work with vulnerable groups.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B - CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

B.1 Aim

To create in Children's Church an environment where children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately addressed.

B.2 Preventing abuse by means of good practice

By adhering to the guidelines below you can help to prevent abuse by good practice and prevent false accusations.

Treat all children/young people with dignity and respect by your attitude, language and actions.

Lay out the teaching areas to permit constant supervision of all children.

Avoid being left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. Leave the door ajar if you need to take a child aside for 'time out' or counselling. When privacy and confidentiality are important make sure another adult knows the interview is taking place. *

Respect the privacy of children and avoid questionable activity e.g. rough sexually provocative games or comments.

Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in fun.

Be careful about touching. Do not allow, or become involved in, inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.

Do not invite a child or young person to your home alone. Invite a group, or ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.

Ensure that the arrangements for transporting children are with the knowledge of the Children's Leader and have parental approval. In some circumstances it may be unwise to transport a particular child on their own.

For residential holidays all sleeping arrangements must be discussed with the Church leadership.

Anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which could be misinterpreted should speak to the Children's Leader or if this is not appropriate to the Safeguarding Lead (see Section 1).

Only adults who have been so designated by Children's Leaders will take children to the toilet or change nappies. Steps will always be taken to try and ensure that babies'/toddlers' nappies are changed by their parents.

Keep yourself familiar with these Policies and Procedures and attend the initial meeting and any subsequent refresher meetings on recognising and dealing with abuse, as recommended or convened by the The Ark Mission.

Keep to the guidelines set out in the description of your role in the Church children's work (see Appendix H/J).

* Although children's workers should always listen and respond to an issue raised by a child/young person, they should not proceed to counsel a child if they are not appropriately qualified to do so.

B.3 Helping children to protect themselves

If you are responsible for curriculum planning or teaching/training the children, following the suggestions below will help the children to know how to protect themselves.

Where appropriate teach the children safety e.g. concerning strangers, good and bad secrets and inappropriate touching. If possible within the curriculum teach the children how to respond if someone asks or tells them to do something they are not sure about.

Examine the way you teach Christian truths e.g. obeying parents may lead to problems where a child is abused at home. It is important that children follow the biblical principle of obeying their parents and they should be encouraged to always do so. However all children should also know that if they feel uncomfortable about something at home they can always check things out with another adult they trust. Explain that if this first adult does not respond they should speak to other grown-ups until someone does something. (You may have to explain that this does not include complaints about bedtimes and other acceptable rules they may have at home).

B.4 Responding to suspicions of abuse

If you notice any worrying changes in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance ...

IMMEDIATELY contact the Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (see Section 4 for contact information)

DO NOT DELAY

DO NOT ACT ALONE

DO NOT START TO INVESTIGATE

If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable contact Edward Otieno, Safeguarding Trustee. If a child talks to you about abuse do not speak to anybody they may have named in the context of the conversation, concerning what has been said.

