

Earley Christian Fellowship

Safeguarding Policy for Children/Youth.



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Social Services Department or Police child Protection Team SS 01189553600/emergencies 01344488495

Advice may be sought from Thirtyone:eight 0303 003 1111

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Section 1: Policy Statement

Aim and purpose of this policy

- Earley Christian Fellowship (ECF) is a family-welcoming church with Sunday School and Bible Class for children and young people on a Sunday morning as well as Youth Club and other organised events.
 - The ECF leadership is comprised of Elders. The leadership is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment for children and young people, enabling them to grow spiritually and emotionally and share in the love of God.
 - We seek to safeguard all members of the church community, following legislation, statutory guidance, and good practice.
 - The leadership is committed to support those who work with children and young people through guidance and training in accordance with this policy.
 - We seek to listen to, relate to effectively and value children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within church activities.
 - We have clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised involving children within our church or who attend our activities and events.
 - We recognize it is the responsibility of each of us in Earley Christian Fellowship to take the necessary steps to minimise the risk of harm to children.
 - We are committed to build constructive links with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies.
 - We are committed to Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010
-
- There are Safeguarding Leads responsible for implementing this policy:
 - **Peter Cowling**, +44 (0) 7891 958 043
 - **Rachel Blackburn**, +44 (0) 7709 890 571
 - **Daniel Towers**, +44 (0) 7941 547 386
 - Detailed procedures for the Safeguarding Leads are in [Appendix 8](#).

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the principles and guidelines in the Home Office publication 'Safe from Harm' HMSO 1993 1, the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

ECF is covered by public liability insurance.

Earley Charitable Trust (ECT), charity number 283068.

Section 2: Training and Awareness

Understanding abuse and neglect

- Workers have an understanding of recognising abuse and neglect ([Appendix 1](#)).

Recruitment

- Those wishing to do voluntary work with children/young people are interviewed by a Safeguarding Lead. References may be taken up and previous experience considered.
- An application form is required ([Appendix 4](#)).
- Those in leadership in the Fellowship will consider an individual's experience, ability, and suitability to perform the tasks and role for which they have applied before an appointment is made.
- The applicant will be given a copy of the safeguarding policy and know how to report concerns.
- Either a new DBS check will be carried out or an applicant will be checked on the Update service.
- Three months after volunteering commences, a Safeguarding Co-ordinator will discuss progress with the individual.

Training

- ECF is committed to providing regular safeguarding training for workers.
- Workers are aware of who the safeguarding Leads are.
- Children are aware of who to contact should they have a concern.

Management of workers

- Roles and responsibilities are distributed among the workers. Each worker is aware of the person in charge of their activity or group (e.g. Sunday School, Youth Group).
- There is a written Code of Conduct for all workers ([Appendix 5](#)).
- Team meetings are convened regularly.
- Some activities may need specific forms such as a consent form or risk assessment.
- Where there is an allegation of abuse against a worker, the worker is supported and appropriate action is taken. Workers and those engaging with the church can raise concerns, how this can be done are set out in the complaints and whistle blowing policy. Information can be found below:

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/media/urtbeawk/model-complaints-policy-1.docx>

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

Section 3: Safety

During Sunday morning meeting

- A register is taken for each Sunday School/ Bible class.
- There are two adult workers present per Sunday School/Bible Class and thereafter the number of adults as per adult child ratios according to the age of the children.
- Younger children (up to and including Year 2) are collected by their parent/carer.

After the meeting

- Children may play in certain areas of the site after the Sunday morning meeting (the back garden and area at the front). Car access to the site is limited on Sunday morning to essential use only.
- It is the responsibility of the parents/carers of those children to make sure the children are playing safely.
- Children/young people are not allowed to leave the site unless there is prior written permission from parents/carers.
- Once out of Sunday School, parents/carers are responsible for their own children.
- It is the responsibility of all to look out for the safety of children.

Youth Clubs/Childrens' Clubs

- These take place on the church premises or there may be an organised recreational activity off-site where parents have given permission for travelling in the church minibus/ going swimming.
- Club members are required to have a signed consent form from their parents/guardian.
- Copies of consent forms are taken on off-site activities to be accessed only if and when necessary.
- Two or more adult workers are responsible for these activities according to the age and number of the children. An appropriate ratio of adult workers supervises all activities.
- A parental contact number is necessary for any new child attending club who will be sent home with a consent form if that child wants to attend regularly.
- There is an accident and incident book kept in the kitchen of the ECF hall to record any incidents and parents are informed, if needed.
- There is also a medical kit in a labelled kitchen cupboard in the hall. A first aid kit is taken to off-site activities.

Youth Weekends and Camps

- Workers will have training and preparation for residential weekends or camps as well as on-going training with Thirtyone:eight materials.
- A consent form showing contact details is required from parents/guardians for any young person under the age of 18.
- This form includes medical and dietary information, permission for photographs to be taken.
- This information can be accessed by workers as needed.
- Parents/carers are informed of the accommodation arrangements, activities involved, and relevant contact numbers.

- Registration takes place upon arrival of the young people.
- There is an accident and incident book kept in the kitchen of the ECF hall to record any incidents and parents are informed.
- A specific risk assessment is tailored to each event to include guidelines on health and safety, first aid, use of photos and technology.
- At least one qualified first-aider will be present. At the beginning of a camp or weekend, we make known to all attendees who the first-aiders are, as well as who has overall responsibility for the weekend, as well as who a youth/child should talk to if they have a problem.
- ECF is working to best practice when transporting young people. This practice involves two adults being present in a vehicle with youth/children at all times, unless absolutely unavoidable (e.g. an emergency). In cases where two adults are not present, the adult should contact another adult to inform them of the need to transport with just one adult. If parents are transporting children/youth during a weekend, consent is obtained from all children's parents/guardians beforehand.
- ECF is operating a no-smoking policy and a prohibition on the consumption of alcohol and illegal substances. Any child/youth or worker found to be possessing alcohol or illegal substances would have to leave the weekend or camp. The child/youth's parents/guardians would be contacted and their removal from the weekend or camp arranged. A worker would be instructed to leave immediately.
- Following detailed discussions around the supervision of attendees at a Youth Weekend, the leadership concluded that given our site, it was in the best interests of the safety and wellbeing of children/youth that at least two leaders would be sleeping in the same area as the children. This enables the safest environment for those attending and ensures a high level of care.

Social media and data protection

- No photos or videos will be taken or published of any child attending an event or activity unless prior permission is sought from a parent/carer ([Appendix 6](#)).
- ECF has a policy on online safety ([Appendix 7](#)).

Section 4: Responding to Concerns

If abuse is suspected or disclosed (see [Appendix 1](#), Definitions and Signs and Symptoms of Abuse):

- Ensure the welfare of the child.
- If there is a physical injury or symptom of neglect, contact the Safeguarding Team.
- If a child/young person discloses any issue to you, listen and do not show that you are shocked or upset. Do not ask leading questions or try to investigate. Show acceptance. Tell them you may need to share the disclosure.
- Do not worry about the consequences for you or for the individual concerned; the Safeguarding Co-ordinators will ensure that matters are dealt with properly and in accordance with the law and ECF's Safeguarding Policy.
- Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:
- 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 Lead(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.
- Make a written, dated note of any conversation causing concern WITHIN 24 HOURS (Incident Report Form, [Appendix 2](#)). Please be as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible – do not interpret what was said using your own words. Include details such as tone of voice, facial expression, and body language. Include a record of what you said.

This will be handed or e-mailed to a Safeguarding Lead and kept in a secure place:

- Peter Cowling, Safeguarding Lead, pete.cowling@ntlworld.com.
- Daniel Towers, Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Rachel Blackburn, Deputy Safeguarding Lead

- Information will be given to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator on a strictly confidential basis. Any serious concerns will be referred by them to the Social Services department for investigation under section 47 of the 1989 Children Act or referred to the police. The contact number for children's services in our area is

0118 9373641

How do I contact the Children's Single point of Access?

There are 3 ways to contact the team:

- Using a web form, which is the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child. The form can be found at: <https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/report-concerns-about-a-child/>
- Calling the team on 0118 937 3641
- Emailing the team on cspoa@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Details on how to proceed in the event of a concern being raised by a third party are in [Appendix 3](#).

Detailed procedures for the Safeguarding Leads where there is a concern are in [Appendix 8](#).

Section 5: Pastoral Care

- The ECF leadership are available to support those affected by abuse.
- Advice and information will be taken from <https://thirtyoneeight.org/>.

Supporting those affected by abuse

- The ECF leadership are available to support 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. This is achieved through pastoral care, through counselling agencies, or other appropriate services. The impact of spiritual abuse is recognised by the church when seeking to offer support.

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, the leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and thorough consultation with appropriate parties.

Appendix 1: Definitions and Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

What is abuse?

- Physical abuse - includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, administering poisonous substances, suffocating/drowning, excessive force, Fabricated illness Child sexual exploitation, Child criminal exploitation, County lines, Child on child abuse, FGM.
- Neglect - a failure to meet basic essential needs of a child, or if a child is left unsupervised at a young age
- Emotional abuse - children harmed by constant lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting or shouting.
- Sexual abuse - involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents, in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violate the social taboos of family roles.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse)

Who abuses children?

- very rarely a stranger
- often someone close to a child, e.g. parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative or friend of the family
- sometimes, someone in authority such as a teacher, youth leader, children's worker, or, very sadly, a church worker/leader
- sometimes, paedophiles and others who set out to join organisations (including churches) to obtain access to children

How might we recognise abuse?

Warning signs: They are only a guide, they are not necessarily proof of abuse, but may be an indication of it:

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Nervousness/watchfulness.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Changed or inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention- seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

Other instances where leaders should be vigilant are:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them, or where differing explanations have been received.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places, which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries and illnesses, which have not received medical attention.
- Instances where children are kept away from the group or school inappropriately.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Any signs of neglect, under nourishment or inadequate care.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- A child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters, and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.

- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

One or more warning signs may be evident.

Earley Christian Fellowship Safeguarding Leads will seek the advice of Thirtyone:eight in the event of difficulty in making appropriate judgments.

Appendix 2: Incident Report Form

Information	
Full name of child or young person concerned	
Address*	
Email address	
Telephone number*	
Date of birth	
Date and time of incident	
Location of incident	
Other people present (witnesses)	
Incident	
Please be as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible – do not interpret what was said using your own words.	
Include details such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language.	
Record of what you said.	

Appendix 3: Third Party/anonymous referrals/allegations

Families not known to the church:

- In cases where allegations are made by a third party, the role of the church worker is to elicit as much information as possible from the referrer. Unless the person wishes to remain anonymous this should include the referrer's details (name, address, telephone number) and as much factual detail as possible about the child and family concerned (names of family members, address, name /date of birth of subject child, ethnic origin, etc). Information as to the cause of concern/nature of injuries/observations should be included.
- The church worker must inform the referrer that information relating to any child at risk, will be shared with their church leaders and may result in referral to the Social Services Department, and in this event the Social Services Department may wish to interview the referrer (if known) as part of the child protection investigation.
- The church worker will then report the above information to the church leaders and the latter will then seek the advice from the umbrella organisation and then if there are sufficient concerns to make a referral to the Social Service Department.

Families known to the church:

- In cases known to the church where the church suspects from either direct observation, third party information, from the child or from a parent/carer, that the child is/has suffered **sexual abuse**, the matter must be reported immediately to the leaders of Earley Christian Fellowship with a view to referral to Social Services Department or directly to the authorities if the church leaders are implicated.
- Should a child allege sexual abuse, the parents should not under any circumstances be informed. Where a parent/carer alleges sexual abuse by another person of their child, the parent/carer should be advised not to inform the alleged perpetrator. Should the church worker by direct observation suspect sexual abuse, they should discuss this immediately with the church leader, with a view to discussion with Social Services as to how the matter will be dealt with.
- In cases of **physical, emotional abuse or neglect** where the church worker, by observation considers that such concerns exist. The church worker should suggest to a parent that they should seek medical help. Approaching the doctor is less threatening and it's then up to the medical practitioner to decide whether there is a question of abuse, which needs to be referred to Social Services. If a parent is reluctant, then the worker could consider going with them or, if they fail to co-operate, then the matter should be immediately discussed with the line manager/church leader, who will refer to Social Services Department if appropriate. Of course, in cases of serious injury the church worker should summon medical help immediately.

Appendix 4: Youth Worker Application Form

We ask all prospective workers with children and young people to complete this form. If there is insufficient room to fully answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet. The information will be kept confidentially by the leadership unless requested by an appropriate authority.

Role applied for:

Personal Details

Full Name:

Maiden/All former names:

Date and place of birth: / /

Address:

Postal Code:

Telephone Numbers: Day: Evening:

How long have you lived at the above address? _____ years

If less than 3 years, please give previous address(es) with dates

From / / to / / From / / to / /

Previous Address	Previous Address
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Please tell us about your Christian experience (i.e. how long have you been a Christian, which Church(es) have you attended and dates, name of minister/leader, any activities undertaken.)

Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children. Please include details of any relevant qualifications or appropriate training either in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Have you ever had an offer to work with children people declined?

YES / NO (Please circle).

If yes, please give details:

References

Please give the names, addresses and telephone numbers and role or relationship of two people who know you well and who would be able to give a personal reference. In addition, we reserve the right to take up character references from any other individuals deemed necessary.

Name

Name

Address

Address

Telephone No.

Telephone No.

Role

Role

Declaration (see note below*)

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a criminal offence; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations? (NB: The disclosure of an offence may not prohibit your appointment.)

YES / NO (please circle).

If yes, please give details including the nature of the offence(s) and dates.

Have you ever been involved in court proceedings concerning a child for whom you have had parental responsibility?

YES / NO (please circle). If yes, please give details and dates.

Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding your conduct with children?

YES / NO (please circle). If yes, please give details.

To your knowledge have you ever had any allegation made against you that has been reported to, and investigated by, Social Services and/or the Police?

YES / NO (please circle). If yes, we will need to discuss this with you.

I confirm that the submitted information is correct and complete and that I am willing for a police check to be submitted.

Signed _____ Date / /

Please return form to Peter Cowling (Child Protection Team of ECF).

Appendix 5: Code of Conduct

Earley Christian Fellowship (ECF) behaviour code for working with children and young people.

Purpose

- This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers).
- The code of conduct aims to help protect 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

- When working with children and young people, you are acting in a position of trust for ECF. 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.
- Engaging in any contact that breaches ECF online safety policy ([Appendix 7](#)).
- Developing inappropriate relationships.
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances.
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged.

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 6: Consent forms for child/youth activities

Earley Christian Fellowship

153 Wokingham Road, READING, Berkshire, RG6 1LW. website: <https://ecfreading.org/>

CHILDREN'S WORK AUTHORISATION

CONFIDENTIAL

Child's Personal Details (ONE FORM PER CHILD) (Please inform us promptly of any changes.)

First Name(s)	Known as:	
Surname	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Address		
Home Phone	Postcode	Date of Birth

Child's Medical Information *Note: This information will normally only be needed in an emergency (see consent details, below)*

Doctor's Name	Surgery name
Address and Postcode	
Surgery Phone	Emergency No.
Disabilities, allergies, medical conditions	(eg asthma, travel sickness; please include usual remedies)
Medication - who/when/how administered	
Any further notes	Approx. date (month/year) of last tetanus injection /

Parent or Guardian Details & Emergency Phone Numbers (Please include a 2nd / alternative contact or number if possible.)

Guardian name	Mobile/Emergency no.
Relationship	(delete as appropriate) <i>Mother / Father / or Other (specify):</i>
Second contact	Other Emergency no.
Relationship	(delete as appropriate) <i>Mother / Father / or Other (specify):</i>

Parent / Guardian's Authorisation *Note: All potentially hazardous activities - eg swimming - will be fully supervised*

I give permission for my child, named above, to be involved in the following ECF activities (delete as appropriate) **Youth Club | Kids Club | Meetings | Sunday School | Bible Class | swimming | outings | on-/off- site activities.**
 My child may be transported to & from such activities by church-owned or other transport available to ECF.

My child may be included in photographs of their activities, taken by helpers and other children. Yes No

I understand that if my child has an accident or becomes ill, you will always try to contact me first for my instructions, before taking any action. If you cannot contact me, I give permission for my child to receive emergency medical treatment, including an anaesthetic.

Signed _____ Date _____

Earley Christian Fellowship (ECF) operates a Child Protection Policy. Copy available on request from our Safeguarding Team. The Policy includes a mandatory DBS check on all children's activity leaders (aged 18+).

Youth Weekend parental consent form
If you are over 18, please just complete the name and address.

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

ADDRESS _____

_____ Tel No _____ Mob No _____

EMERGENCY AUTHORITY FOR YOUTH WEEKEND (Peter Cowling).

~ This section must be completed by the parent or guardian. It provides important information for the good care of your child including giving responsibility to the youth leader for his/her safety, and authority for the leader to sign, on your behalf any papers needed by the medical authorities in case of emergency hospital treatment.

I give permission for _____ to attend the youth weekend (insert date). I will inform you if he/she has contact with any infectious disease within 3 weeks of the event, if any medication is necessary during the weekend and of the appropriate hospital concerned if under treatment. I will provide any pills/medicine clearly marked with name and dose before departure where necessary. In the event of illness or accident requiring emergency hospital treatment, I authorize you, as youth leader, to sign, on my behalf, any written form of consent required by the hospital authorities, if the delay required to obtain my own signature is considered inadvisable by the surgeon concerned.

- He/She has/has not special dietary requirements_e.g. vegetarian, wheat intolerance, gluten/dairy free etc. Details overleaf.
- I give permission for photographs of youth activities to be taken during the weekend which may include my child. Yes/No
- I give permission for my son/daughter to be transported from the Church location to the activities by way of the church minibus or private transport available to ECF. Yes/No.
- I give details overleaf of any allergies (e.g. penicillin) or disabilities (e.g. travel sickness, asthma) that my child has, including usual remedies.
- He/she has/has not* been immunised against tetanus in the last 10 years. **delete as appropriate*

His/her National Health Number is _____

Name and address of family doctor _____

_____ Tel _____

I give overleaf details of where I can be contacted during the weekend of 18-20 Feb. 2022 if I am not going to be at the address given above.

SIGNED _____ (Parent/Guardian) DATE _____

Although we have the usual public liability insurance, some may feel happier if they take out their own personal accident cover.

Appendix 7: Online Safety Policy

This part of the policy covers workers' use of:

- Social networking websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tiktok.
- Microblogging broadcasting, of which the best-known facility is Twitter.
- Regular online blogs (web logs, or online diaries).
- Video-sharing websites such as YouTube and Vimeo.
- Communications in virtual worlds such as Second Life.

As a Church we value the communication opportunities that social media, blogs and video sharing sites present. New technology offers many opportunities for us to share news, updates and prayer requests. Our policy affirms the use of social media, but also seeks to protect the reputation of the Church and those we represent. We also have a commitment to training our workers in respect of the appropriate use of Social Media.

- Members who want to create a church related website, online blog, or upload video content to YouTube or other social sites which links with Church, uses the Church logo or identifies them as members should notify the Elders.
- Social media is viewed as any other means of representing the Church and anyone making false representations may be subject to disciplinary procedures. This includes comments you make on personal websites or social media sites.
- All social media interaction (including WhatsApp) between workers and young people should be limited to monitored/administered groups.
- The minimum age for WhatsApp users in the UK is 16. Thirtyone:Eight recommend these are group chats only, with more than 1 moderator overseeing the chats and monitoring what is being shared and not for 1:1 sustained, conversations. Those under 13 years of age should not be on social media platforms as they are under the approved age range required to access these services. A WhatsApp group for parents/carers is a means of distributing the information we need to get to young people.
- To help equip parents with understanding online safety and the different platforms their children will be using, the following website: www.internetmatters.org may be of interest.
- Consent forms (Appendix 6) contain permission for photography or videos to be taken of the children or young people.

General Guidelines

The following pointers should be interpreted as general guidelines for the use of such media by workers. They are not exhaustive, and should be viewed as a positive affirmation of the use of social media in a way which enables workers to become social media ambassadors. A number of possible scenarios are discussed as examples.

- a) You are personally responsible for any content you personally publish on-line, whether in a blog, social networking site or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time. Protect your privacy and take care to understand a site's terms of service.
- b) Be thoughtful about how you present yourself in online social networks. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in online social networks. By virtue of identifying yourself as a member of Earley Christian Fellowship within a social network, you are now connected to your colleagues, friends and even contacts. You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at the Church, but more than that it should be consistent with a Christ-like testimony.
- c) Respect your audience. Don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in our Church. Be careful about careless comments or content which could be misconstrued. Be sensitive about who is likely to see the comments or content. You should also show proper consideration

for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory such as politics and denominational differences.

- d) Take particular care when posting information about children's activities or interacting with children online. Do not initiate friendships with minors on Facebook or other social media sites. Consider the appropriate use of privacy settings in your personal use of social media. Permission should always be sought before posting photographs of children online, even when access to a blog or Facebook page is restricted. Whilst you may control access to your Facebook page, there is nothing preventing a friend or associate passing on a photograph or a contact. In general, refrain from having online conversations with minors. If you are in any doubt whether your online behaviour affects children please contact the Church's Child Protection team.
- e) Confidentiality is arguably a major issue with Microblogging (e.g. tweets) because users may broadcast sensitive personal information to anyone who views their public feed. Therefore always regard tweets as in the public domain and act appropriately.
- f) Understand the concept of community. The essence of community is the idea that it exists so that you can support others and they, in turn, can support you. You may need to learn how to balance personal and professional information, and the important role that transparency plays in building a community. Your community should not be an environment where competition or borderline behaviour is encouraged or emphasized.

Appendix 8: Role of Safeguarding Co-ordinators

Purpose of the Role:

- To co-ordinate safeguarding policy and procedure in ECF.
 - To be aware of policies and keep abreast of any changes.
 - To review policies every two years.
 - To ensure safer recruitment practices take place.

 - To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues.
 - 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
 - To be aware of appropriate contacts within Social Care and the Police.
 - To be aware of when to seek advice from them.
 - To be aware of when to liaise with an ECT trustee.
 - To ensure records are kept by ECF, handled confidentially and stored securely.

 - To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in ECF.
 - To arrange/promote opportunities for training in safeguarding.
 - To make arrangements for a suitable person to carry out their role when they are on leave. The absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- The leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/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 feel happy to use this procedure in the first instance. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/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.

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 Co-ordinator/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 Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

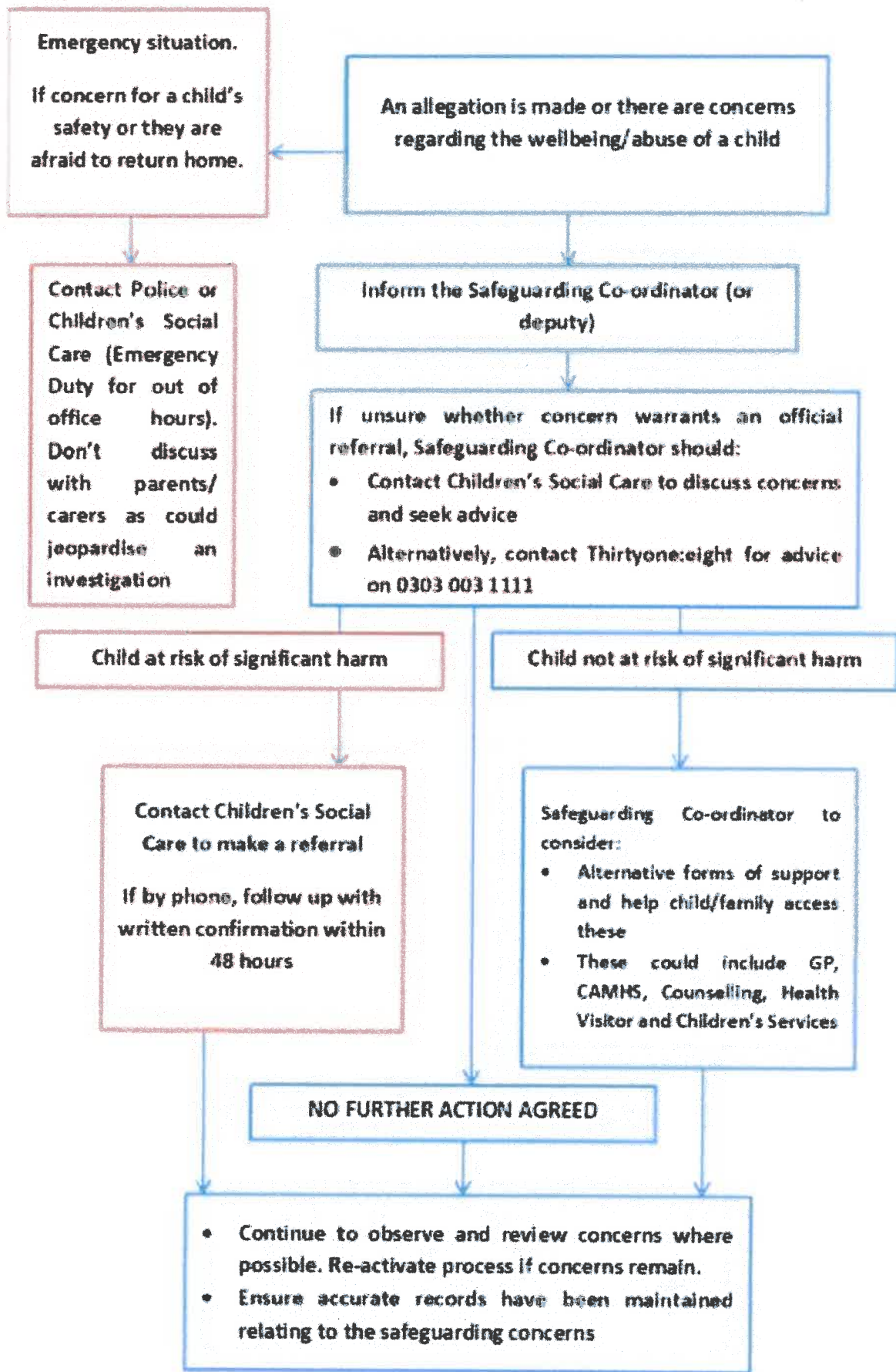
- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

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 Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services regarding the suspension of the worker.

Flowchart for Action



Safeguarding statement to display on website

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

Earley Christian Fellowship

The following statement was agreed by the leadership on:

-
- This place of worship is committed to the safeguarding of children and ensuring their well-being.
 - We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or Abuse to children in all their recognised forms.
 - We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
 - We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship.
 - We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children.
 - We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and will ensure that as a place of worship all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting all children in the place of worship affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding

Leads for this place of worship.

Peter Cowling  Safeguarding Lead


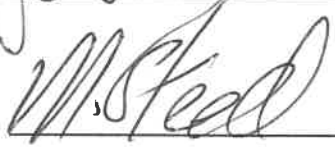
Rachel Blackburn,  Deputy Safeguarding Lead

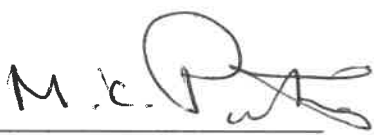

Dan Towers  Deputy Safeguarding Lead

A copy of this place of worship's policy can be requested from the Safeguarding Lead

Signed by the leadership

Signed



Date

17/4/2024

Next Review Date: 26 February 2025