

# IDEN GREEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### 1. Statement of intent

We have a “duty of care” for all adults, young people and children with whom we are involved.

We acknowledge that those under 18 years old have special needs as do adults with conditions limiting their mental or physical abilities, with care and support needs.

In addition, any person can be vulnerable in particular circumstances, such as when they are dependent on a welfare service or undergoing a crisis.

Safer Recruiting processes are used for all our leaders and workers whether in paid or voluntary positions. This is for all from the Church Minister to the kitchen assistant. DBS checks are carried out where the role is eligible. **Current staff are DBS checked every five years.**

In addition to adopting safe practise in every activity organised by, on or in the Church we aim to ensure that the building, meeting rooms etc. are safe and well maintained.

We ensure that fire and electrical equipment is regularly tested. If any meetings take place in a building other than the Church's own we do the best we can to ascertain that these checks have been carried out.

All documents with personal data are kept securely and destroyed safely after 6 months, unless we need the information for financial records. *Iden Green Congregational Church keeps personal information of employees, including contact details, appraisals and reviews for at least 5 years. We keep hold of employees' financial for at least 3 years as HMRC may request to see them in this time and we safeguard all papers indefinitely.*

Registers are kept and risk assessments made for all activities on the church premises and also for those held by the church at other venues or outside of any building.

As Christians, we would want to go further than this and say that we are responsible to God for the way we treat everyone. So we seek high standards because we want to, not just because we have to!

Taking good care is a never-ending process – so the Church will review its procedures and documents at least once every twelve months. This document was last revised on **1<sup>st</sup> July 2019** and agreed by the Church meeting on **17<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

**IDEN GREEN Congregational Church adopts the Congregational Federation guidelines as the standards for all its work with children, young people and adults.**

## **1. Applying good practice**

The church's involvement falls into three categories:

- a) the informal fellowship of people of different ages and capabilities in the worshipping community;
- b) groups organised specifically for children, young people or adults.
- c) groups organised by other agencies on the church premises.

### **a) Informal fellowship**

Church Members have a shared responsibility for all those attending worship and other all-age activities. No one of any age but especially those under 18, elderly or in currently vulnerable circumstances should be left in a dangerous situation.

No person should be subjected to physical or verbal abuse, bullying or inappropriate contact of any kind. All members have a responsibility to step in and challenge such behaviour, and to report it straight away to a church officer.

- **The Church accepts a shared responsibility for all its children and young people, and undertakes to be diligent in their care and supervision.**
- **The Church accepts a shared responsibility for adults who share in its life, and is committed to developing awareness of their needs and dignity.**

### **b) Church groups**

At present these are:      **Woodland Wide Games**

**Holders of these positions are required to notify the members/trustees each time they wish to appoint an assistant leader, so that the church can assure itself that the necessary recruitment steps are taken.**

### **c) other groups using church premises**

At present these are:      **Mr Noah's Nursery School**

The Church advises holders of the positions above that all work on its premises must meet the standards set down in this policy. They are advised to have sufficient insurance cover appropriate for the activity carried out on church premises. Leaders have to sign an agreement that they will follow safeguarding and other relevant processes.

## **2. Safer Recruitment and levels of checking**

In order to ensure safer recruiting, the church completes a job description and person specification, an application form (including a self-declaration form where relevant), an interview and taking references (at least two – not from a relative or someone already working/volunteering for the church).

All church leaders, workers and volunteers are asked to obtain a DBS / PVG check where appropriate.

These lists have been adapted to take into account the introduction of vetting and barring schemes detailed in the Protection of Freedom Act 2012 and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland.

**There may be other roles identified within the Church in addition to the ones listed. Checks are not available for people under 16 years.**

A Local Workers Form (LWF) is required to be completed by anyone wishing to work in a paid or voluntary role within the church.

The DBS/PVG certificate is the property of the applicant however they are required to show the Church's appointed Safeguarding Officer / Protection Verifier their certificate on its receipt. (Unless this is an online check, in which case the applicant only need show the certificate if the verifier is informed that something is on the certificate. Details that may affect the role to which they wish to be appointed are noted and acted upon. This may mean that they are unable to take up the role applied for. The date for renewal is noted for church records. Copies of the certificate are not taken or kept by the church.

New staff and volunteers are trained in our safeguarding practices and procedures.

There are different types of criminal record checks that an employer can request:

- **PVG - Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (Scotland)**  
For staff and volunteers requiring a disclosure in Scotland.  
Includes "New Member" or an "Existing Member" paper application process.
- **DBS Standard check (England and Wales)** shows any spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings
- **DBS Enhanced check (England and Wales)** shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role
- **DBS Enhanced check with barred lists (England and Wales)** shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether you're on the list of people barred from doing the role

### **Enhanced Check with Barred Lists**

- Any Minister, Pastor or Church Ministry leader
- Any retired Minister or Pastor still engaged in Church work
- Leaders/Supervisors of people regularly working with Children
- People transporting children on behalf of the Church

### **Enhanced Check**

- Leaders/Supervisors of people working with Adults
- People transporting adults on behalf of the Church
- Visitors authorised by the Church who undertake assistance with shopping, bills etc.  
The Leaders of groups or activities which involve children or young people under 18 on a regular basis.

### **Standard Check**

- The Leaders of groups or activities which involve adults on the Church premises.

### **Self-Disclosure**

- Applicants requiring self-disclosure only (completion of LWF (Local Workers form and references sought)

- Helpers in any group who are supervised at all times.
- Protection Verifiers.

#### **DBS certificate issued by a third party**

- Regular visiting worship leaders from other churches undertaking no pastoral duties can be asked for evidence of a Disclosure certificate.

***Please note that the above list is for guidance only, as it is not an exhaustive description of potential roles within the life and ministry of the church.***

The church appoints Andrew Barrett as its Protection Verifier. In most circumstances checks are should be carried out using the DDC (Due Diligence Checking) which is the Registered Body acting on behalf of the Congregational Federation.

### **3. Good Practice – Safeguarding**

In addition to the safer recruiting measures and general duty of care to all people outlined above, the church advises all leaders of work with **under 18's** of the following requirements:

#### **a) Supervision**

Leaders must be prepared and ready before admitting children to the building. Children remain under leaders' supervision throughout their time on the premises. Leaders and helpers who do not have the appropriate DBS/PVG certificates need to be supervised at all times and should not be left in sole charge of a child or group. If they are required to assist in toileting they need to have a DBS/PVG check.

#### **b) Working Safely**

Leaders and helpers must avoid situations where they are alone with a child. A leader should not work alone with a group behind closed doors. If possible, children should be led by at least one person of their own gender. The rooms used should be suitable for the numbers of children attending. Registers should be taken at every meeting. Risk assessments should be carried out periodically.

#### **c) Handling Information**

Leaders should be able to respond correctly if a child reports that they have been abused:

- do listen
- do not promise to 'keep a secret'
- do not put words into the child's mouth – hear and report only what they say/do
- do not jump to conclusions or start an investigation
- do not keep the information to yourself
- If a child may be in immediate danger, contact the police.

**The Church appoints Thirtyone:Eight (Formerly CCPAS) as its confidential advisers.**

Any disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, or the potential for these, must be reported the police and an appropriate agency, the Church Secretary to be informed of the action taken. Leaders should inform the Minister or Safeguarding Officer in the first instance, who will inform the relevant agencies. A record of what was said / observed will be kept in a locked cabinet, along with any actions taken by the church (informing agencies, for example).

**d) Home Contacts and Permission**

An accurate register of children will be kept including addresses and telephone numbers. Parents' permission to attend will be obtained in writing at least once a year and whenever children are to be taken off the premises. This permission will include medical details and permission to use photos/contact the child if necessary. (Parents have the right to refuse this permission)

**e) Standard of work**

Leaders are required to maintain a high standard of work, and are encouraged to take up training opportunities to enhance their skills. The church will make all workers aware of any training opportunities and ensure workers are aware of all relevant changes to policy, procedures or legal requirements, including holding internal training events where relevant.

## **4. Regulated activities**

**a) Basis in law**

The Protection of Freedom Act 2012, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 require those undertaking 'regulated activities' to obtain safeguarding registration.

**b) Definition of 'regulated activities'**

These are roles which involve responsibility for children and adults with care and support needs (such as teaching, training, care, supervision or transport arranged by the church) and which are undertaken regularly, frequently or intensively.

This includes:

- those working once a week or more**
- those working for four days or more in a month**  
(e.g. a week-long holiday Bible club for children)
- those working overnight** (e.g. a youth group sleep-over)
- those managing or supervising any of the above.**

**c) Definition of 'vulnerable' (Children, and adults with care and support needs)**

People may be vulnerable because of their age (i.e. under 18); an incapacity (e.g. restricted sight); because of a circumstance (e.g. recent bereavement); or because of reliance on a service (e.g. transport arranged by the church).

Safeguarding registration is required for roles which take some responsibility for people whenever they have care and support needs. This occurs whenever the service is provided and does not need to meet the frequently or intensively rule as above for children. Transport to hospital etc. assistance with shopping, eating and toileting requires a DBS check even if only done occasionally or on a short term basis e.g. because of incapacity due to illness.

Services targeted mainly or solely at vulnerable people (e.g. an advice service for those who find it difficult to fill in forms) are likely to involve roles in this category.

**d) Referring Information**

The church is legally obliged to refer information about individuals who may pose a risk to children or other vulnerable people. The church must report to the Disclosure and Barring

Service any person dismissed from a position within the church even if they have not been charged with a criminal offence.

Referrals are to be made to the appropriate safeguarding agency (DBS/PVG). When such action is being considered, the Congregational Federation Safeguarding Office should be contacted immediately.

## 5. Additional guidelines

### a) Staffing numbers

Recommended ratios of adults and children are:

0-2 years:	1 adult for 3 children
2-3 years:	1 adult for 4 children
3-7 years:	1 adult for 8 children
8+ years:	1 adult for 10 children.

But please note that there must be a MINIMUM of two adults, regardless of recommended ratios.

### b) Safe Activities

Leaders should avoid inherently dangerous or inappropriate games – e.g. young children lifting each other off the ground. They should avoid activities involving physical contact between adults and children, and minimise likely physical contact between children where possible.

### c) Emergencies

A first aid box is provided in **the kitchen and the toilet vestibule**. A telephone available for use in an emergency, in the school room and/or vestry. Any accidents must be recorded in the accident books which are kept near the first aid boxes. Other serious incidents should also be recorded in writing and the record kept securely.

Leaders must be familiar with the fire procedure and evacuation routes. It is suggested that a fire drill be performed with the group once each term.

### d) Safe Use of Images

All photographs including children used on a church web-site or for any other public display (such as a church magazine) must reflect normal children's activities and show the children fully clothed.

Photographs in which individual children can readily be identified may only be displayed on the church's web-site provided parents / carers have given specific written permission.

Larger group photographs in which children cannot readily be identified may be used on the web-site provided parents / carers have given general written permission for their children to be included in church publicity.

This general permission must also be obtained by the church before children's images are used in magazines, posters, etc. or published by a third party, such as a local newspaper or a denominational magazine.

### e) Electronic communications

Only church post holders holding a valid Disclosure and Barring Check may have their contact details included in the web-site or contact young people directly by electronic means.

Meeting times for children's groups are only given on our web-site where all children are met by parents or carers. There is no unrestricted entry to the building at these times.

All contact with under 18's or other vulnerable persons through e-mail, message boards, etc. is copied to a church officer or available for regular inspection by another relevant person – in other words the minister or safeguarding officer.

Phone calls and texts/messaging between leaders and young people are kept brief and functional. For example, 'what time is club tonight?' 'It's at 7, see you there'.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow the Social Media policy, and the church appoints **Tobin Bird** to administer and monitor this if necessary.

**f) Possible physical hazards**

Hazards should be noted and appropriate guidelines given to prevent accidents etc. Leaders are responsible for seeing that safety rules are kept.

**g) Off the premises**

Written risk assessments are recommended for any trips off premises. Prior consent by the Church Meeting is required for any planned residential trips.

**h) Support for Leaders**

The Church seeks to support and encourage all leaders in their work, and expresses this support through the church **members meeting**. Leaders may ask to meet with the **trustees** at any time to discuss their work.

# APPENDIX 1 - SAFEGUARDING CHECKS

Record of Certificates Obtained (all certificates to be renewed every five years). Certificates or copies should not be held by the church. Certificates are the property of the applicant.

*Please note: This document should not be displayed with the policy or a copy given to outside users. It should be locked away with self- disclosure forms, references etc. A copy should however be sent to the Congregational Federation's Safeguarding Officer with the policy when applying for safeguarding status.*

Name	Role	Certificate Number	Date of Issue	Seen & Checked by (Signature/date)
Tobin Bird	Children's worker	001454879643	11/8/2014	PM
Jo Bird	Children's worker	001455971187	20/8/2014	PM
Chloë Bird	Children's worker	001455895895	20/8/2014	PM
Andrew Barrett	Protection Verifier	001457856487	8/9/2014	PM
Andrew Barrett	Nursery School Governor	001526039192	13/4/2016	PM
Kathleen Barrett	Children's worker	001526039798	13/4/2016	PM
Ollie Batehup	Youth worker	001471869523	7/1/2015	PM
Claire Williams	Children's worker	001478872607	10/3/2015	PM
Clare Sargent	Children's worker	001494333230	16/7/2015	PM
Lily Carlisle	Youth worker	001503524795	29/9/2015	PM
Jake Carlisle	Youth	001503683420	30/9/2015	PM

	<b>Worker</b>			
<b>Caroline Jane Buss</b>	<b>Children's worker</b>	<b>001599298671</b>	<b>15/12/2017</b>	<b>PM</b>
<b>James Peter Buss</b>	<b>Children's worker</b>	<b>001599387763</b>	<b>15/12/2015</b>	<b>PM</b>
<b>David John Knott</b>	<b>Children's worker</b>	<b>001650834921</b>	<b>12/3/2019</b>	<b>AB</b>
<b>Nigel Francis Gray</b>	<b>Children's worker</b>	<b>001512055219</b>	<b>4/12/2015 (renewed automatically annually)</b>	<b>Little Gate Farm</b>