



York Community Church
The Centre @ Burnholme
Mossdale Avenue
York
YO31 0HA

Telephone 01904 551733
Email: office@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk

Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Codes of Conduct

Date of Issue: June 2021

Review Date: July 2023

Approved by Trustees:

Date: 13th July 2022

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Catherine Candlin.

Date: 10th May 2024

Circulated to Church Leaders:

Date:

Company Number: 0766084

Charity Registered Number: 1143070

Contents

Section	Description	Page
A	<u>Vision and Values of YCC</u>	2
B	<u>Safeguarding Policy and Procedures</u>	
	1. Purpose	3
	2. Scope	3
	3. Context	3
	4. Values and Beliefs	4
	5. Our responsibilities and Commitments	5
C	<u>Safeguarding Procedures</u>	
	6. Purpose	7
	7. Scope	7
	8. Definitions	7
	9. Governance and Oversight	8
	10. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers	8
	11. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment	10
	12. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures	12
	13. Allegations against or concerns about staff and volunteers	13
	14. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people	14
	15. Concerns about practice and whistleblowing	15
	16. Basis of policy and legal framework	15
Appendix A	<u>Key Safeguarding Actions and Contacts</u>	16
Appendix B	<u>Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework</u>	19
Appendix C	<u>Standard Document Samples</u>	20
	- Application to volunteer	21
	- Concerns reporting form	25
	- Confidential file chronology	28
	- Confidential file record of conversations and actions	29
	- Template report from Designated Safeguarding Referral Team to Trustees	30
Appendix D	<u>Code of Conduct</u>	32
Appendix E	<u>Flowchart for key safeguarding actions where the concern is about a child</u>	34

A - Vision and Values of YCC

York Community Church is a Christian charity and one of its objects is to advance the Christian faith. We express this in terms of our vision, which is:

“Together, to know God and make Him known”

This means that together, as a Christian community, we seek to deepen our knowledge and experience of God and to make his love and the message of his kingdom known to the communities that we serve. We want everything we do to reflect our core values which are:

Faith • Love • Unity • Trust • Enjoyment

We want all of our policies to:

- comply with all relevant statutory guidance, legislation and regulations,
- be embedded in our practice in line with our values and culture,
- be aligned with our biblical faith.

In terms of what “our biblical faith” means: YCC is a member of the Evangelical Alliance and supports their ‘Basis of Faith’. York Community Church also has its own Statement of Faith and Practice which all members of The Leadership Team, the Trustees and all employees are required to sign indicating their agreement to its contents. The church expects all workers (volunteer and staff) to reflect the character of Jesus through their conduct and lifestyle.

YCC does not have a formal membership system: for this policy, a member is defined as a regular attendee who has connected to church activities, or anyone who considers themselves to be part of YCC’s church family.

B - Safeguarding Policy and Procedures:

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

1. Purpose

This policy with its appendices outlines how we will:

- Ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing, and protective environment for everyone who engages with our church community.
- Ensure that every member of our church community is protected from harm and abuse and that if abuse is identified, it is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately.
- Ensure that our trustees, staff and volunteers are clear about their responsibilities and duties and are supported to competently and confidently fulfil them.
- Support the development of an open and transparent culture that listens to the views and wishes of every member of our church community and supports the raising of concerns and complaints.
- Provide leadership and accountability for every member of our church community in relation to safeguarding.

2. Scope

- This policy applies to everyone who works on our behalf with children, young people, their parents / carers and adults at risk of abuse whether Trustees, Leaders, group / ministry leads, paid staff, volunteers, or others working on our behalf.

3. Context

York Community Church (YCC) is an independent evangelical church established in 1993 which has met in various congregational structures and community based activities since being established.

YCC is a limited company (Company Number: 0766084) registered as a charity (Charity Registered Number: 1143070) and therefore we have a group of Trustees who are responsible for ensuring that

the activities of the church accord with the trust document, accounts are kept in a form approved by the Charity Commissioners, that the annual accounts are examined and submitted to the Commissioners together with the annual report, as well as responsibility for the Church's policies. The church also has a Leadership Team (the Leadership Team are defined as Elders in the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association), responsible for the overall direction and activities of the church. This includes responsibility for the services and other activities, pastoral care of the members, and overall distribution of funds.

Children/young people and vulnerable adults are involved in a number of church activities in numerous different physical environments including age specific and gender based small to medium sized groups; they will also frequently be part of larger groups who meet for organised activities as part of the church life. Church activities can take place in The Centre @ Burnholme: (a public community building where YCC's office and Sunday morning services are based; Cornerstone: a church building owned by YCC; and in volunteers' homes. One-to-one mentoring is offered by staff and volunteers on an individual basis. This policy covers any activity provided or resourced by YCC: external organisations such as Foodbank and CAP, which work in partnership with YCC have their own policy and procedures relating to safeguarding for their staff and volunteers.

Foodbank: Any disclosure or complaint taking place in our Foodbank Distribution Session will be reported and actioned under our Safeguarding policy. However, because our Foodbank Session is in Partnership with York Foodbank, our Safeguarding Referral Team will inform York Foodbank Safeguarding Officer of all relevant details and actions taken. All of our foodbank volunteers will also adhere to the York Foodbank Volunteer Code of Conduct as a way of ensuring that the service given to clients is the best we can offer.

4. Values and beliefs

- Everyone who engages with our church community has the right to be protected from any form of bullying or harassment, exploitation or abuse and we will seek to ensure that we provide a caring and nurturing environment that is open and transparent and that promotes the raising of concerns with Leaders or Trustees.
- We have a particular responsibility to protect and promote the wellbeing of those who are vulnerable; particularly to children, young people and adults at risk of abuse; ensuring they are safe while in our care and that we respond appropriately to disclosures or indicators that they are experiencing abuse or neglect while in our care or elsewhere.
- Every member of our church community has a responsibility to act to support the values and commitments outlined in this policy.
- Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:
 - 4.○.1. We are to honour those that God has set in authority over us and to live as responsible and good citizens in the time and place that God has set us in.
 - 4.○.2. Every human life is valuable to God, including the unborn, and each person bears his image.
 - 4.○.3. We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers and we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst from those dangers.
 - 4.○.4. God cares for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger; he calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation.
 - 4.○.5. Jesus' example was one of valuing, accepting, and caring about everyone.

- 4.○.6. We are to love those around us as God loves them and to seek to bring healing, restoration and reconciliation to broken and damaged lives by the manifestation of the love of God through us.
- 4.○.7. The church is not a gathering of sinless and perfect people, but rather a community of grace where we seek to encourage one another to grow in faith and obedience to God.
 - i. We are called to encourage and challenge each other lovingly and to spur one another on to greater holiness and obedience to God in an attitude of humility, grace and forgiveness.
 - ii. Where necessary, the church may impose formal discipline on its members in accord with its governing documents and standing orders.

5. Our responsibilities and commitments

- Our responsibilities are:
 - 5.○.1. To ensure that the protection of all members of our community, but particularly children, young people and adults at risk of abuse and the promotion of their welfare is of paramount importance to us and that best practice in safeguarding is embedded into the culture of our organisation.
 - 5.○.2. To treat each person as equal in the sight of God; equally sinful, equally loved and equally offered the gift of salvation and reconciliation to God and equally protected and respected.
 - 5.○.3. To seek to minister to, and to encourage growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency and sensitivity, in accordance with our fundamental beliefs as laid out in our statement of faith, charitable aims and governing documents.
 - 5.○.4. To value, respect and listen to the wishes of every member of our community, including those who are vulnerable or find it difficult to make their voice heard.
 - 5.○.5. To ensure that as a church we are alert to our duties around the Prevent duty 2016 and to report concerns appropriately.
 - 5.○.6. To work in partnership with children, young people, their parents/carers, adults at risk of abuse and local and national partner agencies and organisations to promote the welfare of and to protect each member of our community, and particularly the vulnerable.
 - 5.○.7. To work to develop and maintain an environment that is protective, caring and nurturing for all who engage with our community, in accordance with our vision, values and beliefs as outlined in our Statement of Faith and Practice.
- How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities
 - 5.○.1. We will seek to visibly demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the organisation and our Church Leaders and Trustees will support the development of best practice and provide accountability to everyone who works (whether paid or voluntarily) on our behalf; including providing accountability and challenge to each other.
 - 5.○.2. We will ensure that those who are responsible for safeguarding at the various levels of the organisation are appropriately trained and supported to competently and confidently fulfil their role.
 - 5.○.3. We will actively seek to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with our biblical principles and best practice in safeguarding.
 - 5.○.4. We will ensure that we have robust and relevant policies, procedures and systems that support the culture of our organisation and the work of all those involved in safeguarding and that these are regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

- 5.○.5. We will ensure that we appoint Designated Safeguarding Leads, supported by a Safeguarding Sub-committee (at least one member of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team, two Leaders, two Trustees, and staff responsible for operational aspects of the safeguarding policy and procedures), who will take responsibility for leading safeguarding children and adults across the organisation.
 - i.* Safeguarding will be promoted and overseen by our Church Leaders and Trustees.
 - ii.* Delegation of tasks and responsibilities will be clearly outlined in the relevant role descriptions and the organisation's safeguarding structures, complete with contact details, will be included in our procedures and made publicly available.
- 5.○.6. We will adopt Safer Recruitment best practice in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- 5.○.7. We will provide effective leadership, management and support for our staff and volunteers including:
 - i.* Ongoing training and skills development.
 - ii.* Supervision and pastoral support.
- 5.○.8. We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry;
 - i.* Developing a positive culture.
 - ii.* Managing health and safety through effective policies and procedures; using risk assessments, processes and proportionate systems.
 - iii.* Creating a positive and nurturing environment in all aspects of the community, including physical, social, emotional, psychological, spiritual etc environments.
 - iv.* Considering the online as well as the physical environments; including our use of social media and technology.
- 5.○.9. We will ensure that we monitor the conduct of our staff and that we have policies, procedures and systems for managing allegations against staff or volunteers, supported by a culture of listening to allegations and responding with rigour, fairness and transparency.
- 5.○.10. We will ensure that our expectations in relation to the conduct of members of our community are clear through codes of conduct, policies and procedures including:
 - i.* Anti-bullying and zero-tolerance approach to bullying; including cyber-bullying and the bullying of volunteers, staff and leaders.
 - ii.* Dealing with peer-abuse and harassment (including sexual harassment).
 - iii.* Clear accountability processes and sanctions for infringements of the codes of conduct.
 - iv.* Equality, diversity and a culture of zero-tolerance of abusive attitudes, language or behaviours toward anybody.
- 5.○.11. We will seek to clearly identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who are part of our community and to respond appropriately and proportionately:
 - i.* To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them.
 - ii.* To provide information, guidance and support as we are able, to help them overcome their challenges.
 - iii.* To share information appropriately with partner agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met.

5.2.12 We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as:

- Consent forms
- Attendance data for work with children, young people and adults at risk of abuse
- Accident and incident reporting
- Confidential recording of safeguarding concerns
- Follow up actions taken, advice given etc

5.2.12 We will involve children, young people, their parents or carers and adults at risk of abuse in our safeguarding processes wherever possible; making reasonable adjustments where necessary to enable them to participate in the decisions that affect them.

5.2.13 We will ensure that we have a culture and policies and procedures for raising concerns or complaints by any member of our community including children, young people, adults at risk or abuse and their parents / carers and for dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest and fair manner; including clear appeals processes.

i. We will also ensure that our Leaders and Trustees are competent and confident in handling complaints.

5.2.14 We will develop a culture that encourages every member of our community to identify and raise concerns and will support this with a clear whistleblowing policy.

i. We will ensure that relevant policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc are publicly available.

C - SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

6. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide staff and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

7. Scope

These procedures will be applied to all staff and volunteers who act on behalf of the church.

8. Definitions

Staff: refers to any paid employee or office holder.

Volunteer(s): refers to anyone who is appointed by the church to a role for which they receive no payment (other than out-of-pocket expenses that are appropriately authorised).

Designated Safeguarding Referral Team: refers to the appointed persons responsible for safeguarding and child protection in YCC. They are responsible for the management of safeguarding referrals.

The Designated Safeguarding Referral team are Vanessa Hutchinson (DSL), Matt Dungey (DSL), and Louis Watson (DSL). (see Appendix A for contact details)

Leader(s): refers to those appointed by the church to be responsible for the spiritual direction and pastoral oversight of the church. With regards to safeguarding, Leaders are responsible for developing a culture that promotes safeguarding. This is a voluntary role.

The YCC Leadership Team are: Becki Dean, Jen Dring, Stephen Flatman, Vanessa Hutchinson, Mark Lewis, James Simister and Bryan Wootten.

Trustee(s): refers to those appointed by the church to be responsible for strategic oversight and legal matters. The Trustees retain ultimate accountability for safeguarding, and are responsible for legal compliance. This is a voluntary role.

The YCC Trustees are: Simon Bryan-Smith, Catherine Candlin, Becki Dean, Eliza Fergusson, Bethan Gibb-Reid, Nigel Moore, Ben Spedding, Ian Thomson, Pat Willis and Bryan Wootten.

Safeguarding Sub-committee: refers to a group made up of two Leaders, two Trustees, and staff responsible for monitoring and implementing operational aspects of the safeguarding policy and procedures.

The Safeguarding Sub-committee are: Vanessa Hutchinson, Eliza Fergusson, Nigel Moore, Matt Dungey (Operations Manager), Jim Melvin (Administrator), and the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team. (see Appendix A for contact details)

Ministry Leads: refers to individuals with responsibility over an aspect of YCC ministries e.g. worship or children's work. With regards to safeguarding, Ministry Leads are responsible for supporting the induction of new volunteers and promote the need for every volunteer to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, teaching and culture of the church and by personal example. This is a voluntary role.

9. Governance and oversight

The Trustees and Safeguarding Sub-Committee will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

- Ensuring that the Church Leaders promote the importance of safeguarding and lead the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable.
- Ensuring that suitably knowledgeable and appropriately skilled Designated Safeguarding Referral Team are appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced.
- Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is in place and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team at least annually, but more frequently as required.
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Sub-committee provides a verbal update to all trustee meetings (which can be conveyed via one of the Trustees) and that a formal annual report is provided to the trustees by the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team.
- Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that role clarity is achieved through a clear definition of the responsibilities of all those involved in safeguarding across the church (see appendix A).

10. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

The recruitment and support of staff and volunteers is of critical importance to York Community Church and to our work and ministry. In order to fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

- **Management of recruitment processes**

- 10.○.1. At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of staff or appointment of volunteers will be trained in Safer Recruitment.
- 10.○.2. Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes.
- 10.○.3. A “Single Central Record” of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained
 - i. DBS certificates will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be kept. The Single Central record is the only record that will be retained by the church.
- 10.○.4. Staff will be provided with written job / role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position / role. Volunteers will be given clear expectations of the role during the appointment process..

- **Recruitment process**

- 10.○.1. Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form (see appendix D). Where necessary and appropriate (e.g. lack of literacy skills, English as a second language etc) support can be provided for completion of the forms.

Paid staff positions

- 10.○.2. Prior to appointment all paid staff will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation.
- 10.○.3. Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought, including, where possible, a reference from the current or previous employer.
- 10.○.4. Upon commencement of their position, all staff will be required to complete a formal induction process.

Volunteer positions

- 10.○.5. Prior to appointment, all volunteers will be required to attend an informal discussion to ensure their suitability and clarity of understanding of the role and its requirements.
- 10.○.6. Prior to appointment, references may be sought (particularly if the individual has recently joined the church).
- 10.○.7. Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, volunteers will be required to complete an informal induction process with their Ministry Lead.

Probationary periods

- 10.○.8. All new staff (who have not been previously employed by the church) will be subject to a formal probationary period, and volunteers will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and can be removed from their position at any time.
- 10.○.9. Prior to commencement of the role, a clear statement of the criteria for successful completion of the probationary period will be provided.

- 10.○.10. Regular support, guidance and review will be provided throughout the probationary period and the outcome (passed, extended, failed) will be communicated to the employee or volunteer prior to the end of the probationary period and records will be retained of all discussions.

Ongoing support and supervision

- 10.○.11. All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management where relevant.
- 10.○.12. Where DBS checks are required, this will be identified in the role description and these checks will be updated at least every three years.

Training

- 10.○.13. All staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular safeguarding training.
- i. Trustees will receive initial training. There is no requirement for formal update training, however, the trustees must ensure that they are competent in their role and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance is up to date.
 - ii. Volunteers and staff involved in working with children, young people or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years.
 - iii. The Designated Safeguarding Referral Team is required to attend formal update training at least every two years.
 - iv. All staff, volunteers, Leaders and Trustees will undergo some informal update activity annually.
- 10.○.14. A log of training and DBS checks will be maintained by the DBS administrator.

11. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

York Community Church fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.

Health and Safety

- The Trustees will ensure that the health and safety of everyone who enters our church community is protected e.g. through risk assessments, accident and incident reporting etc. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policy.

When engaging in ministry to children and / or young people we will:

- Ensure that registers of children attending, and group leaders present are maintained.
- Ensure that those involved in such ministries have been appointed in accordance with our Safer Recruitment procedures. It may be requested that visiting organisations invited to lead youth ministry or ministry with vulnerable adults share their safeguarding policy with Trustees. Visiting leaders will not be left alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that consent is obtained for their attendance at the group and that contact details and information about any additional or specific needs are recorded.

- Ensure that appropriate child: adult ratios are maintained in line with guidance from the NSPCC:
 - ✓ 0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
 - ✓ 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
 - ✓ 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
 - ✓ 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
 - ✓ 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children
- Ensure that appropriate accident / incident reporting is in place and that any accidents or incidents are reported to parents / carers in a timely manner
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken to keep everyone safe, e.g. ensuring that risk assessments are in place and adhered to.

When children or young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and childcare is not provided and their parents are present

- During these times, children remain the responsibility of their parents who are responsible for their safety and care.
- Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team in the usual way.

When young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and participating in that meeting in their own right

- Although there are not specific procedures for such meetings, the normal principles of safeguarding will apply.
- If the young person is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their parents / carers.
- If the young person is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their parents / carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact the parents and establish open communication and transparency.
- Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the young person is adequately protected.
- Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team in the usual way.

When ministering to Adults at Risk of Abuse or Adults with additional support needs

- If the individual is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their carers.
- If the individual is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact them with a view to establishing open communication and transparency.
- Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the individual is adequately protected.

- Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team in the usual way.

General provisions

- The church will ensure that information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed and is available online.
- Those in leadership positions (including Leaders, Trustees, Ministry Leads, and volunteers leading a group on behalf of the church) will promote the need for every member to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, teaching and culture of the church and by personal example.

12. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures

Managing immediate risk

- Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual:
 - 12.○.1. The worker may seek advice from the Ministry Lead or from the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.
 - 12.○.2. In such urgent situations and if a member of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or children's Social care to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team

- Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team
 - 12.○.1. The concerns will be discussed with a member of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding.
 - 12.○.2. Details of the concern must be recorded on the "Incidents and concerns reporting form" (See appendix D) either before, during, or immediately after the discussion with a member of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team.

Managing the risks: the role of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team

- In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required.
- Upon receipt of the completed form, the member of the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk
 - 12.○.1. A Chronology (See appendix D) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file.

- 12.○.2. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis.
 - i. The Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a “need to know” basis
- Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are an adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care
 - 12.○.1. Information will not be shared with the parent/carers in situations where:
 - To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or neglect
 - To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse
 - The concern relates to Fabricated or Induced Illness
 - 12.○.2. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix B for contact details).
 - 12.○.3. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 3 working days, the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will follow up with Children’s Social Care.
 - 12.○.4. The Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the church to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.
 - 12.○.5. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the “Record of action” and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
- Confidential files will be stored in a secure electronic file.
- The Designated Safeguarding Referral Team will share information as necessary with other individuals in the church to facilitate effective safeguarding.

13. Allegations against or concerns about staff and volunteers

York Community Church takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We recognise that we have a responsibility to take the allegation seriously, to manage the situation effectively while the investigation takes place and to and to support the person accused throughout the process.

- Allegations against staff or volunteers within the church should be reported to one of the Trustees in the Safeguarding sub-committee.
- If the allegation is against a Trustee, it should be reported to a Church Leader (non-Trustee).
- Full details of the allegation will be recorded.
- The church’s investigating officer must first assess whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved.
- 13.○.1. Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable.
- 13.○.2. If so, care should be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
- 13.○.3. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation should not be divulged.

- 13.○.4. Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims.
 - At the earliest opportunity, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should be consulted: 01904 551783, lado@york.gov.uk.
 - If the LADO cannot be contacted due to working hours, initial advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS)
 - If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the church's investigating officer will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed.
 - If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the investigating officer will consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency.
 - Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
 - 13.○.1. These records will be held confidentially in a secure electronic file.
- 13.8 Specialist advice will be sought and followed throughout the process.

14. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

- Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, a church Leader or a member of the Safeguarding Referral Team will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.
- With the consent of the individual, the church will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate.
- The Leadership Team will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated.
- A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both a church Leader and the individual. The agreement will include:
 - 14.○.1. The church's commitments to the individual who poses the risk.
 - 14.○.2. The steps the church will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the church community.
 - 14.○.3. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the church.
 - 14.○.4. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement.
 - 14.○.5. When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed.
- All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.
- The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with church members by the Leaders either:
 - 14.○.1. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk.
 - 14.○.2. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared.

- If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church Leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on.

15. Concerns about practice and whistleblowing

- Concerns about the culture or practice within the church should be raised as per the process outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy.

16. Basis of policy and legal framework

This policy is consistent with:

- Current legislation
- National guidance
- Local arrangements
- Our charitable objectives, governing documents and doctrinal statements

Full details are available in appendix B

Related policies and procedures:

[Resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk](https://resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk)

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- The Evangelical Alliance [Basis of Faith](#), and YCC's [Statement of Faith and Practice](#)
- Our governing documents.

Appendix A - Key Safeguarding Actions and Contacts				
		Who to contact & contact details	External Support/Services if YCC contact is unavailable	Relevant form/link
1	I need to report a safeguarding concern about a child or young person.	Designated Safeguarding Referral Team: <u>Vanessa Hutchinson (DSL)</u> Email: vanessa@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk <u>Matt Dungey (DSL)</u> Email: matt@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk <u>Louis Watson (DSL)</u> Email: louis@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk	Statutory services If there is immediate danger, call 999. MASH (York Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub): phone: 01904 551900 email: MASH@york.gov.uk Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) details York LADO: email: lado@york.gov.uk phone: 01904 551783 Emergency out-of-hours: MASH emergency duty team telephone: 01609 780780	resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk Appendix C
2	I need to report a safeguarding concern about an adult.	Designated Safeguarding Referral Team: (contact details above)	Adult Social Care York Phone: 01904 555111 email: adult.socialsupport@york.gov.uk Safeguarding Adults Board https://www.york.gov.uk/ReportAdultAbuseInYork https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/what-is-safeguarding/how-to-raise-a-safeguarding-concern/	resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk Appendix C
3	I want to volunteer in	Speak to the Ministry Lead, contact a	N/A	You will be asked to

	a role which would involve working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.	member of staff, or the Church Leader responsible for the activity. Operations Manager: Matt Dungey matt@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk Jim Melvin (DBS Administrator) Phone: 01904 551733 Email: office@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk		complete a volunteer application form and an informal interview: resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk Appendix D
4	I need to complete / update my DBS.	If you have applied to volunteer in a role where you would work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, you will be contacted directly to arrange a DBS check. Jim Melvin (DBS Administrator) Phone: 01904 551733 Email: office@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk	N/A	
5	I need to report an allegation against a volunteer or member of staff.	Trustees from the Safeguarding Sub-Committee: <u>Eliza Fergusson</u> Phone: 07783043722 Email: eliza.abernethy@gmail.com <u>Nigel Moore</u> Email: nigelmooreprivate@talktalk.net If the allegation concerns a Trustee, it	<i>See allegations process (Section 13 of Safeguarding Policy)</i>	

		should be reported to a non-Trustee Leader. (see section 8 of the Safeguarding Policy)		
6	I need to raise a concern about the culture or practice of YCC.	Concerns should be raised with a Church Leader in the first instance.	<i>See Whistleblowing Policy</i>	resources.yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk

Appendix B - Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework

- Our statement of faith
 - This policy reflects the organisation's fundamental biblical beliefs and should be read in conjunction with the statement of faith
- Our governing documents (e.g. constitution / Memorandum and Articles of Association etc)

Safeguarding Children	Safeguarding Adults
● National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children) ○ Children Acts (1989 & 2004) ○ Children and Families Act 2014 ○ Children and Social Work Act 2017 ○ Working together to safeguard children (2018) ○ What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015) ○ Protection of Children Act 1999 ○ Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006 ○ Protection of freedoms Act 2012 ○ Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2018 amended) ○ Prevent duty guidance 2016 ○ Sexual offences Act 2003 ○ The Safe Network Standards (available from the NSPCC website) ○ The policy also takes account of the principles outlined in: ▪ Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 ▪ FGM duty guidance	● National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults) ○ The Care Act 2014 ○ Human Rights Acts 1998 ○ Care Standards Act 2000 ○ Mental Capacity Act 2005 ○ Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007 ○ Sexual Offences Act 2003 ○ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 o Fraud Act 2006 ○ Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 ○ Health and Social Care Act 2008 ○ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) ○ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) ○ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) ○ LSAB Multiagency Policy and Procedures
● Local guidance and procedures ○ <i>Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures</i> ○ <i>Local authority guidance</i>	● Local guidance and procedures ○ <i>Local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures</i> ○ <i>Local authority guidance</i>

Appendix C Standard Document Samples	
	Application to volunteer
	Concerns reporting form
	Confidential file chronology
	Confidential file record of conversations and actions
	Template report from Designated Safeguarding Referral Team to Trustees



New Voluntary Worker Application Form

Thank you for volunteering to be a worker in York Community Church. As you may have unsupervised contact with the vulnerable in our church we have a legal responsibility to assess your suitability, and it is wise for us to confirm that your spiritual aims and goals are in line with our own; in light of this, please complete the form carefully and accurately, and discuss the role with your activity leader. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak to one of the church leaders.

You may complete the form electronically (printing your name for signature is fine) or on paper and return to the church office or your activity leader.

Name	
Date of birth	

Please confirm you have provided contact details to the church office: ☐

Position / team applied for	
------------------------------------	--

FAITH

Our statement of faith and practice

We worship God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Because He first loved us, we love Him. To know Him better, we seek to hear His voice through the scriptures and the Holy Spirit. We recognise Jesus, the Son of God as our Saviour and Lord, believing his completed work of salvation on the cross to be the only way we are reconciled to God. We seek to be disciple-making disciples, loving those around us by making Him known with words, action and demonstration of the Spirit's power. We worship and serve together as a church family, encouraging and challenging each other; gathered regularly in large and small groups, and scattered in the world as workers for the kingdom of God. We have special celebrations: communion, to remember Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross, and baptism, to welcome new believers into the family.

As part of our church family, we encourage you to:

- Engage with scripture regularly: reading, studying and meditating
- Commit to a life of prayer, individually and with the church
- Meet regularly with other believers, especially as part of a small group
- Prayerfully seek opportunities to help others on their journey of faith
- Prayerfully explore how God has equipped you to serve (both inside the church and outside)
- Earnestly seek the gifts of the Spirit
- Give generously (both supporting the church and elsewhere as God leads)

As a YCC worker, we expect that you will support our statement of faith above; to show your support, please sign below. If you have any concerns, please speak to a church leader before signing.

I want to see God's kingdom come, and His will done on earth as in heaven	Sign here
--	----------------------

DISCLOSURE

Legally, we need to provide you with the information below, in summary it will tell you:

- You must submit a criminal records check and an enhanced disclosure through DBS
- You must declare all convictions whenever they occurred
- You must keep us informed of any other work you perform with children or vulnerable adults
- We will adhere to a strict code of confidentiality

As this post will involve substantial, unsupervised contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, all applicants will be asked to submit to a criminal records check before the position can be confirmed. You will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) - England & Wales. As the position is exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act this check will reveal any details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as formal convictions. Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying this position is exempt from the provision of section 4(ii) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Orders as applicable within the UK), and you are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are "spent" under the provisions of the Act. You must therefore declare all convictions whenever they occurred. In the event of appointment, any failure to disclose such convictions could result in the withdrawal of approval to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults within YCC. This process is subject to a strict code to ensure confidentiality, fair practice and security of any information disclosed. The DBS Service Code of Practice and our own procedures are available on request for you to read. It must be stressed that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to appointment as a worker, only if the nature of any matters revealed could be considered to place children, young people and/or vulnerable adults at risk. YCC agree to abide by the Code of Practice on the use of personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998 as well as the expectations of the DBS. As a condition of being a worker we ask that you keep us informed of any other work (either paid or voluntary) which you are undertaking which involved working with children or vulnerable adults. Should ever we need to refer an individual to any of the lists of people deemed unsuitable for working with children or vulnerable adults then we would also inform them of any knowledge we have of that individual working in any other capacity with children/vulnerable adults. Under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 it is an offence for YCC to offer a volunteer position to anyone who has been convicted of certain specific offences, or included on either of the two barred lists held by the DBS.

Below are a number of disclosure questions which you must complete accurately. If you tick 'Yes' against any of the following, you will need to complete a separate voluntary disclosure form.

Have you ever been charged with, cautioned or convicted in relation to any criminal offence**; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations/pending prosecution?	No: ☐ Yes: ☐
Have you ever been the subject of a police investigation** that didn't lead to a criminal conviction?	No: ☐ Yes: ☐
Has there ever been any cause for concern raised regarding your conduct with children/young people/vulnerable adults?	No: ☐ Yes: ☐
To your knowledge have you ever had any allegation made against you, which has been reported to, and investigated by, Social Services (Children's or Adult Social Care)?	No: ☐ Yes: ☐

*** Certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected': not subject to disclosure, and not taken into account. All guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found in the [DBS filtering collection](#).*

If you are already registered with the DBS Update Service for the same workforce as in the role you are applying for, you won't need to complete an online DBS check again. This service allows you to take your DBS certificate from role to role, and allows organisations such as YCC to undertake

periodic criminal record checks. Please complete your certificate number below and show your certificate to one of the safeguarding coordinators.

DBS certificate number	
-------------------------------	--

REFERENCE

If you have been active in the life of YCC for two years or more, please provide the name of a YCC church Leader (not on the team you are applying to work with) or small group leader who will verify this.

Leader contact name	
----------------------------	--

OR

If you are a relative newcomer to YCC, please provide contact details of a leader from your previous church who would be willing to provide a reference. If this is not possible, please explain why, and provide contact details of someone who can verify your good character and appropriateness to work with young people or vulnerable adults.

Contact name			
Position / role			
Email			Tel

HEALTH

Do you have any medical conditions that could directly affect your work as part of the YCC team?
This could include physical or mental illness, disability, allergies or regular medication

Please confirm yes or no	No: ☐ Yes: ☐
If "yes", please provide details	

CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS

Please read carefully and tick each box when you understand the implications:

I will make sure I understand and work in accordance with the policies and practices of YCC	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
I consent to YCC holding my contact details on file, sharing them only with other workers as needed (unless I've requested for this not to occur)	Yes: ☐ No: ☐

I consent to YCC applying for a criminal records check pertinent to the position for which I have applied	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
I agree to inform a YCC safeguarding coordinator if I am convicted of an offence or become the subject of a police or social services investigation	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
I confirm that I am not barred from working with children or vulnerable adults	Yes: ☐ No: ☐
I give my consent for YCC to view my DBS update service details in order to undertake periodic criminal record checks.	Yes: ☐ No: ☐

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein is correct and complete:

Signature		Date	
------------------	--	-------------	--

Sign here

Please return the completed form to the YCC office – email: office@yorkcommunitychurch.co.uk



York Community Church

Incident / concern reporting form

*Give/send this form to a member of the Designated
Safeguarding Team*

For office use only: Form reference / volunteer reference as per Single Central Record.

About this form and the person completing it

Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your email address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate box(es)</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed

About the person or people we are concerned about or involved in the incident

Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / (where appropriate)
<i>Please insert more lines as required</i>			

Details of the incident / disclosure / concern

What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern
<i>Where / when / who else was present etc.</i>

Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety	
Other action taken or advice sought	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	

Notes for completion

About this form and the person completing it

Please complete all sections.

About the person or people we are concerned about or involved in the incident

When reporting a concern involving a child or young person, please complete all sections.

When reporting a concern about an adult, the parent / carer details may not be required. Where this is recorded, please include the relationship to the person involved. Please insert additional lines as required.

Details of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

When reporting a disclosure, please quote the individual where possible. Please also comment on their body language or any other non-verbal communication that might be useful.

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

Action taken to ensure immediate safety

Please provide details. If no action was required, please indicate by writing "None".

Other action taken or advice sought

If any advice was sought, please provide details including who you spoke to, their contact details and what advice was given or action that was taken.

Signature

Please ensure that you sign the form.

York Community Church
Confidential File Chronology

[illegible]

York Community Church

Record of safeguarding conversations and actions

Date of action / conversation	Document reference
Description of record	
Information given	
Advice received	
Actions to take	
Outcomes	
Recorded by	Date recorded

York Community Church**Safeguarding report to Trustees**

Report from the Designated Safeguarding Referral Team & Safeguarding Sub-committee covering the period from 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2023	
Report completed by:	Date
Summary of safeguarding activity	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to children	
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to adults	
Number of cases referred to Children's Social Care	
Number of cases referred to Adult Social Care	
Number of allegations received	
Number of allegations investigated by Local Authority	
Number of reportable incidents reported to charity commission	
Were there any common themes or issues in the reports submitted?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
Do you have any concerns about the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place?	Yes / No
If so, what?	
What training or informal update activity has been completed this year?	

Any recommendations to or requests of the Trustees?		
Declaration from Safeguarding Leads	Yes	No
Has the policy been reviewed for legal compliance and effectiveness? <i>(CSS can be consulted to check whether any significant changes have occurred)</i>		
Are DBS checks up to date for all staff and volunteers?		
Is the Single Central Record up to date?		
Is staff and volunteer training up to date?		
Is DSL training up to date?		
Is the training log up to date?		
Any other comments		

Appendix D

	YCC Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers <i>Date last updated: May 2021</i>
---	---

All staff and volunteers in their role(s) in YCC will:

- Only engage in activities for which/take responsibility for others when they are physically and mentally fit.
- Treat every individual/child with dignity and respect.
- Act with fairness and treat each individual/child equitably; avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the Church Leaders and that they are open to discussion and challenge.
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of those within their care or those whom they are serving.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in the **YCC Safeguarding Policy**.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about anyone who may pose a risk to any individuals/children.
- Ensure that they understand YCC policies, procedures, systems, guidelines and risk assessments, etc. and ensure that these are followed/implemented.
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual, child or group.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
- Not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning, bullying or discriminatory language or behaviour with anyone.
- Refrain from any abuse of power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual/child.

In addition, those working with children and young people will:

- Treat them in an age appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability.
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice.
- Treat them as individuals.
- Respect their views and wishes.
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- Ensure that age appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure that any age appropriate physical contact is child-led.
- Refrain from any physical chastisement.
- Refrain from making individual social media connections with them (outside of monitored connections permitted under the **YCC Safeguarding Policy**).

In addition, those working with vulnerable adults including adults at risk of abuse will:

- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support and that their views, wishes and choices are respected.
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented.
- Ensure that any physical contact is client-led.

In addition, those involved in providing pastoral care will:

- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support and that their views, wishes and choices are respected.
- Deliver any challenging or difficult messages in a respectful, compassionate and gentle way that is in line with their best interests (including their emotional and spiritual wellbeing).
- Will seek to ensure that the individual's right to question or ignore any advice or suggestions is fully understood.
- Ensure that any physical contact is client-led.

A member of staff considered to have breached this code of conduct will be dealt with under the ***YCC Disciplinary Policy***. A volunteer will be dealt with under the ***YCC Breach of Code of Conduct Procedure***.

Appendix E - flowchart for key safeguarding actions where the concern is about a child or young person

