



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
for South Eastern Baptist Association

March 2024

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Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

The Association, its leaders and trustees, have oversight of member churches within their region. Although the Association does not have direct responsibility for safeguarding practice within the churches, it does have an important supporting role, seeking to train, equip and otherwise support those with oversight of safeguarding. Every church is expected to have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures reflecting the needs of their own congregation. The Association strongly recommends that this is based on the BUGB Model Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Policy Objective

We are concerned with the welfare and wholeness of everyone, within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the Association including all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent neglect and the physical, sexual, emotional, financial, or spiritual abuse of children, young people, and adults at risk. In fulfilling this objective, we will:

- Have an Association Safeguarding Lead with suitable skills and experience to support churches with safeguarding matters;
- Have a named safeguarding trustee responsible for the governance and oversight of safeguarding, including, along with the Association Safeguarding Lead, the promotion of safeguarding best practice across the life of the Association;
- Promote Excellence in Safeguarding within the churches of the Association;
- Offer support and advice to churches with safeguarding concerns or incidents;
- Provide Excellence in Safeguarding training (Level 2 and 3) in line with the recommendations of the BUGB.

Responsibilities

The Association recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk, both directly and by supporting member churches.

We commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all those in our church communities, especially children, young people and adults at risk. In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to this policy and the development of sound procedures to implement our policy well.

Prevention and Reporting of Abuse

It is the duty of all colleagues to help prevent the abuse of children, young people and adults at risk and to respond to concerns about the well-being of those within our churches. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. We will also support our churches to enable them to respond to concerns about the well-being of children, young people and adults at risk in line with our procedures.

Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of workers

The Association will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of all colleagues, particularly those in a position of trust or working directly with children, young people or adults at risk. All colleagues will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk.

Supporting Churches

The Association has a named person responsible for supporting churches managing safeguarding concerns (the Safeguarding Lead). They have completed Level 2 and 3 in Excellence in Safeguarding and understand the procedures for escalating safeguarding concerns. Where they are unsure about the best course of action, they will work with the National Safeguarding Team to ensure that the situation is managed well and those at risk are properly safeguarded.

Promote Best Safeguarding Practice

All colleagues are responsible for promoting best safeguarding practice amongst the churches they support. This includes seeking support from the Safeguarding Lead when necessary and following the advice that has been given.

Provide Training

The Association will facilitate safeguarding training for churches in our area using the Baptist Union Level 2 and 3 Excellence in Safeguarding material. We will ensure that we have knowledgeable and experienced trainers to facilitate the course who have completed the BUGB Train the Trainer course for each level. The Association will ensure that Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training is available to churches throughout the Region and widely promoted by all colleagues.

Working with national and statutory bodies

To ensure that children, young people and adults at risk within our churches are properly safeguarded, we will work closely with the BUGB National Safeguarding Team, statutory authorities, other denominations and uniformed organisations, sharing information where necessary.

Part of this commitment to working together to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk will include the Safeguarding Lead participating in the work of the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, which serves as a coordinating body for improvements in safeguarding policy and practice.

DBS Checks

The Association will initiate all DBS checks for Accredited Ministers and Regionally Recognised Ministers / Pastors using the Baptist Union account with DDC. Any blemished disclosures will be assessed by the National Safeguarding Team and recommendations will be passed to the Ministries Team in relation to BU Accredited Ministers and Nationally Recognised leaders. When the disclosure relates to a Regionally Recognised Minister the outcome of the risk assessment will be shared with the national Safeguarding Office in the first instance.

DBS checks for Unaccredited Ministers are the responsibility of the local church. The Association has no legal right to know the information included in the check. However, the Association will request from the church the date and number of the DBS check, and this will be recorded on the BU database. This ensures consistency with the recording of information about ministers regardless of their accreditation status.

When an Unaccredited Minister has a blemished disclosure, the National Safeguarding Team will share any recommendations from the risk assessment directly with the church in the first instance. If they consider that the church needs support in implementing the recommendations from the risk assessment, then the Association will be advised of the situation.

Training

The Association will provide a timetable for safeguarding training throughout the region, using the BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 materials, and will promote the courses to churches in their area.

The Association will work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify and train specialist Excellence in Safeguarding trainers with a high standard of safeguarding knowledge and experience.

All Association trustees, regional ministers, youth and children's specialists and other pastoral staff will complete Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 and work in accordance with the principles and teaching they have received through the courses.

Supporting and equipping Designated Persons for Safeguarding (DPS) within member churches

It is the responsibility of each church to appoint at least one Designated Person for Safeguarding for their church. The Association will seek to offer specific support to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, particularly when safeguarding concerns arise. Where a church does not yet have anyone in this role, the Safeguarding Officer will work with the leadership of the church to help them to identify, train and support someone to take on this role.

The Association will provide opportunities for DPSs to access peer support. and, through the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify additional training and written resources for people taking on this role.

Policy Review

These Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be agreed by the Association Trustees and distributed amongst all colleagues. It will be reviewed annually.

SEBA Conferences and Events

The Association's Safeguarding Lead when appropriate and required will take on the role & responsibilities of DPS at SEBA's Ministers Conference and any other similar events organised and facilitated by them. This position and details will be noted in linked risk assessments and shared with venues partnering with SEBA to facilitate such events.

Policy Owner	Safeguarding Lead
Date Issued	08 April 2024

Version	Revisions	Date
1.0	Updated and removed from handbook into seperate doc	08 April 2024