



EVERYONE GROWS

SAFEGUARDING POLICY, PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Updated July 2026

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SECTION 1: DETAILS OF THE PLACE OF WORSHIP

Name of Place of Worship: Sawyers Church

Address: Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9BN

Tel No: 01277 210422

General Email: hello@sawyerschurch.org

Senior Leader Name: Peter Jordan

Senior Leader Contact Telephone: 07817 961558

Senior Leader Email: pastor@sawyerschurch.org

Safeguarding Officer: Evelyn Mayes

Safeguarding Officer Contact telephone: 07362 304064

Safeguarding Officer Email: safeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Jon Staniforth

Deputy Safeguarding Officer telephone: 07362 393918

Deputy Safeguarding Email: deputysafeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

Membership of Denomination: Assemblies of God, Great Britain

Charity Number: 1140322

Company Number: 07382893

Regulators: Charity Commission and Companies House

Insurance Company: Integra Insurance Solutions Ltd (Kingdom Bank)
Policy Number – RC01300307

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

Sawyers Church is a church where everyone grows through inspiration, connection, action, mission, and prayer.

Our offices, worship centre, and community hub are based at our church building in Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, CM15 9BN.

Our ministries, activities and outreaches include youth work, children's work, work with families and with single parents. We also provide support for senior people who live in the local area and help adults with care and support needs. Sawyers Church is a Debt Centre working with Christians Against Poverty.

These ministries especially help people who have care and support needs.

The Church runs a coffee shop in the foyer of the building that is open to the public.

The activities of our Community Hub and Coffee Shop sit alongside our church programme of worship, prayer, Bible teaching and mission. As a church we support various missions around the world and encourage people to be involved in global and local outreach.

The church partners with other organisations in the Brentwood area who use the Church facility. These organisations include Central School of Dance, Havering and Brentwood Bereavement Service. Any organisation that the church partners with has to adhere to the Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Sawyers Church is led by a Core Leadership Team who are supported by a Ministry Leadership Team. The Core Leadership Team and the Ministry Leadership Team are accountable to Sawyers Church Board of Trustees (BOT). The BOT includes a Trustee specifically responsible for Safeguarding. The Church and its activities are run by full time staff, part time staff and volunteers.

The church has a **Safeguarding Team** that includes:

Safeguarding Trustee: Chris James

chair@sawyerschurch.org

Safeguarding Officer: Evelyn Mayes

safeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Jon Staniforth

deputysafeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

Deputy Safeguarding Recruiter: Winnie Law

wlaw@sawyerschurch.org

SECTION 2: Governance and Leadership

Introduction

Good governance helps prevent abuse and means it can respond quickly and with integrity when concerns arise. Central to this, is the BOT.

The BOT is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for how Sawyers Church operates and has a critical role in decision making and compliance in all areas of Safeguarding, as well as setting our values, standards, and behaviours.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of Sawyers Church or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways. *“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (ICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).*

The BOT are aware of their responsibility to report Serious Incidents (RSI) to the England and Wales Charity Commission (please see Link as to How to report a serious incident

<https://rsi.charitycommission.gov.uk/web/register/report-a-serious-incident>

Our commitment to safeguarding

As Trustees we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all, including children, young people and adults with care and support needs who engage with Sawyers Church through any of the activities we run.

We acknowledge that children, young people, and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Trustees accept that staff and volunteers who work for Sawyers Church must play their role in protecting children/youth and adults with care and support needs against such behaviour.

As Trustees we have, therefore, adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

We concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

The Trustees undertake to:

- apply relevant laws and take account of safeguarding practice as published by recognised bodies;
- appoint a team of personnel to undertake safeguarding roles and support them in carrying out their work; and
- provide safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers involved in the church’s activities.

The Trustees also undertake to apply:

- Health & Safety laws and regulations to provide a safe and secure physical environment on its premises and in the running of its activities; and
- the Equality Act 2010 and engender a welcoming and inclusive environment for all that seek to participate in the church’s activities.

Our policy and practice guidelines are based on the ten safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight (<https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-ten-standards/>)

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities at Sawyers Church but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example
- we are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles
- there are accountability structures
- Sawyers Church values are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people; and
- there is open communication

Safeguarding Team

A team of people have been appointed by the Trustees to carry out roles and responsibilities for Safeguarding as follows:

- Safeguarding Trustee & Recruiter: Chris James
- Safeguarding Officer: Evelyn Mayes
- Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Jon Staniforth
- Deputy Recruiter: Winnie Law

The *Safeguarding Trustee* oversees and supervises the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and practice on behalf of the BOT through chairing a Safeguarding Team of relevant personnel. The *Safeguarding Trustee* also ensures that adequate training is provided for all of the Safeguarding Team using various agencies and in house training.

The *Safeguarding Officer's* act on behalf of the BOT in dealing with allegations or suspicions of neglect and/or abuse, including referring such matters to the statutory authorities and the Safeguarding Trustee.

The *Recruiter* supports the recruitment of staff and volunteers particularly in seeking references and carrying out checks involving HM Government's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to inform their suitability to work with children/youth and adults with care and support needs.

Communicating Safeguarding Policy and practice and safeguarding contacts

The Trustees will publicly display in the Foyer of the church premises:

- A Safeguarding Statement (Appendix 1) to inform all those that are involved in any activities at Sawyers Church of its commitment to Safeguarding; and
- Information on how children/youth and adults with care and support needs can get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or other matters where they have a concern.

Confidentiality and privacy

The Trustees will seek to ensure that safeguarding information regarding individuals, instance of abuse, etc. is kept confidential and confined to those who need to know. The Trustees will seek to apply privacy to personal information in line with data protection legislation.

Review of Safeguarding Policy and practice

The Safeguarding Trustee will meet with the Safeguarding Team at least annually to monitor the application of Safeguarding Policy, practice, and procedures. As necessary they will conduct audits of compliance with policy and practice.

The Safeguarding Trustee, the senior minister and the BOT will review this Safeguarding Policy annually to ensure that:

- it is up to date with prevailing legislation and recognised practice; and
- any lessons are learned through experience of operating this policy and practice.

The Safeguarding Policy will then be placed before the BOT for confirmation of continuation (where no changes are proposed) or approval (where changes are proposed).

SECTION 3: BACKGROUND

Sawyers Church – objectives, mission, aims and public benefit

Sawyers Church is a Bible believing, Christian church, established as a charity and affiliated to Assemblies of God whose charitable objectives (stated within the Articles of Association) are: *“the advancement of the Christian faith and the relief of sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods or services of any kind, including through the provision of care and support”*.

Sawyers Church mission is to be a Church where *EVERYONE GROWS*.

Sawyers Church aims to promote its charitable objectives and mission through Inspiration, Connection, Action, Mission, and Prayer.

Sawyers Church’s values are Unity, Honour, Commitment, Servanthood, Worship, Mission, Hospitality, Welcome and Prayer.

Activities involving children/youth and adults with care and support needs

In fulfilling its mission, Sawyers Church runs activities each week throughout the year and, in line with Sawyers Church Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, access to these events is available to all irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or belief, etc. Certain activities are, however, run for specific groups e.g., children/youth.

Partnership working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people, and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

Sawyers Church therefore has clear guidelines with regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own policy that meets Thirtyone:eight’s safeguarding standards and adhere to Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy.

In order to verify good safeguarding practices of partnership organisations we will request a copy of their policy and written confirmation that all workers and volunteers are safely recruited.

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

Sawyers Church operates a Debt Centre in partnership with **Christians Against Poverty (CAP) (Charity number 1097217)** which helps people in financial distress. The CAP Safeguarding Policy adheres to Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and CAP follow the Ten Standards of Safeguarding published by Thirtyone: eight (<https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-ten-standards/>). The work of the Debt Centre is often carried out in private homes, and the policy includes good practice guidelines on home visits (Appendix 2).

SECTION 4: PREVENTION

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. For the purposes of this policy a *child* is defined as anyone under the age of 18 and an *adult at risk of harm or in need of protection* in England is defined as any person aged 18 years or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or is at risk of abuse and neglect and/or is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs (The Care Act 2014). A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm (physical, sexual, emotional and/or neglect). Other areas of concern involving children are child on child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), radicalization, domestic abuse and bullying. A person may abuse an adult physically, sexually, financially, emotionally, organizationally, domestically, by neglect, self-neglect, being discriminatory or subjecting to modern slavery. Other areas of concern involving adults include extremism and radicalization, cuckooing, mate crime, hate crime, stalking/harassment, coercion and control, spiritual abuse and romance fraud. Children and adults in need of care and protection may be abused within a family, an institution, or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

To safeguard those in our place of worship we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment, and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with reference to Article 5 which states: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy (Appendix 3, 4 and 5).

Positions of Trust

At Sawyers Church we recognise that all adults working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs are in a position of trust and that all those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship. We are committed to ensuring that workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately and always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

In England and Wales, following the coming into force of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, and in Northern Ireland under equivalent amending legislation, it is a criminal offence for those in positions of trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16- or 17-year-old child under their care or authority, notwithstanding that the child may have reached the general age of consent (16).

Safer Recruitment

The Trustees are responsible for recruiting and appointing workers (staff, volunteers and Trustees) and will ensure that all workers are appointed, trained, supported, and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. *The Senior Pastor* is responsible for approving the appointment of all volunteers. Amongst other things, they are responsible for deciding whether a person is competent, capable, and suitable to work with children/youth and adults with care and support needs. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the role.
- Those applying have completed an application form. Where we use workers or volunteers from outside of the UK, Sawyers Church will undertake the necessary background checks by taking up references from the applicant's home country and ensuring that applicants have obtained a 'fit person' check from their home country.
- Those short listed have been interviewed.
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview.
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate.
- A self-declaration form and Disclosure and Barring check (DBS) or Enhanced DBS has been completed where necessary. (We will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information).
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified.
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant.

- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and knows how to report concerns.
- Appointment of new Trustee to be agreed by the existing Trustees.

The Recruiter supports the recruitment of staff, volunteers and Trustees who work with children and adults with care and support needs by taking up references and liaising with Thirtyone:eight in the DBS checking process on behalf of the Trustees. The Recruiter also arranges the renewal of DBS Certificates every three years for existing staff, volunteers and Trustees.

Sawyers Church works in partnership with Cornerstone HR to ensure this is kept to a high standard and all policies and procedures are adhered to. The Senior Pastor is responsible for ensuring that all staff, including the Youth and Children's Pastor, volunteers and Trustees are supervised and supported in fulfilling Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and practice in carrying out their respective role(s).

An up-to-date Safeguarding Policy is also available to everyone on the Sawyers Church website (sawyerschurch.org).

Safeguarding Training

The Trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all staff, volunteers and Trustees developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our staff and volunteers will receive induction training and undertake recognised refresher safeguarding training on a regular basis, with updates provided annually. A record of training will be kept by the Church Administrator.

The BOT will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The BOT will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Officer and their Deputy undertaking advanced safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the BOT will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

Specialist safeguarding training will be provided for the BOT which will be renewed every three years.

Workers may also attend any inter-agency training provided by a Local safeguarding Children's Board or Local Adult Protection Board.

Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs, Sawyers Church operates and promotes good working practice. This enables workers/volunteers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusations.

We have specific good practice guidelines and risk assessments for every activity we are involved in. They will be living documents which evolve over time to recognise changes in law and practice and of operational experience.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

The Trustees are mindful of instances in churches and religious organisations where children/youth and adults with care and support needs have suffered spiritual abuse in the name of God or religion. In its work with such people, the Trustees, staff and volunteers will explain and share the Christian faith in ways that are appropriate but not coerce, manipulate, threaten, or behave in any manner that seeks to impose the Christian faith on them. Sawyers Church acknowledges that a person who accepts the Christian faith can only do so voluntarily, through individual free choice.

The Trustees are also mindful of instances of sexual abuse perpetrated from within churches and religious organisations. Sawyers Church seeks to operate good practice in its work with children/youth and adults with care and support needs that enable staff and volunteers to develop healthy relationships while minimising the risk of abuse taking place from within the church or of false or unfounded accusations.

The Trustees are committed to supporting all workers (staff and volunteers) and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with Sawyers Church Code of Conduct (relates to the boundaries that need to exist in order to maintain healthy working attitudes and relationships) towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role. They will also receive further training as necessary. The Employee Code of Conduct and Volunteers Policy are sent to each employee and volunteer who are expected to agree to and adhere to such.

The Trustees have also agreed a Whistleblowing Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

SECTION 5: RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Recognising abuse and reporting abuse

In order to assist staff and volunteers who engage with children/youth and adults with care and support needs in recognising and identifying abuse, definitions of abuse are provided in Appendix 3. These definitions take account of the UN Conventions on Human Rights and the Rights of the Child and UK legislation.

Whilst staff and volunteers are not expected to be experts in recognising abuse (whether actual, alleged, suspected or potentially capable of happening) they have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately. This does not place responsibility on them to decide if a situation involves abuse but a duty to report concerns. (Guidance on recognising abuse is in Appendix 4).

Where someone voluntarily discloses abuse, staff and/or volunteers are expected to be sympathetic and supportive but must explain their duty to pass on information. (Guidance on responding to someone who discloses abuse is in the Appendix 5).

Whether or not information about abuse is voluntarily disclosed, under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse but follow the procedures as below:

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

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should complete a Cause for Concern form (Appendix 6) and report concerns as soon as possible and within 24 hours to:

Name: Evelyn Mayes (hereafter the "Safeguarding Officer")

Tel: 07362 304064

Email: safeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

The above is nominated by the Trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with any allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or, if the concerns in any way involve the Safeguarding Officer, then the Cause for Concern form should be completed and reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

Name: Jon Staniforth (hereafter the "Deputy Safeguarding Officer ")

Tel: 07362 393918

Email: deputysafeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

If the concerns implicate both the Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy, then a Cause for Concern form should be completed and the matter reported in the first instance and within 24 hours to:

Name: Chris James (hereafter the “Safeguarding Trustee”)

Tel: 07803 230981

Email: chair@sawyerschurch.org

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required

Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the Cause for Concern Form and share this with the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy/Safeguarding trustee as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

The Safeguarding Officer may first ring Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. Based on the concern they may then contact the relevant statutory services (Appendix 7).

The Safeguarding Officer may need to inform others (see below) depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern

- Chair or Trustee responsible for Safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or charity regulator (The Charity Commission for England and Wales) to report a serious incident.
- LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Concerns must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record (Cause for Concern Form, Appendix 6) of the concerns should be made within 24 hours in accordance with these procedures and given to the Safeguarding Officer to be kept in a secure place on the church premises as follows:

- if electronically created a secure part of the computer system (that is password protected and can be accessed only by the Safeguarding Officer, their Deputy and Safeguarding Trustee); and/or
- if *handwritten*, in a secure filing cabinet (that can be accessed only by the Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Trustee).

Such records **must not** be held on personal electronic devices or, if a paper record, filed outside of Sawyers Church premises e.g., at home.

Whilst disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or deputy, the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Safeguarding Trustee will support the Safeguarding Officer/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 Trustees hope that everyone will use the above procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Trustees demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is an allegation *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 Officer/Deputy will, if the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services informing the Doctor of any concerns.

- Contact Children's Social Care (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.

- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so having contacted Children's Social Care.
- For lower-level concerns (e.g., poor parenting) encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of harm.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any concerns.
- 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 Care direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Children's Social Care.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Care Duty Social Worker for Children and Families or Police Child Abuse Investigation Team direct.
- Depending on the circumstances they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this then contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Children's Social Care /Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult needs protection:

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

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

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the Emergency Services on 999 informing them of any suspicions.

- Contact the Adult Social Care who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions required. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the Safeguarding Officer will:
- Identify support services for the Survivor i.e., counselling, or other pastoral support. Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

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

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Officer, will:

- Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to DBS for consideration of the person being placed on the Barred List for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.
- Share information about the concern with the police.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:

The Safeguarding Officer will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Care to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the police.

The Care Act 2014 places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or

no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Care to decide not Sawyers Church.

Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above).

If the allegation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the safeguarding officer will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the police. If the adult does not wish to report this to the; police then the Safeguarding officer can pass on the information relating to the alleged perpetrator, however, must not share details of the Survivor.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- If the alleged perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Care to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- If the alleged perpetrator is in a role within Sawyers Church contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse by a member of the staff team/volunteer

Where a member of the staff team or a volunteer is suspected, alleged, or accused of causing abuse, advice should be obtained from Thirtyone:eight; alternatively, the Essex Safeguarding Children's Board or Essex Safeguarding Adult Board as appropriate. Advice should specifically be sought on whether its seriousness warrants consideration of suspending the employment of a member of the staff team or, in the case of a volunteer, temporary removal from their role, while the matter is investigated.

Where the suspension of a member of staff or temporary removal of a volunteer is deemed to be appropriate, the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding must be consulted who, as

necessary, may seek legal advice, also taking account of Sawyers Church policy and practice regarding misconduct.

Where, following a confession and/or conviction of abuse, the employment of a member of staff leads to dismissal (or resignation) or a volunteer being permanently disbarred from working with children/youth and adults with care/support needs, consideration must be given by the Trustees as to whether a referral should be made to the DBS which manages people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults (if not already done by the prosecuting authorities).

SECTION 6: WELLBEING SUPPORT AND PASTORAL CARE

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Trustees are committed to working with statutory agencies as appropriate and offering wellbeing support/pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with, or are part of, Sawyers Church. This includes members of staff and volunteers that have been involved and affected in any way.

Individual will be referred to a qualified third-party organisation to the pastoral care team or Wellbeing hub.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending Sawyers Church is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with care and support needs, the Trustees will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing and pastoral care but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

These boundaries will be based on a Risk Assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties and must be approved and communicated by the Senior Pastor who will also be responsible for implementing the monitoring arrangements. A clear code of behaviour that the individual must follow will not only help protect the vulnerable it will also lessen the possibility of the person being wrongly suspected of abuse in future.

All Risk Assessments will be reviewed regularly by the Safeguarding Trustee as appropriate to the concern.

OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS THAT USE SAWYERS CHURCH PREMISES

Organisations who wish to use Sawyers Church premises must demonstrate they operate acceptable Safeguarding Policies and practices where their activities involve children/youth and adults with care and support needs before being permitted by the Trustees to use the premises. These Safeguarding Practices must adhere to the Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and follow the Ten Steps Safeguarding Standards published by thirtyone:eight (<https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/who-we-are/our-ten-standards/>)

EXTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

External organisations, including statutory bodies that provide safeguarding advice and support etc., are listed in Appendix 7.

Safeguarding Statement

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS POLICY STATEMENT

Name of Place of worship **SAWYERS CHURCH**

The following statement was agreed by the Trustees of Sawyers Church on: 27/04/2026

- Sawyers Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
- We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of adults and 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 Sawyers Church.
- We seek to be a church where all people are welcomed and valued as those made in the image of God. We are committed to treating everyone with dignity, respect, and compassion, and to providing a safe and supportive environment for all who engage with our church community. We welcome people irrespective of race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, or pregnancy and maternity.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and heard. We want to ensure that all those who engage with Sawyers Church know this and feel empowered to raise concern if they experience, witness, or are concerned about harm or abuse.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults, 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 2023, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014.
- 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 all staff and volunteers agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting all in Sawyers Church affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Individuals in leadership, pastoral, teaching, or supervisory roles within a faith setting may occupy a legally defined position of trust. It is a criminal offence for a person in such a position to engage in sexual activity with a child or young person under the age of 18 who is under their care, supervision, instruction, or authority, regardless of the general age of consent.
- Children's Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- 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 concern about the safety or well-being of a child or adult, you must report it without delay to the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding Officer: Evelyn Mayes

07362 304064 / safeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Jon Staniforth

07362 393918 / deputysafeguardingofficer@sawyerschurch.org

A copy of Safeguarding Policy can be seen on Sawyers Church website (sawyerschurch.org).

Signed by

Peter Jordan

Pastor Peter Jordan
Date: 27th April 2026

Chris James

Chair of Trustees
Date: 27th April 2026

HOME VISITS

Sawyers Church operates a **Debt Centre** in partnership with **Christians Against Poverty (CAP)**, a charity which exists to help people in financial distress and tell them about the Christian Gospel.

The Debt Centre is led by the Debt Centre Manager who is employed by Sawyers Church and supported by volunteer 'Befrienders'. The work involves meeting people in financial distress usually in their homes and where appropriate in at the Hebrews Coffee Shop at Sawyers Church.

The **Hope Mums** Ministry is led by the Hope Mums Ministry Leader who is a volunteer and supports single mums spiritually and in practical ways. This ministry sometimes involves home visits.

Sawyers Church Safeguarding Policy and practice applies to the work of the Debt Centre and Hope Mums and the personnel including the rules related to undertaking home visits as set out below.

Home visit rules

All home visits must be carried out by at least two people. In the case of CAP, the Debt Centre Manager and a Befriender will attend for formal CAP meetings. This is done in accordance with guidelines from Christians Against Poverty, and the Debt Centre Manager and the Befriender must not be related to each other.

The Debt Centre Manager or the Hope Mums Ministry Leader is responsible for deciding the people to undertake a particular home visit including the appropriate gender, taking account of the purpose and circumstances of the visit and any potential risks to personal safety.

Details of home visits e.g. time of appointment, place, name of person being visited, purpose of visit, expected return time, etc. must be logged and provided to the Senior Pastor and Church Administrator. This must be done at the start of the visit and at the end of the visit and preferably by email (In the case of Hope Mums the visit must be logged with the Hope Mums Ministry Leader in the same way).

The personnel undertaking the home visit must always carry a mobile phone with them and keep other personal belongings to a minimum. Personnel must always withdraw from a home visit if there is actual or perceived threat to their safety and security. If the person being visited,

or anyone else on the premises, is drunk and/or behaving aggressively, the visit should be aborted.

Reporting Safeguarding issues

Personnel who undertake home visits may encounter actual or potential Safeguarding issues in the home of people being visited given the context of such visits. Safeguarding issues may concern the person in financial distress and/or others who also occupy the premises. Safeguarding issues must be reported in line with the arrangements set out in the policy and practice document, particularly the processes and procedures outlined in Session 5 of the Safeguarding Policy.

Definitions of abuse

The following definitions of abuse are not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an Institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Coercion and Control – refers to a pattern of different actions that seek to exert dominance and control over an individual through psychological and emotional manipulation.

Spiritual Abuse - is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Misuse of scripture applied theology, and doctrine is often a component of spiritually abusive behaviour.

Emotional Abuse – any persistent emotional ill-treatment that causes severe and long-lasting adverse effects on someone’s emotional development.

Sexual Orientation related abuse - is any behaviour that harms, intimidates, humiliates, or coerces a person because of their sexual orientation, whether actual or perceived. Within safeguarding, this includes bullying, harassment, exclusion, or attempts to pressure or force a person to change or suppress their sexual orientation through coercive practices.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and affect one person or more.

GUIDANCE ON RECOGNISING POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect - under nourishment, failure to grow, hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to participate in games
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- Violent/aggressive behaviour to other children

Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- Allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Genital injuries
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams, or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- Pregnancy
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Compulsive masturbation

Signs of emotional abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes 'clingy'. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness/anxiety around adults
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying
- Poor self esteem
- Lack of social skills
- Relationship problems with peers

Signs of Neglect

- Consistently poor hygiene
- Tooth decay
- Unhealthy weight loss
- Inadequate clothing

Signs of Financial Control (Adults)

- Unexplained changes in bank account
- Isolation from family or control of daily decisions

Race, culture and religion

Crucial to any assessment is a knowledge and sensitivity to racial, cultural, and religious aspects. Remember also that differences exist not only between ethnic groups but also within

the same ethnic group and between different neighbourhoods, and social classes. While different practices must be considered, it is also important to remember that everyone has basic human rights. Racial, cultural, and religious differences do not justify abuse.

GUIDANCE ON RESPONDING TO A PERSON WANTING TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE

If a person discloses abuse, the person to whom the abuse is disclosed should:

- Keep calm
- Look at the person directly
- Allow the person to talk freely without pressing for information
- Not ask the person questions except to clarify what is being said; not put words into their mouth. Do not push for information.
- Show acknowledgement of what the person says (however unlikely it may sound).
- Be aware that a person may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Tell the person they are not to blame for the abuse and that it is not their fault even if they have broken a 'rule'.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by telling you and that you acknowledge what they are saying.
- Tell the person you will help them and let them know what you are going to do next (i.e., who you are going to tell and why). Do not promise to keep it 'secret'.
- Finish on a positive note with a person reassure and affirm them. Try not to leave them in a distressed state.
- If a person decides not to tell after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful responses

- "I'm sorry this happened to you. It shouldn't have happened to you. You were right to tell".
- "I am glad you have told me".
- "It's not your fault".
- "I may need to get help from others".
- "I understand if you don't want to talk but if you ever want to talk about it, I will listen. Many people find it hard to talk. You may want to talk at a later date".

The person needs to know that you have listened or will listen to what they have to say and that you will treat it seriously and with respect.

In regards sexual abuse, children/youth also need to know that you understand that wherever they have been involved in sexual activity with adults, it is always the adult who is in the 'wrong'. This will help convey a message of empathy for the child who may have blamed himself/herself or feel guilty about what has happened. By saying this you are giving the person permission to talk about it without any pressure to do so. Talking can be very difficult and painful for the individual and for you, but by making this sort of statement you are indicating to the person that you can handle the fact of abuse and his/her feelings.

Unhelpful responses

- "Why didn't you tell anyone before"?
- "I can't/don't believe it".
- "You must have misunderstood/got it wrong".
- "Are you sure this is true? /Are you sure about this?"
- "That's a wicked thing to say! You must not tell anyone else".
- "I am shocked".
- "Why? How? When? Who? Where"?

What to do next

- Make a written report of what happened as soon as possible (not in the presence of the person) using the **Cause for Concern Form (Appendix 13)** to record:
 - what the person said, when they said it, and what you said in reply – do not try to interpret the information;
 - what was happening immediately before hand e.g., description of the activity, and any injury, size, and body location;
 - the date and time of the event and when you made the record; and
 - any action taken.
- Sign and date your notes and pass them to the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and within **48** hours.

The Safeguarding Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Officer are responsible for deciding what needs to be done and, as necessary, arranging appropriate pastoral support for the individual to whom the disclosure is made.



RESPONDING TO ABUSE – CAUSE FOR CONCERN FORM

COMPLETED BY: _____ DATE OF REPORT: _____

TITLE / ROLE: _____ INCIDENT NO.: _____

ABUSE INCIDENT INFORMATION

DATE OF INCIDENT: _____ TIME OF INCIDENT: _____

NAME OF PERSON RAISING CONCERNS: _____

NAME OF PERSON REPORTING ABUSE: _____

NAME OF GROUP / ACTIVITY: _____

LOCATION: _____

ADDITIONAL
PERSON(S) INVOLVED: _____

WITNESSES: _____

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION INCLUDING SEQUENCE OF EVENTS / ACTUAL WORDS USED / OBSERVATIONS:

RESULTING ACTION EXECUTED, PLANNED, OR RECOMMENDED (INCLUDING PERSON(S) CONTACTED):

NOTES:

EXTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133
Swanley
Kent
BR8 7UQ

Tel. no: 0303 003 11 11
Email: info@thirtyoneeight.org

Children Social Care: Essex Safeguarding Children Board

Tel: 0345 603 7627
Out of hours Tel: 0345 606 1212 or 0300 1230 770
Email: emergencydutyteam.outofhours@essex.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.escb.co.uk/Home.aspx>

Adult Social Care: Essex Safeguarding Adult Board

Tel: 0345 603 7630
Out of hours telephone: 0345 606 1212
Email: socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.essexsab.org.uk/>

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 03330 139 797
Email: lado@essex.gov.uk
Website: <https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/safeguarding/report-a-concern-about-a-member-of-the-workforce/>

Essex Police

Tel. no: 101 (for children and adults non-emergency); 999 in an emergency