

# HUCB London Safeguarding Policy

## Policy Statement

### Safeguarding Children, Young People & vulnerable Adults at HUCB London -

The **vision** of HUCB London ("the church") is to see people in Harringay and beyond come to Christ

The **Mission** of HUCB London is to:

- **WORSHIP** GOD, and lift JESUS up.
- **GROW** up to Christian maturity and to the work of mission.
- **WITNESS** (tell) about JESUS CHRIST to people in Harringay and beyond.
- **CARE** for each other and those in need around us.

In fulfilling this vision the church

- has a programme of activities with children and young people
- welcomes children and young people into the life of our community
- makes our premises available to organisations working with children and young people

The church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in *The Children Act* 1989 and 2004, *Safe from Harm* (HM Government 1994) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2010).

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people associated with the church and will pray for them regularly.

In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to the following policies and to the development of procedures to ensure their implementation.

### **Prevention and reporting of abuse and responding to concern**

It is the duty of each church member and each member of the wider church family to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people and the duty of all to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and young people and to report any child abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

### **Safe recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will

be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children.

### **Safe behaviour: a code of behaviour for workers**

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children and young people so that all children and young people are shown the respect that is due to them.

### **Safe practice and safe premises**

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for activities with children and young people and will adopt ways of working with children and young people that promote their safety and well-being.

### **A safe community**

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying of children and young people. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of anyone who may pose a risk to children and young people in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

### **Responsible people**

The church has appointed **Nneka Keazor** as the Safeguarding Trustee to oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees.

The church has appointed **Nneka Keazor** as the Designated Person for Safeguarding, and **Pastor of the church** as deputy, to:

- advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and young people
- take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

### **Policy and procedures**

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the foyer.

Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given a full copy of the policy and procedures and will be required to follow them.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church.

The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed at least annually. Safeguarding update will be read annually at the church Business Meeting in January together with a report on the outcome of the annual review.

## **March 2023**

# **Introduction-**

**HARRINGAY UNITED CHURCH – BAPTIST [HUCB], the Church** seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, young people & vulnerable adults who attend our church, participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children, young people & vulnerable adults of **HUCB London** from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff, members and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

## **Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and volunteer persons who work with children.

## **Child Protection Statement**

**HUCB London** acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice of Haringey Local Safeguarding Children Board requirements.

Haringey’s Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body responsible for co-coordinating and reviewing local work across agencies to safeguard children.

The **policy** recognises that the welfare and interests of children, young people & vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of spiritual, educational and physical activities at **HUCB** in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in the activity provided by the church or outside of the activity.

**HUCB London** acknowledges that some children, young people & vulnerable adults, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy **HUCB London** will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people & vulnerable adults
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people

- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in **HUCB London**. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

### **Monitoring**

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every 2 years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board,
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

### **Selection of Workers**

All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

#### **a) Six Month Rule**

No volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until she/he has been involved with **HUCB** for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

#### **b) Written Application**

All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at the Church Office

#### **c) Personal Interview**

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

#### **d) Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants' references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at Church Office

#### **e) Criminal Background Check [DBS – formerly CRB check]**

A national criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers:

- Those who will be involved in our Sunday school/ for children and young people including :preschool/daycare classes;
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with children;
- Those counseling children;
- Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of children; and
- Those having occasional one-on-one contact with children (such as, church sponsored activities including camping, extra curriculum activities and visits support staff and vehicle drivers).

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorisation form allowing the church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorisation form, s/he will be unable to work with children.

What constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children will be determined by **The Leadership Team** on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances.

Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying factor.

The background check authorisation form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at the Church under lock and key

### **Two Adult Rule**

It is our aim that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation.

### **Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse**

For purposes of this policy, "child abuse" is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child's physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

#### **Physical abuse –**

any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.

#### **Emotional abuse –**

emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.

#### **Sexual abuse –**

any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.

### **Neglect –**

depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at this Church becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the Designated Officer within the Leadership Team who is responsible for Safeguarding in the Church for further action including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law. In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at this Church or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
3. Local Authority [LA] Designated Officer will be notified, and the Church will comply with the Local Authority's requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The Church will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by the LA.
4. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the LA Designated officer and insurance company.
5. The church Designated Officer will be our spokesperson concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of the church should refrain from speaking to the media.
6. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
7. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

### **Open Door Policy**

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.

### **Teenage Workers**

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (volunteers) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 14
- If over 16 years then must be screened as specified above or working under supervision of a Screened adult worker
- Must be working under the supervision of an adult

### **Check-in/Check-out Procedure**

For children below Year 3, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. The child will be signed in by a parent or guardian, who will receive a "child check" for the child similar to a claim check. The parent or guardian must present the "child check" in order to sign out the child from our care. In the event that a parent or guardian is unable to present the "child check," SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER OR ACTIVITY LEADER will be contacted. Sunday School Leader or Activity Leaders will be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

### **Sick Child Policy**

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at HUCB. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children when deciding whether to place a child under our care. In general, children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- Fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 48 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up for the day.

### **Medications Policy**

It is the policy of HUCB not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our sick child policy.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions).

Parents of such children should address their situation with **SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER** to develop a plan of action.

### **Discipline Policy**

It is the policy of HUCB not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with **SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER** if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues including behavior or complex needs management.

### **Restroom Guidelines**

Children five years of age and younger should be escorted as a group of children to the bathroom. The workers should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The workers should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom or activity centre. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the workers should prop open the bathroom door, and leave the stall door open as they assist the child.

For children over the age of five and up to 7 years old, at least one adult male should take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female should take girls to the restroom. The worker should check the bathroom first to make sure that the

bathroom is empty, and then allow the children inside. The worker should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom or activity centre.

For the protection of all, workers should *never* be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

### **Accidental Injuries to Children**

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed

### **Training**

**HUCB London** will provide training on this policy to all new workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

**(Updated 11 March 2023)**