



Child Protection, Safeguarding, and Adults at Risk Policy

Approved by: Church Leadership

Review Date: July 2026

Name of place of worship: **Mount Elim Evangelical Church**

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Safeguarding Policy Statement

Mount Elim Evangelical Church is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and caring environment for everyone, especially children, young people and adults at risk.

We believe every person is created in the image of God and has inherent dignity and worth. We are committed to protecting all who attend our church from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We undertake to:

- Promote a culture of safeguarding throughout the church.
- Recruit workers and volunteers safely.
- Train workers and volunteers appropriately.
- Respond promptly to safeguarding concerns.
- Work in partnership with statutory agencies where necessary.
- Respect confidentiality while recognising that safeguarding concerns cannot always remain confidential.
- Regularly review safeguarding practices.

Biblical Foundation

Our safeguarding commitment is rooted in Scripture:

“Let the little children come to me...” (Mark 10:14)

“Defend the weak and the fatherless.” (Psalm 82:3)

“Carry each other's burdens.” (Galatians 6:2)

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Ministers
- Elders
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Children's workers
- Youth workers
- Pastoral visitors
- Anyone acting on behalf of Mount Elim Evangelical Church

Safeguarding Contacts

Lead Safeguarding Officer: Christine Jones-Maguire

Email: jonesmaguire@aol.co.uk

Telephone: 07983532189

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Heather Morgan

Email: daffodil893@sky.com

Telephone: 07765680505

Who we safeguard

This policy covers:

- Babies
- Children
- Young people under 18
- Adults at risk¹
- Visitors
- Volunteers
- Staff

Safer Recruitment

All workers and volunteers working with children or adults at risk will:

- Complete an application form.
- Undertake an enhanced DBS check where required or as permitted by law.
- Receive safeguarding training on an annual basis.
- Read and agree to this policy.

¹ Under the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014*, an "adult at risk" is an adult who is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and has needs for care and support.

Code of Conduct

Workers and volunteers should:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Avoid favouritism.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Never be alone unnecessarily with a child.
- Use appropriate language.
- Avoid physical contact that may be misunderstood.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Adhere to the 'Lone Worker' policy (see below) when visiting in a leadership or pastoral capacity
- Report concerns immediately

Workers and volunteers must never:

- Humiliate or ridicule anyone.
- Exchange inappropriate messages.
- Develop secret, exclusive or dependent relationships with children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Share inappropriate photographs.
- Abuse their position of trust

Recognising Abuse

Abuse may be:

Physical

Causing physical injury

Emotional

Persistent emotional ill-treatment

Sexual

Any sexual activity without consent or involving children.

Neglect

Failure to meet basic needs

Financial

Theft or misuse of money or property

Domestic Abuse

Controlling, coercive or violent behaviour

Responding to Concerns

If someone discloses abuse:

DO

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Believe what is being said.
- Reassure appropriately.
- Record exactly what was said.
- Report immediately to a Safeguarding Officer.

DO NOT

- Promise confidentiality.
- Ask leading questions.
- Investigate yourself.
- Contact the alleged abuser.
- Delay reporting.

Please see Appendix 12 for further information.

Reporting Procedure

Under no circumstances should a worker or volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person who has observed concerning behaviour or received a safeguarding disclosure of an allegation or suspicion of abuse, should:

1. Contact the Lead Safeguarding Officer, **Christine Jones-Maguire**

If she is unavailable, contact the Deputy Safeguarding Officer **Heather Morgan**.

If neither is available, contact the Thirtyone:Eight hotline for advice - 0303 003 1111

In exceptional circumstances **ONLY**, where no one can be contacted, and someone is in immediate danger: **Call 999 immediately.**

2. Complete a Safeguarding Concern Form.

Upon receipt of a report, the Safeguarding Officer(s) may contact the Local Authority and/or ThirtyOne:Eight for advice or a referral. Where a criminal offence may have occurred, the police will be informed. The church elders will be notified as appropriate.

Neath Port Talbot Council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) team for Children's and Adult Social Care are the main services who should be contacted for referrals and safeguarding:

- **Phone number:** 01639 686802
- **Email:** spoc@npt.gov.uk
- **Opening hours:** Monday to Thursday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
- **Emergency out-of-hours:** Call 01639 895455 (or 999 for immediate danger).

Record Keeping

Safeguarding records will:

- Be factual.
- Be dated.
- Be signed.
- Be stored securely.
- Be accessible only to authorised personnel.
- Comply with UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation.

Please see Appedices 5 & 7 for further information.

Online Safety

Workers using social media should:

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Never communicate secretly with children.
- Avoid private messaging unless authorised.
- Report concerning online behaviour.
- Direct messaging (DM) with young people under 18 on social media or personal messaging apps is prohibited. All digital communications must include parents/carers or take place via an official church channel.

Health and Safety

The church will:

- Carry out risk assessments.
- Maintain first aid provision.
- Record accidents.
- Ensure suitable supervision ratios.
- Maintain safe premises.

Lone Working

Workers and volunteers should:

- Inform a church leader or safeguarding officer when they are visiting someone outside of the church membership or regular attendees, in their capacity as a leader or volunteer.
- Carry a mobile phone.
- Keep a record of all visits to private homes.

Photography

Permission should be obtained before photographs of children are taken or published.

Images should be stored securely. Please see Appendix 11.

Complaints

Anyone wishing to raise safeguarding concerns about church practice may contact the Safeguarding Officer.

Complaints will be handled fairly, promptly and confidentially.

Declaration

Mount Elim Evangelical Church is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk and expects all those working on behalf of the church to share this commitment.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Christine Jones-Maguire (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

Date:

Heather Morgan (Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

Date:

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Appendix 1 - Risk Assessments

Risk assessments of all activities undertaken will be carried out on an annual basis. In addition to this an informal check will be undertaken before the start of any activity to ensure the building is safe. Risk Assessment forms will be kept on top of the safeguarding cabinet.

Any activities which are not covered by the regular risk assessment, (e.g., an outing to the park) must have an individual risk assessment carried out before the activity takes place.

Each department will be responsible for appointing a named individual who will be responsible for risk assessments.

Completed risk assessments must be stored and any issues identified as needing attention must be reported to Mrs Christine Jones-Maguire or Miss Heather Morgan.

A follow- up check must be carried out within two weeks to ensure the problem has been rectified.

Appendix 2 - First Aid

The group leaders will ensure that enough workers and volunteers are trained as first aiders. A qualified first aider will be available when activities are taking place.

The first aid kit and accident book/forms will be available on top of the safeguarding filing cabinet.

There will be a list of First Aiders on the Safeguarding Notice Board.

Appendix 3 – Accidents

The first aid kit and accident book/forms will be available on top of the safeguarding filing cabinet. Any accident, however minor, must be recorded in the accident book. The parent /carer of a child or young person will be asked to read and sign the accident book.

Appendix 4 - Adult to Child Ratios

There should, in all cases, be a minimum of two workers (adults) present in each group: preferably male and female if the group is mixed.

Parents, carers remaining on the premises:

Busy Bees - there will be a worker or volunteer for every 3 children.

Parents/Carers not remaining on the premises:

For children aged 5-11 in Clwb Ponty Kids Club the ratio will be one worker for every 6 children. For children aged 11- 18 in Impact Youth the ratio will be one worker for every 10 children.

A minimum of two DBS-checked adults is best practice, regardless of how small the group is. Whenever this is not possible, appropriate safeguards must be put in place.

A risk assessment will be carried out for activities and especially where it is:

- Outdoors
- high risk or dangerous
- when catering for people with disabilities or special needs

The results of the risk assessment will determine whether an increased ratio of workers to children is needed. ratios need to be increased.

No child shall leave the premises on their own. A worker or volunteer should ensure they are handed over to an identified adult.

Appendix 5 - Data Protection Principles

The following sets out data protection principles to which Mount Elim Evangelical church will work:

- Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully.
- Personal data shall be held only for one or more specified and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or purposes.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant, and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is processed.
- Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose.
- Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subject under the Data Protection Act.

- Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of the data.

Appendix 6 – Registration

- Every child young person or vulnerable adult attending the organised activities of the church must have completed a consent form. These forms will be renewed annually.
- A register of those attending these activities will be kept together with a register of workers present on each occasion. If a child or worker arrives or leaves other than at the normal start and finish times this will be recorded in the register.

Appendix 7 - Keeping Records

- Each group will have a diary for workers and volunteers to note unusual events or conversations that might not be categorised as a safeguarding concern. Written records are important if any allegations should be made at a later date. These logbooks are important for the safeguarding of both children and workers.
- Every child, young person, vulnerable adult, parent, or carer will be able to view what is recorded about them in the diary. This means that information must be kept in a way that does not breach the confidentiality of a
- Information of a sensitive nature (e.g., the safeguarding concern forms) will be kept separately in a secure place. Any such information will be cross referenced in the logbook.
- Diaries and other records will be kept indefinitely.

Appendix 8 - Unexpected Attendance at activities

When any child or young person comes to any activity unexpectedly, we will:

- Welcome them but try to establish their name, age (children), address and telephone number. Record their visit in a register.
- Ask if a parent/carers is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home. If this is before the session ends, they should be encouraged to return home, unless the parent/carers can be contacted and they are happy with the arrangement.
- In the case of children in particular, suggest the child seeks the parent/carers permission to return the following week.
Link the visiting person with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity.

- On leaving, give the person a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact.
- Without an interrogation, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs, (e.g., medication), so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

Appendix 9 - Parents / Carers staying with Children's Groups.

If a parent asks if they can remain to watch an activity it is important not to appear guarded, but these guidelines will be followed:

- Parents can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made.
- It can help certain children settle into a group, if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a helper/worker.
- Remember that whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they are strangers.
- For some children with special needs, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

Appendix 10 - Outings

- When the church arranges day trips or visits for children and young people under 18, parents or carers will be asked to complete and sign a consent form for the activity.
- The church will carry out a risk assessment of the activity to ensure all eventualities are covered and all adults in the team know what to do in the event of an accident or emergency.
- On the day it is important to remember to take a fully charged mobile phone, all essential records and equipment and allocate named children to named pairs of adults.

Appendix 11 - Filming and taking photographs

Permission will be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded.

- It will be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.
- When using photographs of children and young people, group pictures will be used and no identification by name or other personal details will be used. These details will include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone, or fax numbers.

Appendix 12 - How to Respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse - Effective Listening

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk

Above everything else listen without interrupting

Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking

Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used

Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different

Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality

If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

HELPFUL RESPONSES

- You have done the right thing in telling.
- I am glad you have told me.
- I will try to help you.

DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else.