



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK

November 2024

A full copy of the 'Safe and Secure' Manual is held in the Towy Community Church Administration Department, Xcel Centre, Llanstephan Road, Johnstown, Carmarthen SA31 3BP.



Carmarthen  
Charity No: 1136394  
Company No: 07181550  
Registered in England and Wales



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## **NAMED STAFF AND OTHER CONTACTS**

### ***Towy Community Church***

Designated Person – Hazel Bates: *[Contact Church Office]*

Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator – Beth Robinson: *[Contact Church Office]*

Administrator– Helen Griffiths: 01267 232101 Church Office

### ***Xcel Centre (Xcel Bowl Site)***

Designated Person – Jack Wildsmith: *[Contact Xcel Bowl 01267 225990]*

Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator – Paul Griffiths: *[Contact Xcel Bowl 01267 225990]*

### ***Community Money Advice - The Table, Merlin's Walk***

Designated Person – Niall Pickup: *[Contact Carmarthen CMA 01267 225997]*

Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator – Paul Griffiths: *[Contact Carmarthen CMA 01267 225997]*

### ***Safeguarding Contact Numbers***

Social Services Central Referral Team

01554 742322

Police

101

Social Services Duty line out of hours

01558 824283 (childcare)

Thirtyone:eight (formerly CCPAS) 24 hour helpline

0303 003 11 11 (option 2)

*(Support organisations to create safer places for all)*

Live Fear Free (Women's Aid Domestic Abuse Helpline Wales)

0808 80 10 800

SHELTER (Work for people in housing need across Wales and prevent people from losing their homes by offering free, confidential and independent advice)

08000 495 495 (9.30am – 12.30pm Monday to Friday)

### ***Other helpful numbers***

TAF (Team Around the Family) *(provide help and support with all sorts of issues such as concerns about school and education, behaviour, health, housing, etc)*

01267 246555

Childline - for children *(help and advice about a wide range of issue)*

0800 1111

NSPCC *(Provide therapeutic services to help children move on from abuse, as well as supporting parents and families in caring for their children. Help professionals make the*

0808 800 5000

*best decisions for children and young people, and support communities to help prevent abuse from happening in the first place)*

Kidscape Parent Advice Line (A leading anti-bullying charity. Their vision is for all children to grow up in a world free from bullying and harm, with adults who keep them safe and help them reach their full potential) 07496 682785

Stop it Now (Prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed. We provide support, information and resources to keep children safe and create healthier communities) 0808 1000 900

MindinfoLine (Provides information on a range of topics, including types of mental health problems and where to get help). 0300 123 3393

Through the Roof (Changes the lives of disabled people around the world and helps others to change lives too) 01372 749955

Hourglass (previously Action on Elder Abuse) (Runs a confidential Freephone helpline, which provides information, advice and support to victims and others who are concerned about or have witnessed abuse, neglect or financial exploitation) 0808 808 8141

Crimestoppers (An independent charity that gives people the power to speak up and stop crime) 0800 555 111

Thinkuknow (Helps keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online) [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Samaritans (is a unique charity dedicated to reducing feelings of isolation and disconnection that can lead to suicide) 116 123 (UK)

Estyn (Inspect education and training in Wales) 02920 446446

## **INTRODUCTION AND DETAILS OF THE ORGANISATION**

Name of organisation: Towy Community Church, Carmarthen.

Address: *Administration Department, Xcel Centre, Llanstephan Road, Johnstown, Carmarthen, SA31 3BP*

Tel No: *01267 232101*      Email address: *admin@towychurch.co.uk*

Towy Community Church is a member of the Evangelical Alliance

Towy Community Church Trust is registered with the Charity Commission  
Charity Number: 1136394.

### **Towy Community Church**

Towy Community Church is an independent local church which was pioneered in Carmarthen in 2001 by Mark and Nicola Bennett. We have strong links to other leaders with a similar vision to see a healthy, vibrant church established in West Wales which connects with communities and culture. We have a thriving congregation of around 130 people of all ages, backgrounds and race.

Our Sunday morning “family service” is held at town centre locations at 10.30 a.m. and we have 3 children’s groups during the main part of the service. These cover the 0 – 5 years old, 6 – 11 years old and a Rock Solid group for 11 – 16 years old.

Our church offices are housed in the Xcel Centre, Llanstephan Road, Johnstown. This centre is also the venue for our Trussell Trust Food Bank, Community Shop, Furniture Recycling Centre, Café and Bowling Alley, all of which are managed by the Church. Additionally, the church manages a Community Money Advice Centre at The Table, Merlin’s Walk, Carmarthen SA31 3BN. As the CMA is now located on a separate site it was felt appropriate to appoint a separate Designated Person and Deputy for the CMA.

Our vision is to have a passion for God, reaching people, changing lives.

We see the children and young people under 18 (hereby referred to as children) as an important part of today’s church, and as such our vision is that they too would have a passion for God, be equipped for life and transform their community.

Our aim is to ensure that we provide the children with a safe and stimulating environment with clear boundaries in which they are able to learn the truths of the Bible in fun and creative ways and apply them to their own lives on a daily basis.

Our church has a Youth Group for Year 7 to Year 12 that meets at various locations.

This policy has been submitted to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, to the local authority and to Thirtyone:eight (in full).

(It complies with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', DCSF-00305-2010, which gives guidance on how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004)

This policy applies to all church staff, children's workers, volunteer and members of the church and the staff and volunteers who work within the Xcel Centre. We will ensure that all parents /carers and visitors to the church and Xcel Centre are aware of this safeguarding policy by displaying it on our information table and in our offices and areas of work.

### **Xcel Centre (formerly Xcel Project)**

The Xcel Centre was founded by Towy Community Church. Xcel Bowl opened its doors in June 2013 as a part of the Xcel Project, which is a not for profit, social enterprise, focused on serving the community.

The Xcel Centre now includes: The Carmarthen Foodbank, Carmarthen Community Money Advice, Furniture Recycling and Community Shop.

There are well over 40 employed staff as well as many volunteers working across the project. They are drawn from the local community. The Xcel Centre also provides many work placements.

### **OUR COMMITMENT**

We recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults at risk. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults at risk can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept and concur with:

- the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights (for details see appendix 1)
- the Convention on the Rights of the Child (for details see appendix 1)
- **Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020**

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 show a commitment as part of our church safeguarding

approach to support help and educate parents and carers with all challenges involved in family life to promote safe and healthy parenting and to promote the best interests of the child.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight and prepared in consultation with church members through appropriate training opportunities and local consultancy.

We undertake to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults at risk.
- file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with Thirtyone:eight, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, and the local authority. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All adults/young leaders working with or on behalf of children, young people and adults at risk have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to report concerns to those identified with child protection responsibilities.

There are key people who have specific responsibilities. The names of those carrying these responsibilities are listed on page 3 of this document and in the Appendices.

## **RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE**

### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult at risk is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of 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 at risk.

### **Definition of an adult at risk**

"Someone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation".

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Appendix 1 for details).

The definition of abuse which guides our policy is:

“Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting: by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger”. (Working Together 2000)

We understand ‘Categories of Abuse’ to be:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

(Refer to Appendix 3: *Statutory Definitions of Abuse*

Appendix 4: *Signs of Possible Abuse*

Should you, as a member of the church, employee or volunteer be concerned about a child (or adult who may be deemed to be at risk) and possible abuse, make your concerns known to the ‘named co-ordinators’ for the church, Xcel Centre (Xcel Bowl site) or Community Money Advice (The Table) – **(Hazel Bates and/or Beth Robinson church. Jack Wildsmith and/or Paul Griffiths – Xcel Centre. Niall Pickup and/or Paul Griffiths – CMA/The Table)**

Should a child or adult at risk disclose abuse to you, listen carefully (write down exactly what has been said if possible), don’t judge or question, be honest about having to share what has been said and bring the information to the ‘named co-ordinators’ **Hazel/Beth or Jack/Paul Niall/Paul** as soon as possible. Do not discuss the disclosure with anyone else.

### **Important considerations**

- What you see and hear regarding a child is important, don’t dismiss it
- Raising concerns is not a betrayal
- You cannot guarantee confidentiality
- Do not question the child about your concerns
- Do not suggest how an incident may have occurred

(Refer to Appendix 5: *Effective Listening*)

### **Safeguarding awareness**

The Children’s Act 1989 and 2004

- Applies to ALL children and young people under the age of 18
- It aims to achieve a balance between protecting a child from harm and unwarranted intervention in family life
- Places a new duty on key agencies to co-operate to safeguard children and to improve well-being through the Children and Young People’s plans
- Provision of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)



As a church we want to ensure that we look after the children we deal with in ways that ensure they are kept safe.

### **Principles we follow**

- The child's welfare is paramount
- We recognise that children are generally best looked after within their own family
- We encourage working in partnership with parents/ and carers to bring about the best outcomes
- Children are individuals in their own right.

Social Services, through the Children's Act, have a responsibility and duty.

- Section 47 gives the power and the DUTY to Social Services (and the Police) to investigate Child Abuse concerns
- Section 17 Social Services have a duty to investigate, assess and provide services for the child in need in their area.

Towy Community Church and the Xcel Centre have established a way of working, appointing **Hazel Bates** as Safeguarding 'Designated' person, **Beth Robinson** as Deputy Coordinator and **Jack Wildsmith** as Safeguarding 'Designated' person for the Xcel Centre (Xcel Bowl site), **Paul Griffiths** as Deputy Coordinator for the Xcel Centre (Xcel Bowl site). The CMA is part of the Xcel Centre, but given it is now run out of The Table on Merlin's Walk it is appropriate to have separate Safeguarding 'Designated' person and Deputy Coordinator for The Table. The Safeguarding 'Designated' person for The Table is Niall Pickup and the Deputy Coordinator for The Table is Paul Griffiths.

Safeguarding Co-ordinators are to work closely with the Church members, employees, volunteers, Social Services and police, should the need arise, to ensure Safeguarding practices and guidance are followed.

Towy Community Church Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All relevant individuals will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

### **Responding to allegations of abuse**

Under no circumstances should anyone carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The following procedures should be followed:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to **Hazel Bates, Jack Wildsmith or Niall Pickup** ("Safeguarding Designated Persons") who are nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the

allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Designated Person or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Designated Person, then the report should be made to **Beth Robinson or Paul Griffiths** ("Deputy Designated Persons"). If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Designated Person and the Deputy, then advice should be sought from Thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550, and then reported to Social Services or the Police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services or the Police. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirtyone:eight as above.
  - Duty Line out of hours' emergency number is **01558 824283**
- Where the allegation relates to abuse within The Xcel Centre , reference should be made to **Jack Wildsmith** ("Safeguarding Designated Person") or in his absence to **Paul Griffiths** ("Deputy"). Where the allegation relates to abuse within the CMA or at The Table, reference should be made to Niall Pickup ("Safeguarding Designated Person") or in his absence to Paul Griffiths ("Deputy").
  - The local Adult Social Services out of hours number is **0300 333 2222**
- Where required the Safeguarding Designated Person should then immediately inform **Paul Griffiths** the main leader of the church and the insurance company.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Designated Person, the absence of the Safeguarding Designated Person or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Designated Person/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.
- We have every confidence in the rigour of our procedures, but also recognise the right of any individual to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone: eight should they feel it necessary.

The role of the safeguarding designated person/deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the statutory agencies that have a legal duty to investigate. They will also support the person who has received that information.

**DETAILED PROCEDURES WHERE THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK**  
see APPENDIX 2

**Key messages to ensure effective and appropriate response**

- Developing understanding
- Observation
- Understanding the categories of abuse
- Response to any concerns
  - Active/passive listening
  - Confidentiality - secrets
  - Who to tell

**Key Message: Do not talk to anyone about this other than the appropriate Safeguarding Designated Person.**

**Likely Scenarios:**

**(a) Disclosure to a worker**

- Action:**
- listen appropriately
  - make note
  - contact Designated Person
  - discuss and record accurately with dates/details

**(b) Disclosure concerning worker**

- Action:**
- listen appropriately
  - make note
  - contact Designated Person
  - discuss and record accurately with dates/details
  - Worker suspended from role

**(c) Disclosure concerning Designated Person**

- Action:**
- listen
  - make note
  - contact other co-ordinator
  - discuss and record accurately with dates/details
  - Designated Person suspended from role.

**(d) A child discloses allegation involving both Designated Person and Co-ordinator**

- Action:** Contact Thirtyone:eight for advice



Children Social Services Team Duty Officer

- discuss and record accurately with dates/details

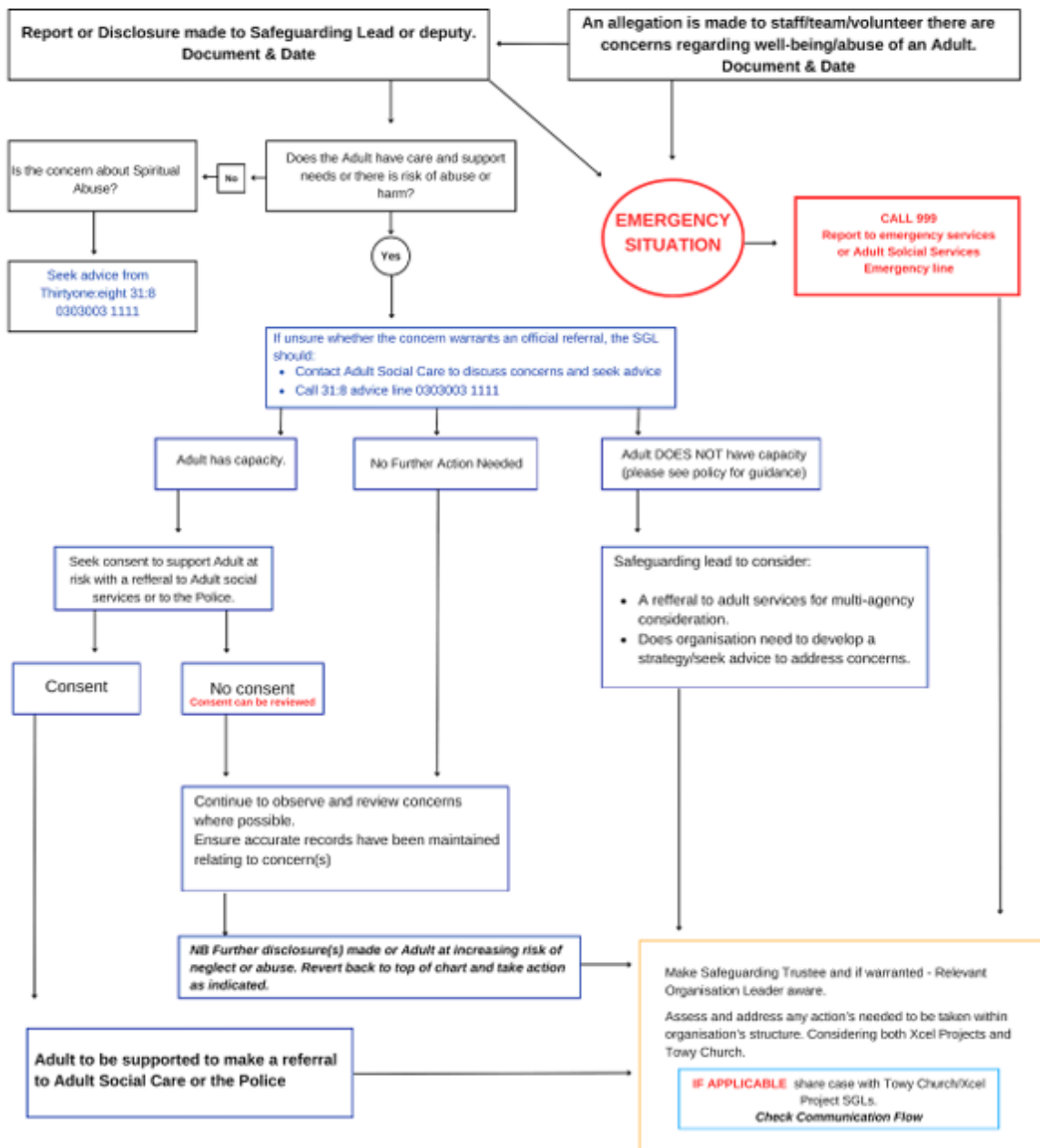
**Appropriate response: Key messages**

- Act swiftly and avoid delay.
- Any adult can take action in his or her own right to ensure that allegation or concern is investigated and can report to investigating agencies

- Written records must be made and dated. The record must include what has been alleged, noticed or reported, and kept securely and confidentially.
- When a child makes a disclosure do not ask leading questions, examine children or promise confidentiality. Reassure the child by informing them-what action will be taken.
- As soon as possible write a dated and timed note of what has been disclosed, noticed, said or done.
- Report to the Safeguarding Designated Person and/or Deputy.
- Inform child of action/further action.
- Begin a case file containing communications and actions, and store securely.

# SYSTEM FOR DESIGNATED PERSON AND DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR - ADULTS

## System for designated Safeguarding Leads (SGL) to report ADULT Safeguarding Concerns.



This flowchart gives an overview of action to be taken when concerned about the welfare of an adult at risk. Please use it in conjunction with the safeguarding policy.

### Footnotes

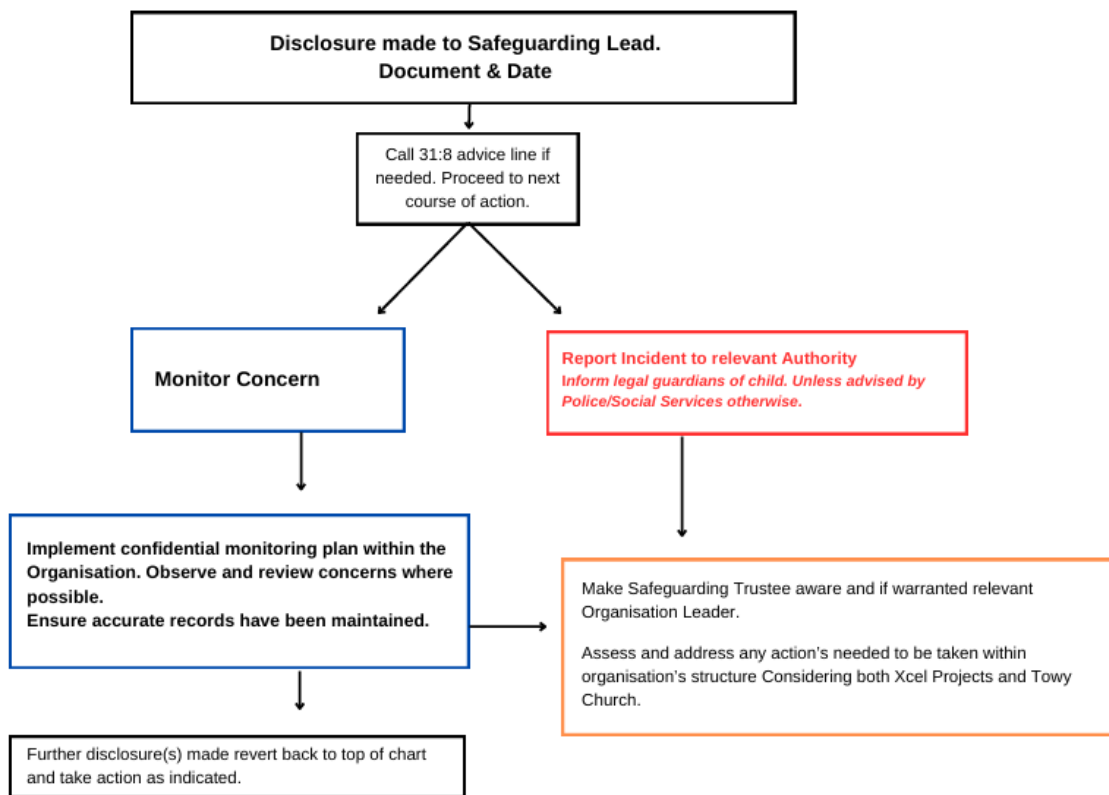
Someone who lacks 'capacity' (due to illness or disability such as a mental health problem, dementia or learning disability) cannot do the following:

- Understand information given to them to make a particular decision.
- Retain that information in order to make the decision.
- Use or weigh up the information to make the decision.
- Communicate their decision.

Capacity is assessed by medical professions. Please see section on the Mental Capacity Act 2005

## SYSTEM FOR DESIGNATED PERSON AND DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR - CHILDREN

System for designated Safeguarding Leads (SGL) to report **CHILD Safeguarding Concerns**.



## SAFE RECRUITMENT

We will ensure all employees and volunteers are appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This normally includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) check has been completed (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 the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.
- Volunteers – Volunteers (within children and youth work) should be known to church leadership for a period of 6 months before volunteering within a role within children/ young

people / adults at risk. References and DBS will always be sought before appointment – in line with volunteer policy

## **MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS – CODES OF CONDUCT**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults at risk. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues. Social Media – social activities outside of church to be considered.

## **PASTORAL CARE**

### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship / organisation.

### **Working with offenders**

When someone is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults at risk, the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. Leadership and Safeguarding officers will work closely with police and probation to ensure that any legal restrictions regarding the offenders contact with children -young people – adults at risk are upheld within the church environment and wider activities.

The safety of children remains paramount and church leaders refuse the right of participation of any individual who refuses to work within set boundaries.

## **PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults at risk we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in, and these are continually being developed.

1. Internal Training Package
2. Allegations Procedures
3. Safe and Secure Manual

## **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

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

We therefore have clear guidelines in regard to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or elsewhere. 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.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, for those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults at risk and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is one means of promoting safeguarding.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY/INFORMATION SHARING**

Every effort will be made by Towy Community Church and Xcel projects to ensure that confidentiality is preserved however this may well be subject to what may be an overriding need to protect someone who has been, or is at risk of, abuse. Everyone working with adults will be clear that it may not be possible to keep information about suspected or actual abuse confidential. The needs of the person and any potential risk to others means that any such suspicion must be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator immediately. In such instances The Safeguarding Co Ordinator of Xcel projects or Towy Community Church may decide a referral is needed to adult services. We will always endeavour to gain consent for this referral. If it is deemed by the safeguarding Co Ordinator that an adult is at risk to themselves or to others a referral may be made without consent

Safeguarding Co-ordinators may share the minimum required information (typically the relevant individuals name) between the Xcel Project and Towy Community Church to avoid the same safeguarding concern being reported multiple times. However, no additional information will be shared unless it is deemed a person may be at risk of harm to themselves or to others attending the projects or the church.



## APPENDICES

### ***APPENDIX 1: Our commitment***

We recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults at risk. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults at risk can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.

We accept and concur with:

- The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights. This states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child. This 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”.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and as a definition of abuse, Article 19. This 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 the 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 particular reference to Article 5. This states that ‘No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’.

## ***APPENDIX 2: Detailed procedures where there is concern:***

### **ALLEGATIONS 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 Designated Person/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services 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.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- 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 Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

### **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Designated Person/Deputy will

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

**The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:**

### **SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE**

If a adult at risk has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Designated Person/ Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the adult at risk is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Adults at Risk Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets' to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

### ***APPENDIX 3: InFocus: Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)***

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

#### **1. FORMS OF ABUSE - WALES**

The following definitions of child abuse are recommended as criteria throughout Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (2000).

##### **Physical Abuse**

This involves deliberate harm to children. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, squeezing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, biting, as well as giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poisonous substances or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as 'factitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen Syndrome by proxy'. Reasonable physical restraint to prevent a child from harming themselves, another person, or from causing serious damage to property is not deemed to be abuse.

##### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

##### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **2. RECOGNITION OF ABUSE**

Child abuse can and does occur both within a child's family and in institutional or community settings. The church acknowledges that some individuals seek to use voluntary and community organisations to gain access to children, and that it is necessary to have an open mind when the possibility arises that a member of the church is suspected of abuse or inappropriate activity. The following may indicate that a child is being or has been abused:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, particularly if such an injury is unlikely to have occurred accidentally.
- An injury for which the child's or adult's explanation appears inconsistent.
- The child describes an abusive act or situation.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour.
- The child appears distrustful of adults.
- The child is not allowed to be involved in normal social activities.
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or shabby.

The recognition of abuse is not always easy and we acknowledge that not all are experienced in this area and will not easily know whether or not abuse is taking place. However, it is the responsibility of all to act on concerns in order to safeguard the welfare of the child.

### ***InFocus: Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Adults at Risk)***

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect adults at risk from abuse (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts
- It may be physical, verbal or psychological
- It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act
- It may occur when a person at risk is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent.
- It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'.

**Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

**Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

**Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult at risk. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult at risk's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

**Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.

**Neglect or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the adult at risk needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult at risk or to others. A person at risk may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired.

**Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

**Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of an adult at risk by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

#### ***APPENDIX 4: InFocus: Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)***

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

##### **Physical**

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation\*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse\*

##### **Sexual**

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate 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\*

##### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- 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

##### **Neglect**

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses,
- Inadequate care, etc

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

## ***InFocus: Signs of Possible Abuse (Adults at risk)***

### **Physical**

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over-use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

### **Sexual**

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

### **Psychological**

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

### **Financial or Material**

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

### **Neglect or Omission**

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

### **Discriminatory**

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

### **Institutional**

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed-times, visitors, phone calls etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids

- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity



## ***APPENDIX 5: InFocus: Effective Listening***

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or adult at risk 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 need to tell someone else to make sure we are keeping you safe
- TED -TELL ME – CAN YOU EXPLAIN TO ME- DESCRIBE TO ME-

### **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

## ***APPENDIX 6: Leadership Safeguarding Statement***

The Senior Leader **Paul Griffiths** recognises the importance of Towy Community Church's ministry/work with children, young people and adults, and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the leadership/organisation:

This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults at risk and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults at risk and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of what we offer, unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and adults at risk.

**We are committed to:**

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/adults at risk.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this organisation.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the organisation affected by abuse.

- Adopting and following the ‘Safe and Secure’ safeguarding standards developed by the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service.

**We recognise:**

- Children’s Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult at risk.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed. In addition, we will report concerns to our agency’s headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

**We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.**

If you have any concerns for a child or adult at risk, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as a Safeguarding Designated Person/ Co-ordinator for this organisation.

**Hazel Bates:** Child Safeguarding Designated Person - TCC

**Beth Robinson:** Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator - TCC

**Jack Wildsmith:** Safeguarding Coordinator - Xcel Centre

**Paul Griffiths:** Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator – Xcel Centre

**Niall Pickup:** Safeguarding Coordinator – The Table

**Paul Griffiths:** Deputy Child Safeguarding Coordinator – The Table

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from **Helen Griffiths, Church Administrator, Towy Community Church, Administration Department, Xcel Centre, Llanstephan Road, Johnstown, Carmarthen, SA31 3BP.**

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been lodged with Thirtyone:eight, Education and Children’s Services Department, Carmarthenshire County Council and the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board.

Name:

Date of Incident:

Location:

People Present:

How Suspicions/Evidence of Possible Abuse Obtained – DESCRIPTION OF OBSERVATIONS, CONCERNS OR DISCLOSURE?

Nature of possible abuse

Action Taken:

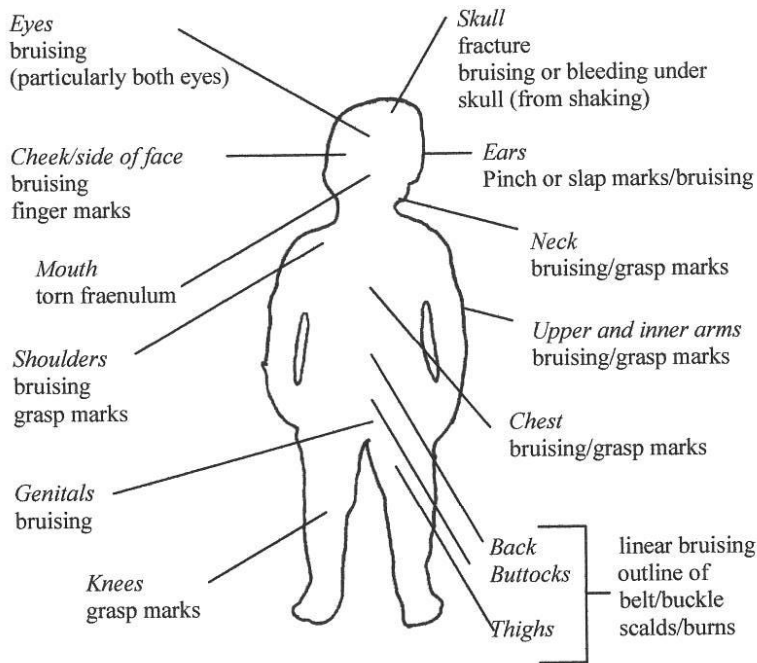
Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

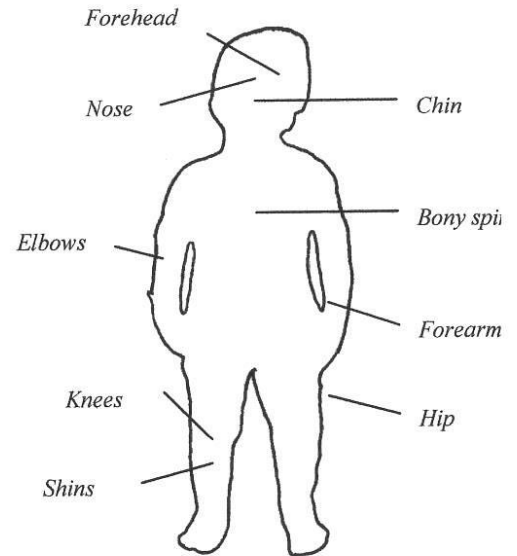
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The signs of possible child abuse:

### Common sites for non-accidental injury



### Common sites for accidental injury



#### Non-accidental injuries

##### *Bruises* likely to be:

frequent  
patterned, e.g. finger and thumb marks  
old and new in same place (note colour)  
in unusual position (see chart)

##### consider:

developmental level of the child and their activities  
may be more difficult to see on darker skins

##### *Burns and scalds* likely to have:

clear outline  
splash marks around burn area  
unusual position, e.g. back of hand  
indicative shapes, e.g. cigarette burns, bar of electric fire

##### *Injuries* suspicious if:

bite marks  
fingernail marks  
large and deep scratches  
incisions, e.g. from razor blade

##### *Fractures* likely to be:

numerous - healed at different times  
consider:

age of child, always suspicious in babies under two  
years old delay in seeking treatment

##### *Sexual abuse* may result in:

unexplained soreness, bleeding or injury in genital or anal area  
sexually transmitted diseases, e.g. warts, gonorrhoea

#### Accidental injuries

##### *Bruises* likely to be:

few but scattered  
no pattern  
same colour and age  
consider:

age and activity of child, e.g. learning to walk  
may be confused with birthmarks or other skin  
conditions

##### *Burns and scalds* likely to be:

treated  
easily explained  
may be confused with other conditions e.g. impetigo,  
nappy rash

##### *Injuries* likely to be:

minor and superficial  
treated  
easily explained

##### *Fractures* likely to be:

of arms and legs  
seldom on ribs except for road traffic accidents  
rare in very young children  
may rarely be due to 'brittle bone syndrome'

##### *Genital area*

injury may be accidental (seek expert opinion)  
soreness may be nappy rash or irritation, e.g. from bubble  
bath or anal soreness may be due to constipation or  
threadworm infestation

Parental attitude is important in assessing all of the above - when a child is suffering a severe and painful injury most would seek medical help.