

# **Avenue Community Church**

## **Summary of forms**

The attached pack contains copies of forms and statements in respect of the Church's work with children and young people. These have been produced in response to the Home Office Code of Practice "Safe from Harm", published in September 1993, giving guidelines for all those engaged in work with children and young people in voluntary organisations including the Church.

Many children and young people come into Church activities each week. They do this because many people have voluntarily given of their time, and show love and care. However, for a very small minority, on very rare occasions there could be hurt and upset because of abuse. We have a responsibility to prevent physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people given into our care. We also have a responsibility to protect those working with children and young people against unfounded accusations, or indeed behaving in ways which may be well-meaning but inadvisable.

- Policy statement
- Good Practice Guidelines
- Good Practice Procedures
- Parental Consent
- Worker Appointment Document
- Holiday Club Registration Document
- Appendix
  - What to do if a child discloses
  - Recognising abuse
  - Mentoring young people
  - Pastoral care
  - Extra needs form

Paula Harris  
October 2018

# AVENUE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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### Useful numbers:

**Social Services 0116 454 1004**

**CCPAS 0303 0031111/ 01322 517817**

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## Safe From Harm Guidelines

### ***Safe from Harm: Summary of Recommendations***

(Pub: Home Office, London 1993, ISBN 0 862529 93-X)

In order to safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in their charge, voluntary organisations (including churches) should consider the issues raised by each of the following statements of principles and then, if they wish to do so, take any action which they deem to be appropriate in the light of their circumstances and structures, and the nature of their activities.

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## **Policy statement on children, young people and the church**

### **Scope**

The scope of this policy covers the children and young people's activities that are organised and staffed by appointed workers of Avenue Community Church only.

This statement was agreed at the Church meeting held on 20/11/18

Children and young people are part of our Church family today. They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in the gospel and the teaching of Christ, we will respect their wishes and feelings.

- As members of this Church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.
  - It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
  - We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole Church.
  - The Church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and to providing supervision.
  - The Church is committed to following the principles of the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm' and adopts the guidelines as set out in this document.
  - Each worker with children and young people must accept and follow the procedures, and undertake to observe them. Each worker shall be given a copy of the Church's policy statement and good practice guidelines.
- As part of our commitment to children and young people, the Church has appointed the following Church members/workers as a Safe Guarding officers:

**Paula Harris and Dan James**

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They will report directly to **Richard Brewster**, the elder in charge of children's/youth work if anything causes concern about a child or young person unless the concern or allegation involves that elder.

### Good Practice Guidelines for Protecting Children, Young People and Workers

Organisation leaders can reduce likely situations for abuse of children and young people and help protect workers from false accusations by making sure that all existing and new workers are aware that, as a general rule, *it doesn't make sense to...*

- spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- take children alone in a car on journeys, however short;
- take children to their home.

Where occasions arise when it is unavoidable that these things do happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the organisation/group leader and the child's parents if possible.

All existing and new workers must clearly understand that they should...

- *avoid* engaging in rough, physical play and *never* engage in sexually provocative games and horseplay with anyone;
- *Avoid* hugging, sitting on knees etc unless instigated by the child and is appropriate to the context – i.e. an injury or upset child
- *never* allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- *never* allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- *never* make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun;
- *never* promise secrecy - whatever a child or young person tells us, if it concerns abuse, we must pass it on and tell the child or young person why;
- *never* leave the meeting unattended, irrespective of the number of children present - children will be safer if supervised by two or more adults;
- *never* let any allegation made by a child, young person or worker go unchallenged or unrecorded, but *not to try to investigate or deal with an allegation* (see below);
- *never* engage in scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person;
- *avoid* doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves\*.

\* It may sometimes be necessary for workers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or have disabilities. These tasks should only

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be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important that all workers are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion. Where possible, two workers should be present.

### **Concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse**

- If anything causes concern about a child or young person, it should be shared confidentially with the organisation leader.
- Allegations received from a child or young person, or reports received about concerns, must always be referred to and recorded in confidence on the incident/accident book.
- The Elder or designated Safe Guarding Officer should also be advised immediately and given all documentation without delay.
- The Elder and the designated Safe Guarding Officer will consider what action is to be taken, where necessary in conjunction with social services and the police.

### **Acting on significant information – (Elder/SGO)**

- All allegations are to be assessed promptly and carefully and the need for immediate action considered.
- All allegations are to be pursued and recorded regardless of the availability of the alleged perpetrator to co-operate with the investigation.
- If the elder/SGO is unsure whether the concerns are valid, s/he will take advice from social services or CCPAS.
- Where it is decided that there are grounds for concerns about an individual, social services and the police are to be informed immediately.
- The individual under suspicion is to be notified of the cause for concern. However, the timing of the notification and any action regarding suspension should be decided in discussion with social services and the police.
- Full documentation of the investigation and of the outcome is to be kept securely, and treated as confidential by the elders

### **Guidelines for discipline**

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding and pray for the child
- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.

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- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model, setting a good example. You can not expect children to observe ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children your attention and do not allow some children take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said – this avoids manipulation.
- Look honestly at your programme – if children are bored, they misbehave. Is the programme at fault?
- Never smack or hit a child and only use physical constraint if the child is a danger to themselves or another child.
- Don't shout – change voice tone as necessary.
- Discipline out of love never anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.)
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism, name-calling. A respect for property, and make sure the child understands the action that will be taken.
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive together. Give them a chance and only separate if they are disruptive.
- Have leaders sit with the children
- Be proactive and don't wait to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take the child aside and talk to them, challenge them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
- Warn a child that you will speak to their parents/carer. As a last resort ban them for a week and advise the parents/carer of the decision.

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## Good Practice Procedures

### 1. Policy statement on children, young people and the church

The church's policy statement on p.4 must be read each year and clearly understood by all workers, whether regular or casual.

### 2. Guidelines for the protection of children/young people and workers

All workers must also be made fully aware each year of the adopted guidelines regarding the need to safeguard children and young people against abuse of a physical, emotional or sexual nature; to avoid likely situations for such abuse; to protect themselves from false accusations; and to be familiar with the steps to be taken in the event of any concern, suspicion or allegation of abuse.

All workers are also to be made aware of fire evacuation procedures from the building, location and use of the fire extinguisher/s and of the first aid box. It is essential that at least one worker present at an organisation meeting should be first aid qualified.

### 3. Interview of new worker

A church family member, wishing to be involved as a worker (on a regular or casual basis) in the organisation should be interviewed by the organisation leader. If there is any doubt in the volunteer's suitability for the role it should be discussed with the elder in charge.

Volunteers who have been in the church family fewer than 18 months will be asked to provide contact details of a leader in their former church or place of work, if a recent believer, who will be contacted by the Safe Guarding Officer.

All volunteers/workers must have an enhanced DBS which if not checked through ACC, must have 18months left to its expiry date.

New workers must not take up their position until a clear, enhanced DBS has been received.

Leaders of groups must ensure that the above procedures have taken place before allowing a new volunteer begin to work.

### 4. Responsibilities of new worker

The new worker's general responsibilities are set out in workers responsibility and job description documents.

To attend annual Safe Guarding training. Failure to do so would mean ceasing work with young people and children.



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## **5. Existing workers**

Existing workers already involved on a regular or casual basis must give assent to the Church policy and adopted guidelines and also be made aware of and clearly understand their responsibilities and the procedures. They must have a current enhanced DBS

## **6. Supervisory ratios**

Attendance at meetings or outside activities is essential. Every effort should be made to ensure that there is sufficient staff in charge. It is assumed that all workers will be present unless the organisation leader is notified at least two hours before the start of the meeting - this will allow time to obtain additional worker/s or cancel the meeting. In order to protect both the interests of the children and the workers it is important that appropriate supervisory worker/child ratios are observed in relation to age, gender-mix and activity.

A minimum ratio of 1:10 or, where physical or outside activities are involved, at the very least 1:8 (and 1:6 for younger children and 1:3 for babies and toddlers) is recommended by NIDVA having regard also to the gender mix. The Church requires that these ratios be observed and that there be a minimum of two workers at all meetings or outside activities.

## **7. Role of a worker**

A worker is to be made fully aware of his/her role at meetings. As applicable, a rota of personnel and activities should be made available for check each week, or copies given to each worker.

## **8. Workers/Parents complaints**

Any complaint of a general or specific nature regarding an organisation's functions or practice is to be referred immediately to, or raised in confidence directly with, the organisation leader who should keep a record of the complaint and action taken. If the worker/parent does not consider the complaint to have been satisfactorily dealt with or resolved, he/she may raise any reasonable grounds for complaint with the elder or SGO. Complaints by a worker about another colleague should be handled in accordance with Matthew 18 v 15-17.

## **9. Disciplinary procedures**

If a child misbehaves during a meeting, he/she is to be told by a worker what is wrong with their behaviour and instructed to stop. If the child persists with unacceptable behaviour, the disobedience is to be dealt with by giving the child 'time out' of the activity, for as long as necessary, under the supervision of a worker/leader. In serious cases, parents are also to be made aware by the organisation leader that persistent,

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disruptive behaviour may lead to barring of their child's attendance at future meetings. Similar procedures are to be applied, as appropriate, for controlled discipline of young people.

## 10. Car lifts

Workers should not, as a general rule, give a child a lift to or from a meeting by car without the *written* consent of the parent/guardian - this may be obtained at the start of the year, by completion of the relevant section of the Parental/Carer Consent Form.

## 11. Outings/Trips/Camps

Before any child and, as a general rule, young person is allowed to take part in Church events (outings, visits, outdoor games or camps etc), an "activity specific" consent form ((Parental/Carer Consent Form) is to be completed, signed and returned. Completed forms are to be retained by the leader of the outing/camp until the activity is fully complete whereupon the completed forms may be securely disposed of.

## 12. Accidents

Each organisation shall have an incident book at all meetings or activities An accident is to be recorded if it requires hospital, home, first aid or other medical treatment, or if the leader considers it prudent to advise the parents e.g. in the case of a head injury, even if first aid is not required. Details are to be promptly recorded of the workers present, child/young person's name, time and a description of the accident, together with details of actions taken and who were informed. The completed record should be signed by the parent or carer to confirm their awareness of the accident and of the action taken. The organisation leader will check on any procedural change or other action needed to avoid (where possible) recurrence of preventable accidents of a similar nature.

## 13. Incidents

Any incidents should be recorded with a description of who was involved, what happened, what the outcome was and what action was taken by the leaders. It should then be signed and dated by the leader involved and a parent or carer

## 14. Church insurance

The church has a public liability insurance policy that is renewed annually. This is reviewed from time to time to ensure that a suitable level of cover is maintained for the activities the church undertakes.

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## Appointment of Worker

**ORGANISATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

It is a person's privilege and duty to serve the Lord Jesus Lord through the local Church.

On appointment as a \_\_\_\_\_ (*post*), you will be expected to be faithful in your responsibilities and duties as follows:

### General Responsibilities

- to seek to live in daily trust of Jesus;
- to teach nothing that shall conflict with the doctrinal standards outlined within the Church's Statement of Faith;
- to attend Church services as regularly as possible;
- to attend your group regularly - if prevented from coming for a valid reason you should notify the organisation leader;
- to be on time;
- to take time to prepare thoroughly for the work assigned to you;
- to attend, if possible, the meeting appointed for workers;
- to co-operate with your colleagues - to seek constructive criticism and helpful suggestions, and at all times to abide by such rulings as may be made for the best interest of the group;
- where applicable, to endeavour to contact the homes of the members of your group, especially those who are absent, recognising that the establishing of good relationships with the parents is necessary for the work to be maintained properly;
- to earnestly strive, under God, praying for the conversion of those members of your group who are not Christians, and encouraging in the faith those who are Christians;
- to be fully aware of the need to safeguard children in your care against abuse, to avoid likely situations for such abuse and to protect yourself from false accusation;
- to pray earnestly for the organisation and for your colleagues in the work;
- to bring relevant matters to the attention of your prayer partners in the work.

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We ask all those who wish to help at the holiday club to complete this form. The information will be kept confidentially, unless requested by an appropriate authority.

Your full name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence of any nature or are you at present the subject of criminal charges or under investigation? **YES/NO**

*(If you have answered 'Yes' or have any hesitation or difficulty in answering this question, contact the Elder or designated Church Officer who will discuss the matter with you in confidence.)*

Are you a qualified first aider or do you hold an emergency first aider certificate? **YES/NO**

Please indicate which days you plan to help at the holiday club

	Mo	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	n				

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## Parent's/Carer's consent form for outings

Nature of outing or activity:

Date of outing:

Time (of leaving & return): /

Surname:

Usual First name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel No:

**I give permission for the above named to take part in the planned outing or activity and if necessary receive emergency medical treatment.**

**(please complete the attached medical form)**

Signed:

Parent/Carer

Date:

***Please note that this form must be returned promptly, completed and signed, for your son/daughter to be permitted to take part in the outing or activity.***

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## Medical Details

Doctor's name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Child's D.O.B.: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Please also provide the following medical information about your child which might affect his/her involvement in activities.

- Details of any medicine being taken, special diet being followed, or treatment being received
  
- Details of any known allergies (eg Asthma) or sensitivities (eg Penicillin)
  
- Whether he/she has been immunised against tetanus within the last 5 years

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

(Parent/carer)

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

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## Safeguarding Officer

Government Guidelines recommend that children have access to an independent person to minimise the possibility of any abuse going undetected.

The role of the Safe Guarding Officer can be summarised into the following three areas:

- to be a voice for the children or young people

The Safe Guarding Officer would in effect represent the interests of the children and young people at Church meetings. In order to do this the Safe Guarding Officer must be Church members and would need to listen to the concerns and suggestions of the children and young people and encourage them to voice their ideas.

- to act as a contact person

The Safe Guarding Officer would be available for the children or their families in order to voice concerns or complaints regarding any area of the Church's work with children or young people. The Safe Guarding Officer's name and telephone numbers should be publicised and parents should be invited to raise any concerns whatsoever with them.

- to support and monitor the implementation of the Church's policy and procedures
- to be an expert in the field
- to be the first Point of Contact
- to be part of decision-making body

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## Creche

### Creche leaders

Creche Leaders are required to read prayerfully, agree and sign the Youth Worker's Covenant annually, as a continued commitment to God and to the children entrusted to their care

They are responsible for:

- the overall planning of Creche and associated events - they are ultimately responsible for anything that occurs during such a meeting/event;
- the weekly running of Creche - with particular regard to the care and safety of children and encouraging sharing and interaction with other children.
- building relationships with the children and, where possible, parents;
- keeping the Church regularly informed for prayer and support.

### Creche helpers

Helpers are responsible for:

- working alongside and assisting the Creche Leaders;
- undertaking any task or duty, mutually decided upon, to the best of their ability;
- building relationships with the children;
- becoming familiar with, and abiding by the Church's policy and Good Practice Procedures for working with children/young people.

Helpers may well be asked to assist in various parts of the programme but should not, in general, be responsible for the running of crèche or any key decisions affecting the wellbeing of children.



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## **Sunday Club**

### **Sunday Club Teachers**

Sunday Club Teachers are required to read prayerfully, agree and sign the Youth Worker's Covenant annually, as a continued commitment to God and to the children entrusted to their care.

They are responsible for:

- Attending meetings relevant to the role;
- The overall planning of their Sunday Club class;
- The weekly running of their Sunday Club class - with particular regard to teaching the children;
- Building relationships with the children and, where possible, parents;
- Keeping the other Sunday Club teachers regularly informed for prayer and support.

### **Sunday Club Helpers**

Sunday Club Helpers are responsible for:

- working alongside and assisting the Sunday Club Teachers;
- undertaking any task or duty, mutually decided upon, to the best of their ability;
- building relationships with the children

Sunday Club Helpers may well be asked to assist in various parts of the programme but should not, in general, be responsible for the main teaching.

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## ACCelerate/Ace

### ACCelerate/Ace Leaders

ACCelerate/Ace Leaders are required to read prayerfully, agree and sign the Youth Worker's Covenant annually, as a continued commitment to God and to the children entrusted to their care.

They are responsible for:

- Attending meetings relevant to the role;
- The overall planning of ACCelerate/Ace and associated events - they are ultimately responsible for anything that occurs during such a meeting/event;
- Helping to maintain a healthy level of discipline in the group in accordance with the Discipline Policy.
- Building relationships with the children and, where possible, parents;
- keeping the Church regularly informed for prayer and support (for example at the Church family and their Home Groups).

### ACCelerate/Ace Helpers

ACCelerate/Ace Helpers are responsible for:

- working alongside and assisting the ACCelerate/Ace Leaders;
- undertaking any task or duty, mutually decided upon, to the best of their ability;
- building relationships with the children;
- becoming familiar with, and abiding by the Church's policy and Good Practice Procedures for working with children/young people.

ACCelerate/Ace Helpers may well be asked to assist in various parts of the programme but should not, in general, be responsible for the main teaching.

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## Source

### Source Leaders

Source Leaders are required to read prayerfully, agree and sign the Youth Worker's Covenant annually, as a continued commitment to God and to the children entrusted to their care.

They are responsible for:

- Attending meetings relevant to their role;
- Assisting with the planning of each weekly event and occasional 'special' events. - they are ultimately responsible for anything that occurs during such a meeting/event;
- Helping to maintain a healthy level of discipline in the group in accordance with the Discipline Policy.
- The weekly running of Source - with particular regard to the detailed study of the Bible;
- building relationships with the young people and, where possible, parents;
- keeping the Church regularly informed for prayer and support, (for example via the Church Family Meeting and their Home Groups)

### Source Helpers

Helpers are responsible for:

- working alongside and assisting the Source Leaders;
- undertaking any task or duty, mutually decided upon, to the best of their ability;
- building relationships with the young people;
- becoming familiar with, and abiding by the Church's policy and Good Practice Procedures for working with children/young people.

Helpers may well be asked to assist in various parts of the programme but should not, in general, be responsible for the main teaching in the epilogue.

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## RECOGNISING ABUSE

### PHYSICAL

- Any injuries not consistent with explanation given for them
- Injuries, which occur to the body in places not normally, exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Unexplained pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures
- Cuts, scratches

### SEXUAL

- Any allegations made by the child
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
- Detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Severe sleep disturbance
- Eating disorder
- Bed wetting

### NEGLECT

- Inappropriate clothing
- Dirty clothing
- Failure to grow
- Steals food
- Smells
- Unwashed

### EMOTIONAL

- Changes or regression in behaviour particularly withdrawal, clinginess, aggression, depression, anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions and phobias
- Sudden under achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with adults and peers
- Attention seeking
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away
- Stealing

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- Self harming

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## WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES

### GENERAL POINTS

- Accept what the child says (however unlikely the story seems)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – **don't promise confidentiality**
- Remember the child is never responsible for the abuse
- Be aware the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell you
- Never push for information

### HELPFUL THINGS YOU MAY SAY OR SHOW

- I believe you or show affirmation
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

### DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure?
- Why? How? When? Who?
- Never make false promises

### CONCLUSION

- Let the child know what you are going to do
- Contact the person in your church responsible for co-ordinating safeguarding
- Contact SS or police
- Make notes
- Consider your own feelings seek pastoral help

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## Mentoring Young People

### **Aim:**

- That young people would grow in their knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus and be disciplined to disciple others.
- Young people would be part of the church family and develop positive relationships with older people
- Young people would be supported in their Christian walk

### **Practicalities/good practice:**

- Parents must be asked for permission and purpose of the mentoring explained carefully
- Parents will be aware of the material being studied
- Same sex mentoring relationships only
- Mentors will have DBS clearance and be known to the leadership
- Mentoring will take place in a public place such as a café or in the young person's home – not their bedroom
- The mentoring session should not last more than 1 hour and include a basic Bible/book study appropriate to the young person, a short time of prayer and some 'chill out time'
- Promises of confidentiality should not be made.
- Mentors should be encouraged to meet young person on a regular basis
- Basic one to one training will be given to the mentors
- There should be an initial testing out period of two months after which the mentoring should be reviewed to see if the young person wants to continue
- The church child protection policy should be adhered to at all times.

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## **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 Avenue Community Church.

If a situation has arisen which you need to help to process or has raised issues for you please talk to the Safe Guarding Officers who will be able to signpost you to the most appropriate help

### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending Avenue Community Church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer 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.

If someone who poses a risk to children, young people or adults with care and support needs wants to join in with activities or become part of an organisation, it is important the leadership manage the risk appropriately by creating clear policies and a code of behaviour the individual must follow. This will help protect the vulnerable and lessen the possibility of the person being wrongly-suspected of abuse in the future. This code of conduct will be written with the input of the Safe Guarding officer and done on an individual basis.



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## **Youth and Children's Clubs Additional Needs Form**

**Child's name:**

**Date of birth**

**Name of person filling in this form:**

**Relationship to child**

At Avenue Community Church we want all young people to be able to enjoy our youth and children's clubs. We try our best to organise activities that cater for all needs and abilities, therefore we would appreciate any information you can provide us with regarding any additional needs they have and how we can best cater for them.

1. Would you say your child has a physical, mental, social or emotional issue that we need to be aware of: Y/N. If yes please give details below:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Is there anything that you feel we need to be aware of regarding this issue?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Is there anything is particular that you have found helpful in meeting their needs that we should be aware of? (e.g. a fiddle toy to help concentration etc.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Is there anything you think may cause a serious issue to your child that we may not be aware of?