



**GVC CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**  
**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

## CHURCH DETAILS

Name: Gordano Valley Church (hereafter, "The Church") Registered Charity N<sup>o</sup>: 1019486

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## INTRODUCTION

This Policy should be read in conjunction with supporting GVC documents/policies/guidelines and with reference to regulatory requirements. For definitions of terms used in this Policy please see the Essential Practice Guidelines.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Core Leadership [hereafter referred to as Core Leaders] and Trustees recognise the importance of its ministry to children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the children's/youth workers within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the church.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

## CHURCH POLICY

The Core Leaders and Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Core Leaders and Trustees have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter "the policy"). It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The policy and attached Essential Practice Guidelines are based on a model published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS). The Core Leaders and Trustees undertake to file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with CCPAS and Children's Social Services, and any amendments subsequently published. The Core Leaders and Trustees agree not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

The Core Leaders and Trustees are committed to on-going child protection training for all children/youth workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.

The Core Leaders and Trustees also undertake to follow the principles found within the Abuse Of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office. 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.

## RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a church worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to Trisha Chisnall (hereafter the "Co-ordinator") tel no: 01275 851425 who is nominated by the Core Leaders and Trustees 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.
- The Co-ordinator may also be required by conditions of the Church Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company.
- In the absence of the Co-ordinator, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Co-ordinator then the report should be made to David Gradwell (hereafter the "Deputy Co-ordinator") tel no: 01275 849859. If the suspicions implicate both the Co-ordinator and the Deputy Co-ordinator, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550 or alternatively contact Children's Social Services. The local Children's Social Services office telephone number between 9.00am and 5.00pm is 01275 888222. The out of hours emergency number is 01454 615165. The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 01934 638171.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with church procedures (EPG Section Page) and kept in a secure place (EPG Section Section 8.2).
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Co-ordinator, the absence of the Co-ordinator or Deputy Co-ordinator should not delay referral to the Children's Social Services Department.
- The Core Leaders and Trustees will support the Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies or seek advice from CCPAS, although the Core Leaders and Trustees hope that members of the church will use this Child Protection Policy procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Core Leaders and Trustees demonstrate the commitment of the church to effective child protection.

The role of the co-ordinator/ deputy co-ordinator is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Children's Social Services Department. It is Children's Social Services task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

## **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 Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or CCPAS) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Will 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, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of injury.
- 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 CCPAS (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 Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator 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 CCPAS if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

## **ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above the co-ordinator in accordance with Local Safeguarding, etc. LSCB procedures will need to liaise with children's social services in regards to the suspension of the worker and making a referral to an Allegations Management Adviser (AMA).

## **APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF LEADERS & WORKERS**

The Core Leaders and Trustees will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines "Safe from Harm" ( HMSO 1993), in line with CCPAS guidance and this Policy's guidelines. The same principles will be applied to those appointed to work with vulnerable adults.

## **SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

The Core Leaders are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse.

## **WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, the Core Leaders will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its commitment to the protection of children, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Core Leaders and Trustees on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Core Leader) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signed (Trustee) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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