



Safeguarding Policy

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1. CHURCH DETAILS

Name: Gordano Valley Church (hereafter, “The Church”) Registered Charity N^o. 1152104
Address: 4 Combe Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 6BJ
Tel No: 01275 847032
Email address office@gvc.org.uk

2. INTRODUCTION

This Policy should be read in conjunction with supporting GVC documents/policies/guidelines (Appendix 1) and with reference to regulatory requirements.

3. 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, young people and Adults at risk entrusted to the church's care.

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

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and Adults at risk as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the 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.

4. CHURCH POLICY

The Core Leaders and Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and Adults at risk. It also acknowledges that children, young people and adults at risk 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 and adhere to the government guidelines set out by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The policy is based on a model published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service now called 31:8.

The Core Leaders and Trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training for all workers involved with children/youth and Adults at risk and will regularly review the operational guidelines listed in Appendix 1.

The Core Leaders and Trustees undertake to follow the principle that it is 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.

Within GVC the Safeguarding team is comprised of:

- the GVC Safeguarding Co-ordinator - Sue Davey
- the GVC Safeguarding Deputy Co-ordinator - Lynn Reading
- a Trustee – Ali Smith
- a Core Leader – Dave Francis
- GVC Administrator – Lois

Within GVC the Safeguarding co-ordinator will take the overall lead role within the church on matters related to Safeguarding. This decision is attributed to her professional expertise and knowledge.

5. SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES – RECRUITMENT of WORKERS (Employees and Volunteers) – refer also to the Statement of Intent for Volunteers

It is recognised that there are similarities within both groups and thus some practices and procedures use the same format of documentation and process i.e. in the recruitment of volunteers.

The Safeguarding team will ensure staff and volunteers are recruited, trained and kept up to date with legislation and good practice through an annual meeting with the Core Leadership team. Information will also be available to the church membership, visitors and those who participate in GVC activities through the GVC website and information leaflets.

Please refer to the GVC Child and Adult at Risk Recruitment Guidelines

All attendance records, recruitment applications (volunteers and paid staff) and any incident records must be retained confidentially at No 4 in case they are ever required for reference in the future. Where these records have been generated electronically (such as using ChurchSuite) these will be retained in and made available to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator/Deputy Co-Ordinator in a timely fashion).

6. SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES - CHILDREN

GVC follows **31:8** guidelines found in their Online safeguarding manual and adheres to the Government guidelines set out by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Please refer to the GVC Child Safeguarding Guidelines. In the event of an allegation of abuse of a child, please refer to this document.

7. SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES – ADULTS at RISK

GVC follows **31:8** guidelines found in their Online safeguarding manual and adheres to the Government guidelines set out by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Please refer to the GVC Adults at Risk Safeguarding Guidelines. In the event of an allegation of abuse of an adult at risk please refer to this document.

8. 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 Sue Davey (hereafter the "Co-ordinator") tel no: 07786031671 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 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 Lyn Reading (hereafter the "Deputy Co-ordinator") tel no: 07780367053. 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 **31:8** PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 03030031111

or alternatively contact Children's Social Services. The local Children's Social Services office telephone number between 9.00am and 5.00pm is 01275 888808. The out of hours emergency number is 01454 615165. The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 101.

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Co-ordinator, or in the absence of the Co-ordinator the Deputy Co-ordinator, this 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 **31:8**, although the Core Leaders and Trustees hope that members of the church will use this Safeguarding Policy. 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.

8.1 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 31:8) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Refrain from telling 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 **31:8** (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

8:2 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 **31:8** if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children’s Social Services/Police. **31:8** will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

8:3 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 Safeguarding co-ordinator in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children’s Board procedures will need to liaise with children’s social services.

9. 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 **31:8** guidance and this Policy’s guidelines. The same principles will be applied to those appointed to work with children or adults at risk.

10. 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 that have been affected by abuse.

10:1 Working with offenders

When someone attending the church is known to have a conviction for a sexual or physical offence, the Core Leaders will work with our Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the police and the probation service to ensure the offender’s attendance is safe, whilst allowing them to participate as fully as possible in the life of the church community. An attendance agreement will be drawn up which will make clear to everyone concerned what the offender can do and be involved with, in relation to church activities, and what they must avoid. All involved to sign this agreement and see it is reviewed regularly.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Core Leaders and Trustees in September

APPENDIX 1

GVC Safeguarding Policy - Related documents

- GVC Child Safeguarding Guidelines
- GVC Adults at Risk Safeguarding Guidelines
- GVC Safer Recruitment Guidelines
- Statement of Intent for Volunteers
- Children and Technology Guidelines
- Transport Guidelines
- First aid and Accident Reporting
- Children with Additional Needs Guidelines
- Off-site Camps and Residential Events Guidelines
- Toileting Guidelines
- Prayer and Ministry Guidelines
- Self-referring Children
- Charity Commission for England and Wales '10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance'