

## Our Vision For The Welfare of Children and Vulnerable Adults in Our Care

“We are all children of God and, as a church, recognise that it is our responsibility to help young people grow spiritually, morally and emotionally in a community, so that they will all be aware of and experience God’s love in a safe and caring church environment.”

Members of the churches of The Walton Churches Partnership will adopt the following policy for all work with children and vulnerable adults undertaken on behalf of these churches, for the support and protection of children, young people, vulnerable adults, parents/guardians, volunteers, members and the leadership team.

### Safeguarding Policy

As members of the churches of The Walton Churches Partnership, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and vulnerable adults.

1. We will provide a welcoming, nurturing and safe environment for all children, vulnerable adults, helpers and leaders who take part in activities run by the church.
2. We recognise that our work with children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community. This includes a culture of ‘informed vigilance’ as to the dangers of abuse.
3. We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult or child may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation and we will have a clear reporting procedure in place.
4. We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and vulnerable adults – whether paid or volunteering – in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Criminal Records Disclosures.
5. The churches are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and vulnerable adults, and to providing supervision.
6. We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him or her an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
7. We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
8. We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
9. The church is committed to the Home Office Code of Practice *Safe from Harm* and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet *Safe to Grow* and the Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Handbook We will encourage best practice and take note of how relevant bodies interpret requirements of the law.
10. Each worker with children and vulnerable adults must know the requirements and recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall have access to a copy of the WCP’s agreed procedures and good practice guidelines.
11. As part of our commitment to children and vulnerable adults, the WCP has appointed a Safeguarding Officer, a Verifier and a Recruiter – these may be the same person.
12. Each church in the WCP has appointed a Children’s Advocate. The Children’s Advocate role will be regularly explained to the children and their contact details publicly displayed. See details of these roles below. The ChildLine telephone number will also be displayed.
13. We will advise the Diocese and other relevant bodies which Registered Body we use to process applications for Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures.
14. We will advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and other relevant church officers as required if we receive a Disclosure which is ‘blemished’ or ‘positive’.
15. We will maintain a structure for the overview of this work and provide the support necessary for the implementation of the above. This includes an annual policy review, checking that our policies are up to date, and supplying a copy of the updated policy statement to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Signed on behalf of The Walton Churches Partnership: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_