



Staff & Volunteers  
safety and protection procedures

for

**Working with children, young people  
and vulnerable adults**

**Children are a gift from the Lord,  
They are a reward from Him.  
-Psalm 127:3**

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## **Safety and Protection Procedures - Staff & Volunteers**

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The following document includes the procedures for the **safety and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults** and the **staff and volunteers of Hillsong Church, UK**. Hillsong Church, UK includes all related services as well as the other ministries. This document includes the six campus' positioned in Guildford, Newcastle, Kent, London Bermondsey, London Dominion and Oxford.

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures to:

- i) Ensure the protection, safety and well being of all the children in the care of the staff and volunteers of Hillsong Church, UK.
- ii) Safeguard children and vulnerable adults from any danger of abuse.
- iii) Safeguard the staff and volunteers from allegations that can arise from careless and unwise behaviour.

### **Safety and Protection Mission Statement**

Hillsong Church UK is committed to the protection, safety and well being of all children and young people in its care. Hillsong Church UK fully accepts its responsibility to relevant UK legislation on this issue, and endeavours to do everything possible to prevent child abuse and to be an agent of love, encouragement, care, healing and justice.

Hillsong Church UK is therefore committed to:

- safeguarding and nurturing the children within our community.
- viewing the welfare of children as paramount to our community.
- carefully selecting and training staff and volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults and using appropriate background checks on each person.
- responding without delay to every complaint made that a child or young person in our care, or vulnerable adult, may have been harmed.
- cooperating fully with any statutory agencies during the course of any investigation into allegations concerning a member of our church community.
- offering informed pastoral care to any child, young person or vulnerable adult who has suffered abuse, and using the appropriate external channels as necessary.

- caring for and supervising any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult.

## Duties

### Duties of Hillsong Church UK

- i. To be linked with Parliament, government departments, statutory agencies and church partners in promoting the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- ii. To put into place appropriate systems of accountability and supervision at all levels of the Church's life, and ensuring that employment (staff and volunteer) procedures are robust enough to manage risk.
- iii. To appoint a suitably qualified staff member to act as Designated Person, directly accountable for all matters relating to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- iv. To ensure that all staff and volunteers in direct contact with such persons are properly trained and equipped to confidently undertake their responsibilities.
- v. To provide access to the Disclosure and Barring Service for staff and volunteers who require disclosures, and to pay the necessary fees for using this service.

### Duties of the Designated Person and Deputy Designated Persons

- i. To accept the prime duty of care for the children, young people and vulnerable adults in the Church community.
- ii. To adopt and implement a child protection policy and procedures and where appropriate, policies and procedures in relation to vulnerable adults.
- iii. To be responsible for conducting background checks on trustees, staff and volunteers wishing to work with children and young people within church.
- iv. To be responsible for the training and equipping of staff and volunteers so they are able to confidently undertake their responsibilities.
- v. To ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place and adhered to where children and young people are concerned.
- vi. To ensure that those who may cause a threat to children and young people in our church, and vulnerable adults who may attend church, are effectively and sensitively monitored and managed.
- vii. To receive, report and monitor any concerns involving the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in our church.
- viii. To receive, report and monitor any allegations regarding staff or volunteers causing or potentially causing harm to the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our church.

The **Designated Person** is Pastor Alistair McNally.

The **Deputy Designated Person(s)** are Pastors Kalleigh Mikkelson, Phil Kyei and Ray Newton, Church Legal Counsel.

The **Deputy Designated Persons for Vulnerable Adults** are Pastors Julie Galanti and Alistair McNally.

The **Campus Pastors** at first point of contact are: Oxford-Craig Farley, Dominion- Robby Lewis, Bermondsey- Phil Kyei, Guildford- Kalleigh Mikkelson, Newcastle- John Talbot and Kent- Grant Erksine.

### Duties of a Responsible Person

A Responsible Person is any staff member or volunteer who is entrusted with supervising and caring for a child or young person under the age of 18 years. This is typically, but not limited to, Campus Pastors, someone involved with Hillsong Kids and Families, Fuel, Wildlife, or a church-endorsed school or outreach program.

Whilst the Church does not own, operate or manage adult day or residential care facilities, from time to time staff and/or volunteers are invited to attend such facilities or visit the elderly in their homes. In the event any matters of concern arise out of such visits they must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person or a Deputy Designated Person for Vulnerable Adults.

- i. To comply with background checks and procedures at the instruction of a Designated Person.
- ii. To comply with the Hillsong Church Child Protection Policy in its fullness at all times.
- iii. To receive Child Protection and other training as deemed appropriate by a Designated Person.

Notwithstanding our legal and ethical responsibilities for the children and young people in our care, and vulnerable adults, parents and legal care-givers are not bound by this Policy.

## DEFINITION OF ABUSE

Abuse has many forms. There are four identified categories of abuse as described in the governmental guidelines *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (March 2015). The categories are defined as below:

### ABUSE

- A form 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 others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, 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 situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent 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 they meet the other person's needs. 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, although it may also occur alone.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## **NEGLECT**

• Is 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 adequate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Possible signs of abuse**

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A child may indicate that something is wrong in three ways: visual indicators, behavioural indicators, verbal indicators, or a combination of these.

#### **EXAMPLES OF INDICATORS:**

- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- Bruising which looks like hand or finger marks
- Cigarette burns
- Human bites
- Scalds and burns
  
- Stomach pains or discomfort when walking or sitting
- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas
- Frequently hungry, dirty or inadequately dressed
- Constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- Becoming sad, withdrawn or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
  
- Behaving aggressively or being disruptive
- Showing fear of certain adults
- Showing lack of confidence and low self-esteem
- Using drugs or alcohol
- A marked change in the child's general behaviour
  
- Refusal to attend school, or having difficulty in concentrating so that their school work is affected
- Using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age
- May describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, 'secret' friendship with an adult or older child.

## **Vulnerable Adults**

May be any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently, or for the time being, unable to take care of her or himself, is or may be in need of community care services; or unable to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

This could include people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. *It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti social abuse behavior*, physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

Forms of abuse can fundamentally be similar to those suffered by children.

Many vulnerable adults may not realise that they are being abused. For instance an elderly person, accepting that they are dependent on their family, may feel that they must tolerate losing control of their finances or their physical environment. They may be reluctant to assert themselves for fear of upsetting their carers or making the situation worse.

Harm must be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also 'the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

Abuse of a vulnerable adult, like abuse of a child, may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot, consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual.

Concerns about abuse may be raised and reported to a social service agency as a result of a single incident or repeated incidents of abuse.

If anyone who has concerns about poor care standards and neglect in a care setting, for example when visiting an Older Persons Residential or Care Facility or a private home may raise these within the service, with the regulatory body and/or with the social services agency and should advise the Designated Person or a Deputy Designated person of the concerns.

## PROCEDURES - RECRUITMENT

People joining Hillsong Church London as a staff member or volunteer with a view to being in the position of a Responsible Person must have the prior approval of the Department Heads of Hillsong Church London and have undergone a pastoral screening process.

### **Conditions of recruitment:**

#### **1) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure:**

It is a criminal offence to offer paid or unpaid work with children to someone who is disqualified from working with children, or to allow them to continue doing such work. Hillsong Church London requests an **Enhanced DBS Disclosure with Barred Check List** from each person applying to work as a Responsible Person with children or young people and all staff **and at a minimum, a DBS Disclosure for all volunteers involved in Kids and Youth Church activities.**

### **Suitability Assessment**

In the case of the DBS returning a Disclosure Form with prior convictions, cautions or warnings, it is the responsibility of the Designated Person to assess the impact these will have on the Responsible Person performing their duty. The Designated Person should take into consideration the severity and frequency of the record, and the time lapsed since recording.

The Designated Person may choose to follow further references to aid their decision, or may ask the person to serve in another area of church for a period of time first. In all cases, the well-being of the children takes precedence over the well-being of the adult.

### **The legal requirement of Hillsong Church UK to the DBS and policing authorities:**

The church has a legal and moral obligation to inform other professional practitioners, those directly working in child or adult service as indicated in *Working with 2015* This is solely the duty of the Designated CPO with the agreement of church leadership.

## **Grounds for Mandatory Refusal**

A person shall be immediately and irrevocably denied status as a Responsible Person and from any activity with children under 18, in the event of any disclosure indicating a person is on the list of individuals unsuitable for working with children and adults.

In these circumstances, the relevant authorities shall be notified that such a person has attempted to gain paid/unpaid work with children. The Designated Person shall be informed and will give guidance on receiving and supporting the person as a part of the wider church community.

## **Storage and access to Disclosure Forms**

Disclosure Forms are completed by the applicant electronically through an agency designated by the Church and only on request, checked by the church for completion, before lodgement. Access to such forms is only permitted to Designated or Deputy Designated Persons and authorised delegated staff.

The agency will contact the applicant in the event a matter is disclosed and inform the Church of that fact. In that event the applicant for clearance has the option to withdraw the application or authorise disclosure to the Church.

**Save for disclosures requiring mandatory refusal, any disclosure will be referred to the Designated Person for assessment and final decision as to whether an individual may be appointed to staff, appointed as a Responsible Person or be involved in any volunteer activity with children or vulnerable adults.**

Disclosure information shall not be retained for longer than is necessary to make an appropriate decision of suitability. This should usually be less than six months. The only record kept on church files will be that an application for DBS clearance was lodged and the date clearance was received OR in the event of a disclosure, the decision of the Designated Person following any assessment, or the fact of Mandatory Refusal.

## **2) Interview [Face to face] and two character references**

In the interview the person will be asked such questions as:

- a. What experience do they have of working with children?
- b. What do they understand about child safety and child protection?
- c. Do they know what to do if they receive a disclosure of abuse?
- d. They will be asked if they have ever been convicted or accused of any untoward acts of child molestation or abuse. [If the answer is 'yes', these people are unable to participate in ministry towards children or young people.]

Note: there is a specific set of questions that are assigned to the interviewer by Hillsong Church which will be completed online and any concerns noted sensitively.

Part B: Each candidate is required to provide two character references. It is preferred that one is a current employer and one other designated person of good moral standing. The character reference comments must be logged onto the myhillsonline.com very carefully. If for any reason a character reference rejects the candidate or highlights concerns, the information must be recorded, not told to the candidate until agreed upon by church designated leadership.

### **3) Probationary Period**

A three month probationary period will be given at which point the volunteer or staff member may be required to be interviewed by a senior member of staff regarding their performance.

### **4) Child-Protection Training**

All new members to team in a position as a Responsible Person are required to attend a Child-Protection Training session with a Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person.

All people who work in the area of children's ministries will be required to receive a copy of the policy and agree to abide by its procedures before they commence their work with children. Failure to do so will disqualify the person from any form of contact or work with the children.

## **PROCEDURES – REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE**

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report suspected abuse to the proper authority; notwithstanding a person's right to make a direct report. In most cases it will be proper to report suspicions to a Responsible Person, Deputy Designated Person or the Designated Person.

Nothing in this policy prevents a person speaking to or reporting such issues directly to the Senior Pastor, an Executive Pastor, a Campus Pastor, Children's Pastor or Youth Pastor, unless they are the subject of allegation.

If a concern is raised, the following actions are essential:

#### The Responsible Person

- Must report the concern immediately to the Designated Person or a Deputy Designated Person.
- Must not ask a child to repeat a story or ask for any more information than the child is willing to give.
- Should not ask 'leading' questions, make assumptions, or attempt to investigate the situation themselves.
- Must not speak directly to the person against whom the allegations were made.
- Will treat the issue as confidential, and relay on a 'need-to-know' basis only.
- Will inform the child immediately that, for the child's safety, they will need to speak to someone in church who can help them. No 'secrets' are kept

between a child or young person and a Responsible Person. The Designated Person

- Will immediately contact Children's Social Care in the case of a concern for the child's safety if they should return to their parent or caregiver.
- Will seek medical help if needed, advising a doctor of the concerns.
- Will make careful notes of conversations and or concerns.
- Will refer the concerns to Children's Social Care.

Similar procedures should be followed if it involves a vulnerable adult.

If an allegation is made that a staff member or volunteer of Hillsong Church London has committed physical or sexual abuse towards a child (whether part of the church community or not), or towards a vulnerable adult, the church will report the matter immediately to the police, other relevant authorities and to the Trustees of the church. That person shall be immediately withdrawn from contact with children or such adults until the findings of an investigation are made.

If an allegation is made that has staff member or volunteer of Hillsong Church London has committed an act of neglect or emotional abuse towards a child (whether part of the church community or not), or towards a vulnerable adult, the matter shall be referred to the Designated Person, who shall take appropriate steps.

## **PROCEDURES – INCIDENT REPORT FORMS**

In the event of an incident where first aid, medical, or extended disciplinary measures are taken, the involved Responsible Person must complete an Incident Report Form with details of the situation. Parents/care-givers of the child must be informed verbally on the same day that an Incident Report Form has been completed involving their child, and the parents should be given full information of the event.

Similar Incident Reports must be completed with respect to any incident of abuse involving a vulnerable adult.

## **PROCEDURES – ACCESS TO CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

During children's activities, children must be supervised at all times by an appropriate choice of Responsible Persons.

Parents and caregivers will be given full information about the program including starting and finishing times. Staff and or volunteers will cooperate with the parents/caregiver's to ensure the child is picked up safely.

While under the care of Hillsong Church London children will not be allowed to play in an unsupervised manner.

At all times, parents and care-givers will have access to their children. While they are not usually encouraged to stay during the activities, they must have full and uninterrupted access with the option to remove their children as they wish.

### **Visitors to children's activities**

Any visitors to a children's area must be under the invitation and supervision of a Responsible Person. Visitors from outside of Hillsong Church must complete the Visitor Log and be supervised at all times.

At all times the following points should be observed:

- Visitors must have a 'supervisor' (buddy) that takes responsibility for them for the entirety of their stay in the children's rooms.
- Visitors should wear a 'Visitor' Badge to identify them to Team.
- The Visitor Log must be completed by the supervisor, who will sign them in and out.
- No cameras are permitted at any time by Visitors in the Kids Rooms.
- Supervisors must ensure that Child Protection requirements are kept by Visitors. Under no circumstance should a Visitor pick up one of our children.
- Disciplining/correcting a child is the responsibility of our team. Visitors should not be involved in this at all.

## **PROCEDURES – RESTRICTIONS ON A RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

Staff and volunteers are not permitted to:

- a. Take children alone anywhere.
- b. Visit a child at home while the child is alone.
- c. Be involved in toileting except with preschoolers and then only if done in an open way with another staff person or volunteer within sight and hearing.
- d. Change the nappy of a toddler. The parent or carer is to be contact to change the wet or soiled nappy.
- e. Allow children to sit upon the staff or volunteers shoulders.
- f. Touch children in areas that would normally be covered by swimming attire.
- g. Drive or transport a child without at least one other adult in the car.
- h. To phone children aged 11 and under. For children aged 12 and over, a log book giving brief details of all calls made will be kept.
- i. Allow the children to play in an unsupervised manner.
- j. Use language or actions that is sexually suggestive or inappropriate to the child's age or maturity.

With regards to touch:

- a. Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the adults.
- b. Touch should be age-appropriate.

- c. Touch should generally be initiated by the child.
- d. Touch should always be used for the immediate and long-term benefit of the child and the children within the vicinity.
- e. Children are entitled to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances, ie when medical attention is necessary or the safety of a child is at risk.
- f. Other options to respond to, or engage, a child should always be considered first.

With regards to discipline:

- a. No staff member or volunteer may use physical discipline on a child under any circumstances.
- b. A Team Leader or Pastor may use reasonable physical contact to remove a child from a situation of immediate danger or harm. In this event, it must be done in the presence of another Responsible Person and must be recorded on an Incident Report Form.

#### **PROCEDURES – PASTORAL CARE MEETINGS WITH CHILDREN**

Meeting with children in a pastoral capacity will be done in an open manner, within the view of another person. Two members of staff or volunteers must be present. Parents will be informed of any pastoral meeting with children, providing that this does not compromise a child's safety. External professional care will be sought as necessary.

#### **PROCEDURES – FIRST AID FOR CHILDREN**

Any child or young person requiring first aid will be referred to an appropriately trained First Aider. An Incident Report should be filled out immediately and the child's parents should be informed, either immediately or at the collection of the child.

#### **PROCEDURES – ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS**

Whenever possible, the ratio of adults to children in our care will be 1:3 for children 1 and 2 years old, and 1:8 for children 3 to 5 years old and 1:13 for children aged 6 to 11 years old. Volunteers under the age of 17 shall not be included in the ratios.

#### **PROCEDURES – CAMPS AND CONFERENCES**

Children and young people on church run camps and conferences will be properly supervised in teams on a ratio of no less than one leader for every twenty young people, 1:20. Whenever possible, the ratio of adults to children will be 1:3 for children aged 1 and 2 years old, and 1:8 for children aged 3 to 5 years old and 1:13

for children aged 6 to 11 years old. Volunteers under the age of 17 shall not be included in the ratios.

Rules for staff and volunteers and campers will include:

- i) There must be at least two staff and or volunteers supervising children and young people in each dwelling at all times [dormitory, room - females with females and males with males.] At camps with tents, the tent areas must be well supervised by staff or volunteers of the same sex. See above ratios.
- ii) Children and young people are not allowed to get into bed with another camper or with a staff person or volunteer under any circumstance.
- iii) Children and young people of the opposite sex will not share a bedroom, room, or tent. Access to bathrooms, toilets or dwellings of the opposite sex is not allowed by leaders or campers.
- iv) During night security two male and two female leaders will be on duty to deal with any problems. Males will deal with male related issues and females with female related issues.
- v) Health and safety rules of the campsite being used will be adhered to.
- vi) Children will be supervised at all times.



## Hillsong Church London Safety and Protection Procedures Staff and Volunteers Commitment Form

Full name of person applying to work with children:

\_\_\_\_\_

- HILLSONG KIDS     FUEL / WILDLIFE
- SISTERHOOD     HIGH SCHOOLS
- OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration

I declare that:

1. I will work within the procedures as laid out in the Hillsong Church Safety and Child Protection policy.
2. I have completed a DBS clearance application.
3. I have not been convicted or the subject of an allegation of child abuse, sexual misconduct or act of violence, where the conduct involved children, was said to be directed at children, or took place in the presence of children.
4. I understand that if an allegation is made against me about child abuse or neglect, the matter will be referred to the police and other relevant authority for investigation.
5. I will report any concerns or suspicions I have about a child's welfare, or about the conduct of another volunteer or member of staff in relation to child protection. I will report any disclosures or allegations to the Designated Person, a Deputy Designated Person or Responsible Person.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Designated/Deputy Designated Person's Signature:- \_\_\_\_\_

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