



## **KENSINGTON BAPTIST: ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

This document is issued as a guide for those involved in ministry to adults, persons 18 years and over in the church and applies to ministry on the premises of Kensington Baptist Church (KBC), including those of BC3 and Village Church, and it's ministry in the community. This is not a matter simply for those who are paid by the church but applies to those who carry out tasks in the name of, or as part of, the overall ministry of the church.

### **WHO IS A VULNERABLE ADULT (SEE ALSO APPENDIX 1)?**

In this policy we use the following simple definition:

Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care of, or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.' (See appendix 1)

It should be noted that reaching a certain age or having a particular disability does not, in itself, mean that a person is vulnerable, as any adult can be deemed vulnerable in certain situations.

### **WHAT IS ABUSE?**

Abuse means any violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act of neglect or of omission to act or multiple acts of neglect and omissions to act. It may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial, sexual or other transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to an individual and can lead to ongoing exploitation of that person. For further explanation of Abuse see appendix 2 and for a clarification of "Significant harm" see appendix 3.

### **THE ROLE OF the VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (VASGO)**

The role of the designated officer is to deal with all instances involving adult protection that arise within the organisation. They will respond to all vulnerable adult protection concerns and enquiries.

The VASGO for Kensington Baptist Church is Peter Prior. Should you have any suspicions or concerns relating to Adult Protection then contact him, either directly or through the Church Office (Please see Appendix 4).

### **THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT LEADER**

The Department Leader must ensure that all staff and volunteers within their team are familiar with KBC's vulnerable adult protection procedures and ensure that all staff and volunteers undertake necessary training, where appropriate. In the event of a safeguarding issue occurring in their department the Department Leader should be available to support the member of staff or volunteer involved and to ensure that protocols are adhered to, unless an allegation is made against him or her.

## **RECRUITMENT**

Kensington Baptist Church operates procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults, including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff, volunteers and trustees where applicable.

A DBS (Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), will be required by all those working with “vulnerable” adults at a level appropriate to their role. No staff member or volunteer should be free to start in a particular ministry until they have been cleared by the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS). The VASGO will decide the level required by each individual prospective worker.

### *What is “regulated activity”?*

The definition of regulated activity for adults from 10th September 2012 identifies the activities provided to any adult which, if any adult requires them, will mean that the adult will be considered vulnerable at that particular time. The Protection of Freedoms act has changed the meaning of regulated activity for adults. Consequently all previous definitions of vulnerable adult have been repealed. The SVGA (Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Act 2006) will no longer label adults as ‘vulnerable’ because of the setting in which the activity is received, nor because of the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult receiving the activities.

This means that, anyone providing specific personal care to an adult is in regulated activity irrespective of whether that occurs in a hospital, a care home, a day care centre, a prison or in sheltered housing.

Any time a person engages in the activities set out below, they are engaging in regulated activity.

1. Regulated activity excludes any activity carried out in the course of family relationships, and personal, non-commercial relationships.
2. Regulated activity includes social care, and some limited activities in day centres and drop-ins.
3. Regulated activity includes personal care both in hospital; care in the home and in residential care.

This means that some persons involved in ministry where there is contact with people who could be potentially vulnerable requires the person carrying the activity out to hold an Enhanced DBS.

## **Day Centre**

All prospective Day Centre volunteers must complete a Ministry Application Form, giving two referees and permission for a DBS to be carried out.

In addition an informal interview will be conducted by a Day Centre Leader or the VASGO.

Only once these steps have been satisfactorily completed will the applicant be free to start working in the Day Centre. Mandatory training will be given – see below under TRAINING.

## **Pastoral Care and Pastoral Care Fund Teams**

Those asked to serve on the Pastoral Care Teams will have been members at Kensington for at least two years. They will be required to hold a Basic Disclosure and will have an informal interview by the VASGO and will undergo mandatory training as directed by the VASGO.

## TRAINING

Training will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that staff are aware of procedures and good practice. Training for staff and volunteers will be “in house” with those involved in helping people in wheel chairs and with mobility being required to attend a training session before assisting people.

This training will be carried out within the first month of engagement.

The VASGO will also undergo training.

## RESPONDING TO SERIOUS CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS

Kensington Baptist Church considers the protection of all vulnerable adults as very important. Therefore all comments, complaints, allegations and suspicions will be taken seriously.

The following procedures must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused.

### **If you are concerned about the welfare of an individual:**

- Contact the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer (VASGO) or deputy as soon as possible. If neither is available your Department Leader or one of the elders should be contacted
- If the situation is sufficiently serious (laws are being broken) the SGO should also inform the local Police team responsible for safeguarding issues.
- The number of persons informed must be kept to a minimum on a “need to know” basis so those contacted may include the department head and pastor.
- A full **handwritten** record should be made as soon as possible on the Concern/Disclosure Log form available from the VASGO or the Church Office. This must be a factual account of the concern or incident, and should not include opinions, judgements or embellishments. Facts should include the following:
  - the date, time and place of the alleged abuse
  - your name and the names of others present
  - the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused
  - the nature of the alleged abuse
  - a description of any injuries observed
  - an account of the allegation

The Concern/Disclosure Log folder is stored in a secure location in the Church Office to ensure confidentiality

### **What to do if an allegation is made -**

#### **DO**

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them (ambulance/Police)
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts.
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Explain areas of confidentiality to the victim.
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for ongoing support
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them with the victim as soon after the incident as the victim feels able to recount them.

## **DON'T**

- Panic
- Ignore the allegation
- Make promises (promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual)
  - Confront the alleged abuser
  - Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
  - Be dismissive of the concern
  - Ask leading questions
  - Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
  - Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
  - Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
  - Assume Information
  - Elaborate in your notes

Where a disclosure has been made, staff must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the designated Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer.

## **Further action**

- The VASGO will refer the matter to the local Social Service team if this is necessary.
- Where the situation is urgent and extreme the Police will be contacted directly.
- The Pastor will be advised of the situation.
- In the event of the complaint being against the Pastor the Eldership will be notified.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all.

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines.

If an adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept confidential, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Within that context, the adult must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

The adults' involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account. Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties but in some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Staff must assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with other policies for the organisation including:

- Disciplinary and Grievance Confidentiality
- Confidentiality
- Data Protection
- Recruitment and Selection
- Safeguarding children and young people

## **WHISTLE BLOWING**

The organisation has a complaints procedure available to all staff, volunteers and trustees. Please contact the Church Office to obtain a copy.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Who is a vulnerable adult?**

All adults who are involved in regulated activities will be considered vulnerable whilst in receipt of those activities and the following describe the context and situations in which such activities may occur. There are other activities where an individual may be considered vulnerable which are not covered by these activities:

- An adult (a person aged 18 or over) who 'is, or may be in need of, community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'. (Definition from 'No Secrets' March 2000 Department of Health)
- The above could include people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It is important to include people whose condition and subsequent vulnerability fluctuates. It may include an individual who may be vulnerable as a consequence of their role as a carer in relation to any of the above.
- It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse behaviour. The person's need for additional support to protect themselves may be increased when complicated by additional factors, such as, physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.
- 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.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Types of Abuse**

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, cannot consent, or would not ordinarily have consented.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Department of Health in its 'No Secrets' 2000 report suggests the following as the main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- Sexual abuse - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

- Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Significant harm**

It is important to consider the meaning of 'Significant Harm'. The Law Commission, in its consultation document 'Who Decides,' issued in Dec 1997, suggested that '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'.

### **Appendix 4**

#### **Contact Numbers**

Peter Prior (Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Officer): 0117 904 9360/ 07914 572 902

Andrew Howlett (Deputy Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Officer): 07523 141 273

Church Office: 0117 9511 202

**APPROVED BY KBC TRUSTEES: NOVEMBER 2018**