

Hope City Church Southampton

Safeguarding Policy Handout

Ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children, young people and adults is a high priority for us at Hope City Church Southampton. We are committed to preventing and responding appropriately to abuse or suspected abuse.

Safeguarding Lead: Matt Cranston safeguarding@hopecitysoton.com 07724006522	Deputy Safeguarding lead: Ruth Hughes safeguarding@hopecitysoton.com 07715664787
Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Dilhani Goonesekera dili.gooneseekera@hopecitysoton.com	Chair of Trustees: Angus Lyon angus.lyon@hopecitysoton.com

Contents

1. Prevent
 - a. Statement of Commitment.
 - b. Safer Recruiting.
 - c. Rules for paid and unpaid staff.
 - d. Leadership Accountability.
2. Protect
 - a. What is Abuse?

- b. How to Report a Concern?
 - i. Observations.
 - ii. Disclosures.
- c. What will be done with that concern?
- 3. Safeguarding/Disclosure Form.
- 4. Charity Information.

1. PREVENT

a. Statement of Commitment

Hope City Church Southampton (Hope City) leadership and trustees are committed to ensuring outstanding practices, policies, and procedures in the area of safeguarding, in agreement with official guidance and law. We are committed to building strong working links with relevant safeguarding authorities and agencies including: "Thirtyone:eight," with whom we are a member: <https://thirtyoneeight.org/>.

We commit to:

- Promote and follow all national and local legislation and procedures, relating to safeguarding.
- Provide regular training for all paid and unpaid team members in safeguarding, appropriate for their position.
- Regularly review any of Hope City' s safeguarding policies or processes.

b. Safer Recruiting

All paid and unpaid team members will be interviewed (formally or informally) by a current staff or team member before being considered for a position representing Hope City.

Paid and unpaid team members who will regularly work with children or adults at risk will be required to provide references from two referees (who are not a family member by marriage or blood) who are able to confidently answer questions about the applicant's behaviour and character. The safeguarding lead will ensure that these references are complete before the applicant assumes any role that represents Hope City.

They will also be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS) appropriate for their role. The safeguarding lead will complete these checks through "Thirtyone:eight" before the applicant joins the team.

c. Rules for Staff and Volunteers

All paid and unpaid team members will be provided with annual safeguarding training to ensure they are able to spot signs of abuse and are confident in how to record and report any concerns.

Different teams may have more detailed or specific rules but all paid and unpaid team members must:

1. Attend annual safeguarding training.
2. Treat children, young people, and adults with respect

3. Report any safeguarding concerns they have to the safeguarding lead as soon as possible.
4. Be honest and transparent with their team leader or line manager.

Leadership Accountability

Hope City recognises that those in authority have, in the past, used that authority to abuse that underneath them. Therefore, we recognise the importance of transparency and accountability within our leadership team and trustees.

If you have any safeguarding concerns about members of the leadership team (currently Dave Williams, Emily Williams and Matt Cranston) please speak up and report to Ruth Hughes, Dilhani Goonesekera or Angus Lyon (see page 1 for details) as soon as you can.

If you have any safeguarding concerns relating to church leadership, please speak up and report to the safeguarding lead or safeguarding deputy lead, as soon as you can.

2. PROTECT

In cases of suspected abuse, it is important to report any and all concerns as many small concerns may paint a picture of abuse that would otherwise go unnoticed. We therefore commit to ensuring our teams are confident in how to recognise abuse and report a concern.

a. What is Abuse?

There are many different types of abuse:

- Physical abuse - causing physical harm e.g., hitting, burning.
- Emotional abuse - continuous emotional mistreatment e.g., scaring, humiliating, isolating.
- Neglect - causing harm by not providing what they need e.g., malnourishment, untreated medical problems.
- Sexual abuse - forcing, tricking, or manipulating someone into sexual activities, or any sexual activity involving children under the age of consent (16 years).
- Domestic abuse - controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are/were in a relationship.
- Cyberbullying – in-person and online bullying, that by its nature follows the victim everywhere.
- Grooming - building of a relationship, trust, and emotional connection so they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them.
- Criminal exploitation and gangs - being manipulated into committing crimes.
- Financial abuse - misusing or stealing money from someone you have (real or imagined) authority or control over.
- Spiritual abuse - using spiritual or religious beliefs to hurt, scare or control.
- Leadership abuse - using perceived or actual authority to control, coerce or otherwise abuse people under their authority.
- Modern Slavery - exploiting for personal or commercial gain; being tricked, coerced, or forced into losing one's freedom.

- Discriminatory abuse - unfair treatment because of age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability.

You do not need to learn the different kinds of abuse, but you should be aware of them. It can be hard to spot signs of abuse. For more information on signs to look out, please see further detail in the larger Safeguarding Policy, or go to:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>
- <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse/>

b. How to Report a Concern?

i. Observations

If you observe anything that causes you to feel uneasy or concerned you should report it as soon as possible. This could be a visible injury, a sudden change in behaviour, a concerning interaction between a caregiver and their child/young person, or anything else that makes you uneasy.

- c. Write down your concern in as much detail as possible. Do not worry about spelling, grammar, or punctuation - just write as much as you can as clearly as you can. Include information like the date and time, who was there, where you were, what was happening around you, as well as your contact details. We have forms available if you are unsure what to include (see page 8),

but if you do not have access to one at that moment, a piece of paper will do fine. QR codes to access online recording sheets for reporting the concern, can be accessed on safeguarding posters dotted around or concerns can be emailed directly to the safeguarding leads on: safeguarding@hopecitysoton.com.

- d. Do not discuss your concern with ANYONE except the safeguarding lead or your team leader, as this could lead to more harm or the covering up of evidence of harm.
- e. Give/Send your report to the Safeguarding Lead (Matt Cranston) or Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Ruth Hughes) promptly. In the event, they are not around or an online reporting form cannot be filled, the person reporting may pass their paper report to the team leader if safe to do so. Team leaders are advised not to read the report but immediately send it/give it to the safeguarding leads. If anything is reported to the leaders, leaders are advised to provide some time and quiet space for the person reporting to fill their concerns either digitally or on a physical copy as soon as possible.
- f. Finally, DO NOT INVESTIGATE, the Safeguarding Lead (Matt Cranston) and/or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Ruth Hughes) will get back to you if more information is needed.

ii. Disclosures

A disclosure is when someone tells you about abuse that is happening or has happened to them or someone close to them. Here are some good rules to follow if someone starts to tell you a concern:

- Let them speak and try not to interrupt them or ask questions.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret but you can reassure them that you will do what you can to help them.
- Try not to give your opinion but react calmly with compassion and respect.
- Do not tell them you do not believe them even if what they are saying sounds unbelievable.
- Tell your team leader or the Safeguarding lead as soon as possible that a disclosure has been made.
- Write down the conversation as close to the actual words as you can as soon as possible in the same way as for an observation (see above).

Follow the same steps as above for 'observations' to report a disclosure.

If you think someone is at immediate risk of significant harm, contact the police (999) or social services immediately. The number for Southampton City Council Social Services is 023 8083 3004. Let your team leader or Safeguarding or Deputy Lead (Matt Cranston or Ruth Hughes) know that you have done this straight away.

If you have a concern about the Safeguarding Lead, please contact the Deputy Safeguarding Lead and vice versa. If the query is about both of the leads, please go directly to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Dilhani Goonesekera (dili.gooneseekera@hopecityson.com) Chair of Trustees: Angus Lyon: (angus.lyon@hopecityson.com) or directly contact 'Thirtyone:eight,' on 0303 003 1111. More general

information can be found on their website:
<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>

What will be done with that concern?

The Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy in their absence) will make sure they have all the information they need and will then pass this information onto the appropriate agencies. They may first seek advice from 'Thirtyone:eight' before deciding what action to take. Once the information has been passed on to the appropriate agency, that agency may choose to investigate further or simply record the report. Hope City will keep their own records of all reported safeguarding concerns for 10 years.

Hope City aims to work with relevant agencies to support families and victims of abuse and may also offer practical help if needed.

If you have questions about any of the above information or would like a physical copy of our Safeguarding Policy, please email:
hello@hopecitysouthampton.com.

3. Safeguarding/Disclosure Form

Safeguarding Concern/ Disclosure Form

Their name(s)	
Their contact details (or the contact details of their parent/carer)	
Date	
Time	
Location	
Event	
Context	
Witnesses	
What happened Give as much detail as possible, even if it may seem irrelevant. Try to get as close to the exact wording of what	

was said as possible (if applicable). If reporting an observation, be specific.	
Your name	
Your signature	
Date the form was completed	

4. Charity Information

Hope City Church Southampton

Charity number: 1207762

Email: hello@hopecitysouthampton.com

Official address: The Hope Centre, Drayton Close, SO19 9JN

This handout will be reviewed annually by:

Safeguarding Lead: Matt Cranston

Chair of Trustees: Angus Lyons

Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Dilhani Goonesekera

Church Leader: David Williams

Last review: 31.03.2025.