

Safeguarding

The Association, its leaders and trustees, have oversight of member churches within their region. Although they do not have direct responsibility for safeguarding practice within the churches, they have a support and challenge role, seeking to train, equip and support those with oversight of safeguarding. Every church is expected to have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures reflecting the needs of their own congregation. The Association strongly recommends that this is based on the BUGB Model Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

1.1 Policy Objective

We are concerned with the welfare and wholeness of each individual, within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the Association including all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent neglect and the physical, sexual, emotional, financial or spiritual abuse of children, young people and adults at risk. In fulfilling this objective, we will:

- Have an Association Safeguarding Advisor with suitable training and experience to support churches with safeguarding matters
- Have a named safeguarding trustee responsible, along with the Association Safeguarding Advisor, for promoting safeguarding practice across the life of the Association
- Promote Excellence in Safeguarding within the churches of the Association
- Offer support and advice to churches with safeguarding concerns or incidents
- Provide Excellence in Safeguarding training (Level 2 and 3) in line with the recommendations of the BUGB

1.2 Responsibilities

The Association recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk associated with it, both directly and by supporting member churches.

We commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all those in our church communities, especially children, young people and adults at risk. In pursuit of this we commit ourselves to this policy and the development of sound procedures to implement our policy well.

1.3 Prevention and Reporting of Abuse

It is the duty of all workers to help prevent the abuse of children, young people and adults at risk and to respond to concerns about the well-being of those within our churches. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. We will also support our churches to enable them to respond to concerns about the well-being of children, young people and adults at risk in line with our procedures.

1.4 Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of workers

The Association will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of all workers, particularly those in a position of trust or working directly with children, young people or adults at risk. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk.

1.5 Supporting Churches

The Association has a named person responsible for supporting churches managing safeguarding concerns (the Safeguarding Advisor). They have completed Level 2 and 3 in Excellence in Safeguarding and understand the procedures for escalating safeguarding concerns. Where they are unsure about the best course of action they will work with the National Safeguarding Team to ensure that the situation is managed well and those at risk are properly safeguarded.

1.6 Promote Best Safeguarding Practice

All workers are responsible for promoting best safeguarding practice amongst the churches they support. This includes seeking support from the Safeguarding Advisor when necessary and following the advice that has been given.

1.7 Provide Training

The Association will facilitate safeguarding training for churches in our area using the Baptist Union Level 2 and 3 Excellence in Safeguarding material. We will ensure that we have knowledgeable and experienced trainers to facilitate the course who have completed the BUGB Train the Trainer course for each level. The Association will ensure that Level 2 and 3 safeguarding training is available to churches throughout the Region and widely promoted by all regional team members.

1.8 Working with national and statutory bodies

To ensure that children, young people and adults at risk within our churches are properly safeguarded, we will work closely with the BUGB National Safeguarding Team, statutory authorities, other denominations and uniformed organisations, sharing information where necessary.

Part of this commitment to working together to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk will include the Safeguarding Advisor participating in the work of the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, which serves as a coordinating body for improvements in safeguarding policy and practice.

1.9 DBS Checks

The Association will initiate all DBS checks for Accredited Ministers, Regionally Recognised Leaders and Recognised Local Ministers using the Baptist Union account with DDC. Any blemished disclosures will be assessed by the National Safeguarding Team and recommendations will be passed to the Ministries Team in relation to BU Accredited Ministers and Nationally Recognised leaders. When the disclosure relates to a Regionally Recognised Minister the outcome of the risk assessment will be shared with the Safeguarding Advisor in the first instance.

DBS checks for Unaccredited Ministers are the responsibility of the local church. The Association has no legal right to know the information included in the check. However, the Association will request from the church the date and number of the DBS check and this will be recorded on the Dynamo database. This ensures consistency with the recording of information about ministers regardless of their accreditation status.

When an Unaccredited Minister has a blemished disclosure, the National Safeguarding Team will share any recommendations from the risk assessment directly with the church in the first instance. If they consider that the church needs support in implementing the recommendations from the risk assessment, then the Association will be advised of the situation.

1.10 Training

The Association will provide a timetable for safeguarding training throughout the region, using the BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 material, and will promote the courses to churches in their area.

The Association will work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify and train specialist Excellence in Safeguarding trainers with a high standard of safeguarding knowledge and experience.

All Association trustees, regional ministers, youth and children's specialists and other pastoral staff will complete Excellence in Safeguarding Level 2 and 3 and work in accordance with the principles and teaching they have received through the courses.

1.11 Supporting and equipping Designated Persons for Safeguarding (DPS) within member churches

It is the responsibility of each church to appoint at least one Designated Person for Safeguarding for their church. The Association will seek to offer specific support to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, particularly when safeguarding concerns arise. Where a church does not yet have anyone in this role, the Safeguarding Advisor will work with the leadership of the church to help them to identify, train and support someone to take on this role.

The Association will provide opportunities for DPSs to access peer support. and, through the National Safeguarding Contacts Group, work with the National Safeguarding Team to identify additional online and written resources for people taking on this role.

1.12 Policy Review

These Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be agreed by the Association Trustees and distributed amongst all members of the Association staff team. It will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis.

Appendix

1 Association Contacts

Association Safeguarding Advisor: Keith Baldwin

They will support other regional team members and churches, providing advice and guidance on how to manage safeguarding concerns. This includes supporting churches to put Safeguarding Contracts in place, assisting with safeguarding risk assessments and promoting excellence in safeguarding in all Baptist churches in their regional area.

Contact Details: 07712 508779

SCBAsafeguarding@scba.org.uk

Deputy Association Safeguarding Contact: Revd Simon Gray

If the Association Safeguarding Advisor is on leave or unavailable, then the Deputy Safeguarding Contact will be available to fulfil their role

Contact Details: 07857697696

s.gray@scba.org.uk

Association Safeguarding Trustee:

They will raise the profile of safeguarding amongst the trustees of the Association and oversee the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the trustees.

Contact Details:

2 Police and Local Authority Contacts

The Regional Association spans county boundaries. This means that we are likely to be liaising with police and social services from a number of authorities.

The Police Forces working within the Regional Association area are:

Force Name	Areas covered
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

The Local Authorities working within our Regional Association boundaries are:

Local Authority	LADO contact details	Children’s Services (MASH, Assessment and Intake team) Contact Details	Adult Services (MASH, Assessment and Intake Team) Contact Details

3 Procedures for managing concerns and allegations

The Regional Association Safeguarding Advisor is responsible for ensuring that churches within the association have access to support and guidance when managing safeguarding issues within their congregation. In addition, the role of the Association Safeguarding Advisor is to both support and challenge church leaders where there are concerns about their approach to safeguarding, working with them to attain best safeguarding practice.

There may be occasions when the Association will take the lead in investigating a situation and these will be set out within these procedures. The Association Safeguarding Advisor will seek additional support and advice from the BUGB Safeguarding Team and other professionals when necessary. They will maintain a record of all concerns brought to their attention. All information collected and processed in this way will be held for at least 75 years in line with the BUGB Guide to Safeguarding Recording Keeping.

3.1 Concerns raised about SCBA workers

3.1.1 Regional Ministers

In the case of a Regional Minister the procedures below relating to BUGB Accredited Ministers will be followed.

3.1.2 Other staff, trustees and volunteers

If a safeguarding concern is raised about a member of staff, a volunteer or trustee working directly for the Regional Association then the Association Safeguarding Advisor will contact statutory services for advice on next steps, as well as seeking advice from the National Safeguarding Team. If the concern relates to a child or young person, the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police will be contacted in the first instance.

3.2 Concerns raised about BUGB Accredited Minister/Worker

When a member of the Regional Team is advised of a safeguarding concern involving an Accredited Baptist Minister they will contact the BUGB Safeguarding Team or the BUGB Ministries Team Leaders within 24 hours, passing over all information they have received about the case.

The BUGB Safeguarding Team and Ministries Team Leader will agree a strategy for investigation, this will include decisions about who will make the referral to statutory agencies, whether suspension is required and when the person of concern can be informed of the issues that have been raised.

The Regional Minister will work with the national specialist teams (Safeguarding and Ministries) to ensure that information is shared in a timely manner to enable the investigation to progress. They will be led by the national

team and will not disclose information to the person of concern or a third party without their agreement.

Pastoral Support

The Regional Association will offer pastoral support to the person of concern. This will not be provided by the Association Safeguarding Advisor but by another member of the Regional Team or an experienced minister from another church within the Association.

3.3 Concerns raised about a Regionally Recognised Pastor/Worker

When a member of the Regional team is advised of a safeguarding concern involving someone who is Regionally recognised, the responsibility for investigating lies with the Association Safeguarding Advisor, with support from the National Safeguarding Team if needed. On occasions the Association may decide to subcontract the investigation to a third party such as 31:8 or an independent safeguarding consultant. However, the Association remains responsible for ensuring that the outcome of the investigation is acted upon and the advice given is followed.

The Regional Association Safeguarding Advisor will work closely with the statutory authorities. If the concern related to a child or young person the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police will be contacted in the first instance.

3.4 Concerns raised about an Unaccredited Minister or Pastor

If safeguarding concerns are raised about an unaccredited minister or pastor these should be managed by the trustees of the church in the first instance. The Association's role in this situation will be to support the church with the investigation. They will involve the National Safeguarding Team if necessary.

Although the Association will offer support, the church will need to take the lead in contacting statutory services. If the concern related to a child or young person the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted in the first instance. If the concern relates to an adult at risk then the Adult Safeguarding Team will be contacted. In both cases if there is a concern that criminal offences have or may have been committed the Police need to be contacted by the church in the first instance.

The Association will not be directly able to offer pastoral support to the person under investigation, however they may be able to recommend someone else to the church who can perform this role during the investigation.

3.5 Concerns raised by a church about the behaviour or well-being of someone who attends the church

The Association recognises that at times churches need additional support and advice when they have concerns about someone within their care. The Association Safeguarding Advisor will offer this support and work with the church Designated Person for Safeguarding, consulting with the National Safeguarding Team when necessary. As with unaccredited ministers, the church will take the lead in contacting statutory agencies and undertaking the investigation.

To ensure that the correct advice is given to the church the Association Safeguarding Advisor will check whether the individual is in a position of leadership or trust within the church. If they are, the church will be asked to contact the LADO or Adult Safeguarding Team to seek their advice before the Association issues further advice.

3.6 Safeguarding Contracts

A Safeguarding Contract should be put in place by a church when they are aware that someone is either under investigation for, or has convictions for, offences against children or adults at risk. The Association will hold the template Safeguarding Contract and work with the church to ensure that the final agreement is robust and in line with the recommendations made by the National Safeguarding Team. The Association will hold a copy of the contract and work with the church to ensure that it is regularly reviewed. The Association Safeguarding Advisor will take an active role in facilitating contract meetings between the church and the subject of the contract. This is in line with the guidelines published by the National Safeguarding Team in the guide Safeguarding Contracts: Frequently Asked Questions, which is downloadable from the BUGB website.

If a church is reluctant to follow the safeguarding advice given by the Regional Association, then the Regional Safeguarding Advisor will consult with the National Safeguarding Team and a decision made together about the best way to ensure effective safeguards are in place within the church.

3.7 Pastoral Care in safeguarding situations

When safeguarding situations occur within a church all those involved will inevitably need additional support and care. This includes the person making an allegation and the person subject to it. The Association will support the church in identifying people who can take on this pastoral role and on occasions may be able to seek support from a different
