Harvest Church London Safeguarding Policy

Date Approved: July 2025

Review Date: July 2026

Responsible Person: Safeguarding Officer

# 1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard all people connected to Harvest Church London, inclusive of children, young people, adults at risk and all other adults. We endeavor to create a safe environment where the whole church community is respected, protected, and supported.

This policy applies to:
- All staff, leaders, and volunteers
- All church ministries, groups, and activities
- Everyone working with or coming into contact with both vulnerable and non-vulnerable people through the church

# 2. Legal and Theological Framework

We acknowledge our legal obligations under relevant safeguarding laws and adult protection acts (such as the Children Act, Care Act, Mental Capacity Act) and affirm our biblical and moral duty to care for the most vulnerable and all other members of our church, following Christ’s call to love, protect, and value every individual.

# 3. Definitions

- Child/Young Person: Anyone under the age of 18
- Adult at Risk: A person aged 18 or over who is vulnerable due to age, disability, illness, mental health condition, substance misuse, or circumstances that leave them unable to protect themselves
- Abuse: Can be physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual, neglect, financial, discriminatory, domestic, self-neglect, or exploitation

# 4. Policy Statement

Harvest Church London is committed to:
- Protecting children, adults at risk and all other adults within our church from harm or abuse.
- Promoting a culture of safety and inclusion for all
- Ensuring safe recruitment and training of staff and volunteers
- Responding to safeguarding concerns swiftly and appropriately
- Supporting those affected by abuse or safeguarding incidents

# 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding Coordinator

* - Main point of contact for all safeguarding concerns
- Ensures policy implementation and training
- Maintains confidential records
- Works with statutory agencies when necessary

Church Leadership

* - Provides oversight and accountability for safeguarding practices
- Supports the coordinator and team
- Ensures compliance with legal and denominational requirements

All Staff and Volunteers

* - Must understand and follow this policy
- Attend regular safeguarding training
- Report any concerns promptly and responsibly

# 6. Safe Recruitment Practices

All workers and volunteers who work with children, young people, or adults at risk will:
- Complete a criminal record check (DBS)
- Receive safeguarding training and sign the Code of Conduct

# 7. Code of Conduct

All representatives of the church are expected to:
- Treat all individuals with dignity, respect, and equality
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries
- Avoid situations where they are alone with a vulnerable person and all other members of the church unless necessary and properly risk-assessed
- Be mindful of leadership dynamics in relationships
- Never abuse, exploit, or neglect anyone, and report any witnessed or suspected abuse

# 8. Responding to Concerns

Concerns about a child, adult at risk, or anyone in the church should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

If someone is at immediate risk, contact emergency services (e.g., 999).

All reports must be:
- Taken seriously
- Recorded accurately and promptly
- Kept confidential (shared only on a need-to-know basis)
- Referred to statutory agencies if appropriate

# 9. Pastoral Care and Support

We commit to offering:
- Compassionate support to victims or survivors of abuse
- Appropriate support and supervision to those accused of abuse (without compromising safety)
- Ongoing pastoral care for the wider church community affected by safeguarding incidents

# 10. Training and Awareness

- All relevant personnel must complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role
- Refresher training is required every 3years
- Regular updates will be given as legislation or procedures change

# 11. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- Safeguarding information is recorded factually and securely stored
- Access to records is strictly limited
- Records are maintained in accordance with data protection law and retained for a period set by safeguarding guidance

# 12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Feedback from staff, volunteers, and members will be welcomed to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

Signed:

Church Leader: Pastor Paul Naughton

Safeguarding Coordinator: Naomi Kamana

Date: 25/07/2025