

Safeguarding Policy: Children and Youth (CAY) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton

1 Introduction

1.1 Safeguarding is a priority at KCC

King's Community Church, Southampton (KCC) is committed to safeguarding children and youth (CAY), and we hold this responsibility as a top priority. Every child has the right to be protected from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs.

To uphold this, we aim to:

- Comply with current legislation and government guidelines.
- Continuously improve our safeguarding standards.
- Actively listen to children and act on concerns quickly and effectively.
- Train all staff and volunteers to recognise and report signs of abuse.
- Take reasonable steps to protect children and young people from known risks.
- Promote safer working practices to reduce opportunities for harm.
- Have posters displaying the Safeguarding Team and their contact details clearly visible on-site.

KCC will fully cooperate with statutory agencies (police, children's services, social services etc) when necessary. KCC recognises that safeguarding concerns take precedence over confidentiality. This policy is guided by Working Together to Safeguard Children, which sets national expectations for all organisations, including voluntary and faith-based groups.

Safeguarding is a core responsibility embedded in all areas of our work.

1.2 Definitions and abbreviations

Child / Children – from birth to 11 years (school year 6).

Youth – age 11 – 18 (School year 7 – 13).

CAY – Children and Youth.

STL/SGC – Safeguarding Team Leader / Safeguarding Coordinator.

Ministry Leader – Leads a Children's or Youth group long-term.

Session Coordinator (Primary) / Session Leader (Pre-School & Youth) – Manages sessions, especially safeguarding issues when the STL/SGC are unavailable.

Volunteer – Leads or supports a group, usually on a rota.

1.3 Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to everyone working with CAY at KCC — whether paid or voluntary, including U18s — as well as to KCC Leaders and Trustees. It also applies to contractors, consultants, suppliers, service providers, hirers and event organisers using the KCC venue. We expect everyone attending or using its premises to support a safe environment for CAY.

Compliance with this policy is essential to the safeguarding of U18s and forms part of our commitment to insurers, the Charity Commission, and other regulatory bodies.

1.4 Related Documents

Additional procedures, guidelines, training materials, and Team Handbooks provide further practical guidance.

1.5 Oversight and Legal Responsibilities

The Elders oversee the spiritual life of the church and affirm that safeguarding is a shared spiritual responsibility.

The Trustees hold legal responsibility for ensuring KCC meets all safeguarding obligations for vulnerable groups.

They ensure that:

- At least one Trustee is appointed to oversee safeguarding.
- At least two STLs/SGCs (one male, one female) are appointed to monitor and improve CAYs safety and wellbeing.
- Safeguarding is actively promoted throughout the church.
- Policies and procedures reflect current high standards and best practice.
- KCC complies with all relevant laws and government expectations.
- Adequate insurance, including legal and public liability cover, is maintained.

This policy is formally approved by the Trustees.

2 Safer Recruiting Of All Who Work With U18s

2.1 We follow best practice with recruiting for work with CAY

- All applicants for roles with close contact/position of trust with U18s:
 - Complete a self-disclosure form and sign a declaration agreeing to uphold our high standards of safeguarding.
 - Provide two satisfactory references.
- All applicants 16 or over:
 - Complete a DBS check with a check of Barred Lists before they begin Regulated Activity with CAY, as required by Law.
- All applicants aged U-18:
 - Will undergo a customised Risk Assessment to ensure their wellbeing and safety, which must be signed off by their parent or guardian.

KCC complies with the DBS code of practice on the handling and sharing of information obtained through DBS checks.

Reference: Recruiting of Paid Employees Policy & Procedures

*Procedures for Onboarding to U18s teams
Forms available on ChurchSuite or via the STL/SGC*

3 Safeguarding Training

- All staff, Trustees, Elders, and volunteers involved in regulated activity must complete safeguarding induction training and refresher training every three years.
- Safeguarding Leads need to have training every two years.
- Training is proportionate to role and responsibility.
- Session Coordinators / Session Leaders, and the Safeguarding Team receive additional, role-specific training.
- Records of completed training are maintained on ChurchSuite.
- Volunteers under 18 receive age-appropriate training and guidance.
 - Under 16s are given a simplified safeguarding guide at induction and must always work under supervision.
 - At 16, volunteers complete a DBS check, receive the full training guide, and may attend training sessions with parental consent.
- A short guide (“U18s Working with U18s”) is available to support leaders in supervising youth team members safely.

Anyone not completing their full training will not be permitted to work with CAY until compliant.

*Reference: Safeguarding Information for Sunday Serving Teams
Team Handbooks
U18s working with U18s – Group Leaders Guide*

4 Abuse, Concerns & Disclosures

KCC recognises all forms of abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual). See NSPCC guidance for signs. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

KCC aims to prevent abuse, respond quickly and compassionately where it has occurred, and support those affected.

We train all our CAY Team members to:

- Be alert to signs of abuse.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures.
- Record disclosures & concerns accurately.
- Report directly to the Safeguarding Team.

(Do not discuss concerns with others unless advised by the Safeguarding Team.)

STL/SGC will report all allegations of sexual abuse to the relevant authorities as required by law and in line with statutory reporting obligations.

4.1 Disclosures: When a Child Tells You About Abuse

KCC takes any disclosure or concern seriously and will respond to these. Team must listen, reassure, and report without delay; see disclosure guidance in handbook. Records will be kept for the period required by law, stored securely, and may be shared with statutory agencies when legally required.

4.2 Concerns – What to Report

Definition: A concern is any situation, behaviour, or observation that suggests a child or young person may be at risk of harm or abuse, even if there is no clear evidence.

Examples:

- Noticing unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Observing a child appearing unusually withdrawn, anxious, or fearful.
- Hearing rumours of potential abuse or neglect.

Key point: A concern does not require certainty—it is about being alert to signs that something may be wrong and reporting it appropriately.

4.3 Disclosure

Definition: A disclosure occurs when a child or young person directly tells an adult about harm, abuse, or neglect that they are experiencing or have experienced.

Examples:

- A child telling a youth leader that someone at home has been hurting them.
- A young person reporting inappropriate behaviour by a peer or adult.

Key point: Disclosures must always be taken seriously. Staff and volunteers should respond calmly, listen without judgment, and follow the safeguarding reporting procedures without delay.

Summary Difference:

- **Concern:** Something you notice or suspect.
- **Disclosure:** Something the child explicitly tells you.

4.4 Recording Concerns / Disclosures

Complete the form accessed via the QR code before speaking to the Safeguarding Team. If you are unable to use the QR code, then write the details on paper with a pen and keep it safe until you can give it to the Safeguarding Team.

Your notes must include:

- Your name, date, and time of writing.
- Date and time of the incident or observation.
- Location and who was present.
- What was said, what you said, or what happened — as close to the exact words or actions as possible.
- Any interpretation or opinion — clearly marked as such.

Keep notes private and secure until they are handed to the Safeguarding Team.

If writing is a challenge for you then speak to the Safeguarding Team and they can assist you using your verbal report.

4.5 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns / Disclosures

Only report to:

- The Safeguarding Team.
- A designated safeguarding contact (if the team is unavailable).

Do not contact parents or carers yourself, unless instructed. If a parent is involved in the abuse, informing them may worsen the harm.

4.6 Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers (Whistleblowing)

- KCC encourages a culture of openness.
- Any allegation against a worker (paid or volunteer) must be reported immediately to the STL/SGC.
- The STL/SGC will inform the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and follow statutory procedures.
- The accused may be suspended without prejudice while investigations are carried out.
- KCC will cooperate fully with statutory agencies.
- Both the child and the person accused will be offered appropriate pastoral support during the process.

Reference: *Whistle Blowing Policy*

4.7 Pastoral Care and Support

- KCC will offer support to children, young people, and families affected by abuse.
- Where appropriate, victims of abuse will be signposted to specialist counselling or statutory services.
- Support will also be offered to staff/volunteers who receive disclosures or are involved in safeguarding cases.
- If someone is accused, they will be supported pastorally while due process is followed, without compromising the safeguarding of CAY.

5 Working Safely

5.1 Risk Assessments

Must be completed for all KCC activities, regardless of location.

Where U18s are involved (especially without their parents), assessments must include:

- Recruitment checks, DBS and training in line with KCC policy.
- Suitable adult-to-child ratios.
- Registers for emergency purposes.
- Contact information for parents.
- Awareness of medical conditions, allergies, etc.
- Security to protect children and prevent unauthorised entrance / exit.
- Procedures for supervising children outside the main room (e.g., toileting).

Adult-Child Minimum Ratios

Pre-school Kids 1 - 2 years:	1 adult to 4 children
Pre-school Kids 3 - 4 years:	1 adult to 8 children
Primary Kids 4 - 11 years:	1 adult to 10 children
11+ years:	1 adult to 10 children

Note:

Helpers under the age of 16 are considered children for the purposes of adult-to-child-ratios.

Parents caring only for their own child(ren) do not count in the adult ratios, and their child(ren) are also not included in the child ratio if the parent is responsible for them. Different ratios may apply for all out of routine activities and events.

Reference: Special Activities Policy

5.2 Data Protection And Visual Images

Data Protection

Personal data must be stored securely, shared only with authorised individuals, and never disclosed without consent.

Reference: Data Protection Policy

Visual Images

Only authorised people may take photos/videos of U18s, with approval from the Session Coordinator / Session Leader and Communications Lead. Media must not be used without consent.

Reference: KCC Visual Images Policy

5.3 Indecent Images (Sexting)

The creation, distribution, or encouragement of indecent images of U18s is a serious offence.

- It is illegal to send or receive such images involving U18s.
- Encouraging U18s to send such images constitutes sexual abuse.
- Those involved will be reported to authorities and removed from their position.
- If sexting occurs among U18s, report to the Safeguarding Team.

Guidance is available via the STL or SGC

5.4 Digital Communications

There must be no digital communication with children. All digital communication with youth must comply with the Policy on Digital Communication with CAY.

All communication with youth must be:

- Appropriate and wholesome.
- Protected by safeguards when using technology.

Reference: Policy on Digital Communications with CAY

5.5 Internet Use At KCC

Applies when U18s are in KCC's care.

CAY must not:

- Access inappropriate content.
- Post or stream inappropriate or unwanted content.
- Disrupt or upset others.

Ministry Leaders should address violations as behavioural issues.

Guidance is available via the STL or SGC

5.6 Dealing with Problems

- KCC has zero tolerance for bullying, alcohol at any U18 event and substance misuse.
- KCC never sanctions physical punishment for dealing with behaviour issues.

Reference: Policy on Use of Force

Gangs

KCC recognises that children and young people may be at risk of involvement with gangs, county lines, or peer-related criminal exploitation.

Relevant staff and volunteers are alert to:

- Changes in behaviour.
- Unexplained possessions, gifts or money.
- Fear of certain places or people.

All concerns regarding possible gang involvement or exploitation:

- Are treated as safeguarding issues.
- Must be reported immediately in line with KCC's safeguarding procedures.
- May require liaison with statutory agencies for support and protection.

Radicalisation and Extremism

KCC recognises that safeguarding children and young people includes protecting them from radicalisation and exposure to extremist views. Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support extremist ideologies, groups, or activities that may lead to harm to themselves or others.

KCC recognises that holding strong religious, political, or personal beliefs is not in itself a safeguarding concern. Concerns arise when beliefs are used to promote hatred, intolerance, violence, exploitation, or harm towards others.

Children and young people can be vulnerable to radicalisation through a range of influences, including online content, social media, peer groups, family members, or other individuals who seek to exploit them.

Relevant staff and volunteers are alert to:

- Changes in behaviour.
- Expression of extreme or intolerant views.
- Justification of violence or harm.
- Increased secrecy.
- Concerning online activity.

These indicators do not necessarily mean a child is being radicalised but may indicate a need for further support or assessment.

Any concerns about radicalisation or extremism must be treated as safeguarding concerns and reported promptly to the STL/SGC. Concerns will be managed in accordance with KCC safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, referred to statutory agencies (e.g. Prevent) for advice or support.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

KCC recognises that modern slavery and human trafficking are serious forms of abuse and exploitation and are safeguarding concerns.

Modern slavery is an umbrella term that includes slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, debt bondage, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Victims may be children or young people and may be exploited by individuals, organised criminal groups, family members or others in positions of trust or power.

KCC recognises that any child or young person can become a victim of modern slavery regardless of gender, nationality, ethnicity or background. Some children and young people may be at increased risk due to factors such as disability, poverty, family circumstances, homelessness, immigration status, previous trauma, social isolation or being groomed by those seeking to exploit them.

Those working with CAY should remain alert to indicators of exploitation, which may include:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour, appearance or wellbeing.
- Signs of physical abuse, neglect or poor living conditions.
- Fearful, anxious or withdrawn behaviour, particularly in the presence of certain individuals.
- Limited freedom of movement or someone else consistently speaking on the child's or young person's behalf.
- Unusual control over a child's or young person's money, identity documents, mobile phone or personal belongings.
- Possession of unexplained money, expensive items or multiple mobile phones.
- Unexplained absence from home, school, church activities or other usual activities.
- Going missing or being collected or attempting to leave with an unauthorised or unknown adult.

- Repeatedly travelling to locations without a clear explanation or being found in hotels, transport hubs or addresses associated with exploitation.
- Evidence that a child or young person is being controlled, coerced or exploited financially, sexually, through forced labour, domestic servitude or criminal activity.

Any concerns that an U18 may be experiencing modern slavery or human trafficking must be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported immediately to the STL/SGC in accordance with this policy. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted without delay.

KCC will work with relevant statutory agencies and other appropriate organisations to ensure concerns are reported appropriately, CAY are safeguarded and appropriate support is provided.

Missing Child

KCC has a Procedure for missing children on site.

Reference: Missing Child Alert procedures

Recording Incidents

- All incidents must be logged following KCC Health and Safety procedures.
- Parents must be informed of any moderate or serious injury immediately.
- Minor injuries are reported to parents at the end of the session.

5.7 Safeguarding Across Activities

Private Events

Private events are outside the scope of this policy. While KCC cares about children's safety in all settings, we have no authority over private activities, and parents should not expect KCC safeguarding standards to apply.

This includes events held on KCC premises, as venue hire does not require a safeguarding assessment.

Babysitting/Childminding

KCC does not provide babysitting. Nobody is allowed to babysit on behalf of KCC and KCC does not approve people as babysitters.

Creche/Childcare

Must not be provided on behalf of KCC without consultation with the Safeguarding Team and compliance with full safeguarding standards.

Children at Adult Events

- **Children and Youth at Adult Events**
 - Children should not attend adult events. Youth may attend adult events if it has been arranged in advance.
- **Mixed-Age Groups (MAGs)**
 - These groups are primarily for adults but may have young people attend.
 - Require safeguarding procedures and parental consent. Contact the Safeguarding Team and use ChurchSuite forms for Safe Contacts.
- **Sunday**
 - Children must be accompanied by an adult who remains on site throughout the session.
 - Children must be signed in on arrival.
 - When not in their group room, children are the responsibility of the adult who brought them and must remain with the adult.
 - Youth may be unaccompanied by an adult.
 - This also applies to other events where families are invited.
- **Regular Midweek Activities**
 - Children may be unaccompanied in age specific midweek groups where this is assessed in a risk assessment.
 - Groups for younger age children may require a parent or guardian to always be responsible for their child(ren) when in the group. This will be reflected in the risk assessment.

Reference: Procedure for Safeguarding U18s in Mixed Age Small Groups

Special Activities

Must follow KCC policies and include all required procedures and documentation.

*Reference: Policy on Special Activities for CAY
Special Activities Procedures CAY*

Mentoring

Mentoring is permitted under strict boundaries with formal agreements and a 4-way contract between the church, youth leader, youth, and parent/guardian.

*Reference: Youth Mentoring Procedures.
ChurchSuite Forms for Mentoring*

Transport (Lifts)

No one can give a lift to an U18 without their parent with them. Exceptions apply to CAY workers in specific circumstances.

Reference: Special Activities Procedures CAY

Meetings in Homes

No meeting is to take place with children in private homes.

Youth meetings can take place in homes, with safeguarding measures in place.

- All adults involved in the activity are DBS checked.

- At least two unrelated DBS checked adults are always present.

6 Those Who Pose a Risk To Children

We take active steps to manage risk: Where an individual is known to pose a risk to CAY — whether through conviction or credible information — we have robust processes in place to prevent any access to CAY. These arrangements are overseen by the STL/SGC and tailored to the specific context and level of risk.

Reference: Policy and Procedures on Managing Known Risks to the Vulnerable

7 Working With Other Organisations

7.1 Working in School

- When KCC works in schools, there must be an agreement in place.
- This may be a written contract or a clear exchange of emails (which should be retained).
- KCC workers will comply with the safeguarding procedures of the school.
- KCC will work with the school to address any concerns.

7.2 Working Overseas

- When individuals work or travel overseas on behalf of KCC, they must safeguard U18s to the same standard as in the UK.

Reference: Policy and Guidance for Working Overseas (Safeguarding)

8 Final Notes

8.1 Positions of Trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence for an adult in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17-year-old.

Therefore, no one in a leadership or team role may begin or pursue a romantic or sexual relationship with any young person U18 in their group. If a situation arises where mutual feelings develop, the adult must immediately withdraw from their role and inform the STL/SGC so that appropriate safeguarding boundaries can be maintained and all parties protected from harm or allegation.

If an individual is already in a relationship with a youth member and would like to serve on a team; they will need to discuss this with the Safeguarding Team before taking on this role.

9 Related Safeguarding Documents

The index below was accurate when this policy was issued. Documents and resources are regularly updated. For the most current list, contact the STL/SGC.

Documents are stored on the KCC Server. Please speak to the STL/SGC for a copy of these documents.

9.1 Children and Youth

9.1.1 Main Policy

Category	Name
Policy	Safeguarding Policy: Children and Youth (CAY) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton 2025

9.1.2 Use of Force

Category	Name
Policy	Policy on Use of Force (Under-18s)

9.1.3 Digital Communications

Category	Name
Policy	Policy on Digital Communications with CAY

9.1.4 Safeguarding Info for CAY Leaders

Category	Name
Procedure	Missing Child Alert Procedures
Guidance	Under-18s working with Under-18s

9.1.5 Special Activities and Related Documents

Category	Name
Policy	Policy on Special Activities for CAY
Procedure	Special Activities Procedures CAY
Procedure	Youth Mentoring Procedures

9.1.6 Onboarding and Training

Category	Name
Procedure & Policy	Recruiting of Paid Employees
Procedure	Procedure for Onboarding to U18s Teams

9.1.7 Sunday Teams (Duty Managers, Welcome, Stewards)

Category	Name
Procedure	Missing Child Alert Procedures
Guidance	Safeguarding Information for Sunday Serving Teams

9.2 Mixed-Age Groups

9.2.1 Mixed-Age Documents

Category	Name
Procedure	Procedure for Safeguarding U18s in Mixed-Age Small Groups

9.3 STL/SGC (CAY)

9.3.1 STL/SGC Core Documents

Category	Name
Policy	Policy and Procedures on Managing Known Risks to the Vulnerable

9.4 Other Safeguarding (e.g., Overseas Trips)

9.4.1 Overseas & Other

Category	Name
Policy	Policy and Guidance for Working Overseas (Safeguarding)
Policy	Data Protection Policy
Policy	KCC Visual Imaging Policy
Policy	Whistle Blowing Policy

10 Contact Details

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11 Policy Review Information

Review Period: 1 year (as required by insurance company)

Review to be done by: STL/SGC, reporting to Trustees

Next Review Due: November 2026

THIS POLICY	DATE	Name given to the policy at this point
First approved by Trustees (after review tracking introduced)	18/03/2019	Safeguarding Under-18s Policy
Changes made regarding reporting process and activities outside group time	18/03/2020	Safeguarding Under-18s Policy 2020
Rewrite of policy and change of policy name	03/11/2025	Safeguarding Policy: Children & Youth (CAY) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton 2025
Minor changes made to include Radicalisation and Extremism Minor changes made to include Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	20/07/2026	Safeguarding Policy: Children & Youth (CAY) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton 2025