

# Gather '26

## Safeguarding Policy.

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### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that everyone attending Gather is kept safe, particularly children, young people, and adults who may be vulnerable. As a family of churches, we are committed to creating an environment where everyone is valued, respected, and protected from harm.

Gather is an opportunity for fellowship, Bible teaching and worship, and building relationships within our church family. However, because the event involves a range of activities, shared spaces, overnight accommodation, and people of different ages and backgrounds, it is important that safeguarding is actively considered and prioritised throughout the weekend.

This policy outlines the principles, responsibilities, and procedures that apply to all leaders, volunteers, helpers, participants, and visitors. Everyone has a role in maintaining appropriate boundaries, recognising concerns, and responding appropriately.

We are committed to good safeguarding practice, preventing harm where possible, and ensuring that any concerns about safety or wellbeing are taken seriously and acted upon. All leaders and volunteers are expected to read and uphold this policy throughout the weekend.

Further information about the churches' safeguarding policies can be found online.

Redeemer: [redeemer.co.uk/safeguarding](https://redeemer.co.uk/safeguarding)

Trinity Church: <https://www.trinitylittlehampton.co.uk/safeguarding-footer>

Apex Church: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eCEUcqu2idOvhQxvZUqiKOep4sDcLk3Y/view>

## **2. General Safeguarding Arrangements**

### **2.1 Responsibility and Expectations**

- Parents/carers remain responsible for the supervision and behaviour of their own children.
- When they are not participating in Kids and Youth work, parents/carers should know where their children are, who they are with, and what activities they are participating in.
- Any concerns about a child, young person, or adult's wellbeing should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead immediately.

### **2.2 Safeguarding Individuals Camping Alone**

- Any person camping alone should inform the site leader of their arrival and where they are camping.
- Leaders should be aware of anyone who may be vulnerable due to age, sex, disability or health needs. Anyone considered vulnerable will be encouraged to share a tent with a suitably matched person.
- A person under 18 cannot camp alone under any circumstances.

### **2.3 Site Access and Unknown Visitors**

- We do not have exclusive use of the grounds of the South of England Showground and therefore site managers will remain vigilant of outsiders throughout the weekend.
- All Gather ticket holders will be given a wristband upon arrival which they must wear throughout the weekend to be identified.
- Ticket holders will sign in and out of Gather at the welcome desk, this includes those with weekend tickets and day tickets, and any individuals wishing to go off-site.
- Any concerns about unknown individuals onsite should be reported immediately to the site manager/safeguarding lead and any unknown individual will be asked to move away from the camping ground.

### **2.4 Missing child procedure**

- If a child or young person goes missing during a Kids and Youth session all leaders must stay in the Kids room and not go looking for the child
- A leader should call the number on their wristband and inform the site team a child is missing, the site team will then begin a search.

- If a child goes missing at any other time, the first person to realize must call the number on their wristband.
- The site team will begin a timely and thorough search of the entire camp, using all people available to them to help with the search.
- The site manager will notify parents within 10 minutes if the child is not located
- Readiness to contact the police if the child is not found within a reasonable time.
- An incident report will be completed within 24 hours of the child going missing and the safeguarding team notified.

## **3. Safeguarding children and young people**

### **3.1 Volunteer children and youth workers**

- All over 18s volunteering in Kids and Youth work at Gather must have an Enhanced DBS check issued within the last 5 years and have received safeguarding training from their church.
- Volunteers will read the Gather safeguarding policy and sign the Code of Conduct.

### **3.2 Ratios and Supervision**

- NSPCC Recommended adult-to-child ratios will be used for all children's groups
- Both male and female Kids and Youth workers will be present at every session, as far as possible.

### **3.3 Registration, Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures**

- Children will be signed into kids work (ages 2-10) by their parent/carer at the start of each morning session.
- Youth (ages 11-15) will walk independently to and from the Youth barn, the Youth leader will keep a register of attendees and will sign the young people in and out of the session.
- Emergency contact details will be known and the leader will have this information on hand for all children and youth.
- Medical and allergy information will be recorded and communicated for all children and youth.
- Only authorised adults may collect children aged 2-10 and they must present the correct pick-up sticker to receive their child/ren.

- If an adult does not collect their child from Kids work within the expected time period (11.30am) the child will be taken to the grown up and this will be passed on to the safeguarding team.
- If a child goes missing during the morning Kids/Youth sessions, the leaders must immediately radio the site team who will look for the child. Leaders must remain with the children in their care and cannot leave the building.

## **7. Toileting**

- During Kids sessions all children are encouraged to use toilets independently.
- Toilet steps are provided to help younger children get on the toilet without the need for an adult.
- A minimum of two adults will take children to the toilet and all children must use the female toilet.
- The adults will stand in the toilet area by the sinks
- If a child needs assistance both adults must be present and the assistance be given in clear sight with the cubicle door remaining open at all times, while maintaining privacy.

## **8. Health and Safety**

- A risk assessment of the room has been carried out and any safety instructions will be followed at all times.
- A first aid box will be provided in the Kids building and in The Robins Building and a member of the first aid team will be on duty at all times.
- First aid must only be given by members of the first aid team.
- All accidents must be recorded and reported to the parent/carer on pick up, including any first aid given.
- In the event of a fire, everyone will follow the fire evacuation procedures of Ardingly Showground, evacuating buildings safely and promptly and assembling at the closest designated fire assembly point.
- Allergies and medical conditions will be made known to the leaders by the parent at drop off each day and a note of any allergies will be written on their name sticker.
- If a child carries medication on their person, they must bring this in a bag and hand it to the designated leader at the start of the session

## **9. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns**

- If a Kids or Youth volunteer has a safeguarding concern, or witnesses a safeguarding incident, or a child discloses abuse, they must record what they have seen/heard accurately and as soon as possible. Then they must inform the Gather safeguarding leads.
- Safeguarding leads will handle the concern or incident and proceed in line with Redeemer, Trinity and Apex Church safeguarding policies and procedures, referring to statutory agencies where necessary.
- Escalation procedures if concerns involve a leader.
- Referral to statutory agencies where necessary.
- If there is an allegation made against staff or volunteers, the safeguarding leads must be informed straight away, who will act inline with Redeemer, Trinity and Apex Church safeguarding policies and procedures.

## **10. Photography, Video and Phone use**

- Photo/video team to know which children should not be included in photos.
- Kids and youth leaders must not take photos of children on their own devices
- Kids and Youth will not have their devices out during sessions

# **Code of Conduct for Leaders and Volunteers**

## **Good practice**

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the safeguarding coordinator
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action

## **Unacceptable behaviour**

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Swearing, sexualised speak, innuendo
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way
- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details and any contact that breaches Redeemer, Trinity or Apex's social media policy
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged