

Safeguarding Policy: Adults at Risk (AAR) 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 adults at risk (AAR), and we hold this responsibility as a top priority. Everyone 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 and act on concerns quickly and effectively.
- Train all staff and volunteers to recognise and report signs of abuse.
- Take reasonable steps to protect AAR 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, social services etc) when necessary. KCC recognises that safeguarding concerns take precedence over confidentiality. This policy is guided by The Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005, which sets national expectations for all organisations, including voluntary and faith-based groups.

KCC operates a culture of 'always report' — concerns should never be ignored, minimised, or dealt with alone.

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

1.2 Definitions and abbreviations

AAR – "adults at risk" are people aged 18 or over who have care and support needs and are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect and unable to protect themselves from harm or the risk of harm. In some documents these people are also known as Vulnerable Adults or Adults with Care and Support Needs.

STL/SGC – Safeguarding Team Leader / Safeguarding Coordinator.

1.3 Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to everyone working with AAR at KCC — whether paid or voluntary, as well as to KCC Leaders and Trustees. We also expect all attendees to support a safe environment for AAR.

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

1.4 Related documents

Additional procedures, guidelines, and training materials 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 AARs 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 AAR

2.1 We follow best practice in recruiting those who work with AAR

- All applicants for roles with close contact/position of trust with AAR:
 - Complete a self-disclosure form and sign a declaration agreeing to uphold our high standards of safeguarding.
 - Provide two satisfactory references.
 - Complete a DBS check with a check of Barred Lists before they begin Regulated Activity with AAR, as required by Law.

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
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.
- Records of completed training are maintained on ChurchSuite.

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

Reference: Sunday Prayer Team Safeguarding Guidance

4 Mental Capacity

KCC recognises the importance of empowering adults and respecting their autonomy. We follow the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005:

- Presume capacity unless proven otherwise.
- Support individuals to make their own decisions.
- Respect unwise decisions.
- Act in best interests where capacity is lacking.
- Use the least restrictive option.

Capacity may fluctuate and must be considered in relation to the specific decision at the specific time.

Safeguarding responses will follow Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) principles. Information will normally only be shared with consent. However, consent may be overridden where:

- There is risk of serious harm.
- Other adults or children are at risk.
- A serious crime has been committed.
- There is a legal obligation to share information.

4.1 Making Safeguarding Personal 2014

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a person-centred approach to safeguarding that focuses on improving outcomes for AAR by involving them fully in decisions about their safety and wellbeing. It emphasises listening to the individual, respecting their views, wishes, feelings, and desired outcomes, and supporting them to have choice and control throughout the safeguarding process. Safeguarding responses should be proportionate, least restrictive, and focused on what matters most to the person, while balancing their rights with duties of care and risk management. MSP promotes empowerment, partnership working, prevention, and learning to ensure safeguarding is meaningful and effective for everyone.

4.2 Safeguarding Principles

KCC works in line with the six safeguarding principles set out in the Care Act 2014: Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, and Accountability.

5 Abuse, Concerns & Disclosures

KCC recognises all forms of abuse including:

- Physical abuse.
- Domestic violence or abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Psychological or emotional abuse.
- Financial or material abuse.
- Modern slavery.
- Discriminatory abuse.
- Organisational or institutional abuse.
- Neglect or acts of omission.
- Self-neglect.

These are defined in the Care Act 2014

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

We train all our AAR staff and volunteers to:

- Be alert to signs of abuse.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures.
- Record disclosures and concerns accurately.
- Report directly to the STL/SGC.

(Do not discuss concerns with others unless advised by the STL/SGC.)

STL/SGC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all adults who may be at risk of harm. Any allegation, disclosure, or suspicion of abuse involving AAR will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.

STL/SGC will assess all allegations or concerns of abuse involving AAR and make referrals to the relevant safeguarding authorities, in accordance with applicable laws and statutory reporting obligations. Reports may be made to the local authority's Adult Safeguarding Team, the police, or other appropriate bodies depending on the nature and urgency of the concern.

Where AAR have capacity and do not consent to information being shared, STL/SGC will respect their wishes wherever possible. However, information may still be shared without consent if:

- There is reason to believe that the person is at risk of serious harm.
- Other adults or children are at risk.
- There is a legal obligation to share the information.

All reports and decisions will be documented clearly. Staff and volunteers are required to cooperate fully with any investigations conducted by statutory agencies.

If an adult is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress call 999 immediately and inform the STL/SGC as soon as is safe to do so.

5.1 Disclosures: When AAR tell you about abuse

KCC takes any disclosure or concern seriously and will respond to these. Staff and volunteers must listen, reassure, and report without delay.

Records will be kept for the period required by law, stored securely, and may be shared with statutory agencies when legally required.

5.2 Concerns – What to report

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

Examples:

- Noticing unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Observing an adult appearing unusually withdrawn, anxious, or fearful.
- Hearing rumours of potential abuse or neglect.
- Signs of self-neglect (e.g. poor hygiene, unsafe living conditions).
- Observing financial exploitation or coercive control.

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

5.3 Disclosure

Definition: A disclosure occurs when AAR directly inform another adult about harm, abuse, or neglect that they are experiencing or have experienced.

Examples:

- An adult tells a church leader that a family member is financially exploiting them.
- An adult reports experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
- An adult confides about neglect in their care setting or living situation.

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 adult explicitly tells you.**

5.4 Recording concerns / disclosures

Complete the form accessed via the QR code, which is found on Safeguarding posters around the building, as soon as possible and inform the STL/SGC. 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 STL/SGC.

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 STL/SGC.

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

5.5 Reporting safeguarding concerns / disclosures

Only report to:

- The STL/SGC.
- A designated safeguarding contact (if the team is unavailable).

Do not contact other family members or carers yourself, unless instructed. If a family member or carer is involved in the abuse, informing them may worsen the harm.

Failure to report a concern may be a safeguarding issue.

Disclosures of historic abuse must be reported and will be responded to in the same way as current abuse by the STL/SGC.

5.6 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 Adults Social Care Team and follow statutory procedures.
- The accused may be suspended without prejudice while investigations are carried out.
- KCC will cooperate fully with statutory agencies.
- KCC will support all parties and offer appropriate pastoral support during the process.
- If the allegation concerns a member of the Safeguarding Team, it must be reported directly to the Safeguarding Trustee or Chair of Trustees.

Reference: Whistle Blowing Policy

5.7 Pastoral care and support

- KCC will offer pastoral care to AAR who are 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 AAR.

6 Working Safely

6.1 Risk assessments

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

Where AAR are involved, assessments must include:

- Recruitment checks, DBS and training in line with KCC policy.
- Awareness of medical conditions, allergies, etc.

6.2 Boundaries

Those working with AAR must:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Avoid dependency-forming relationships.
- Not give or receive money or gifts without approval.
- Use physical contact only where appropriate and consented to.

6.3 Personal care

- Personal care (e.g. toileting, washing, dressing, feeding) is treated as regulated activity.
- Only appropriately recruited and DBS-checked individuals may provide personal care.
- Personal care must be delivered with dignity, consent, and respect for individual preferences.

6.4 Financial safeguarding

- Staff and volunteers must not manage money, shopping, or financial affairs on behalf of AAR without explicit authorisation and safeguarding oversight.

6.5 Lone working

Lone working must be risk assessed. Safeguards include:

- Clear role boundaries.
- Check-in/check-out arrangements.
- Recording concerns promptly.

6.6 Online / digital communication with AAR

Safeguarding applies to online, digital, and remote interactions with AAR, including messaging, video calls, and social media.

The same professional boundaries apply online as in face-to-face contact, including avoiding private or secretive communication.

6.7 Safeguarding across activities

Private events

Private events not organised or led by KCC are outside the scope of this policy. While KCC cares about AARs safety in all settings, we have no authority over private activities. However, any safeguarding concerns identified by KCC leaders or volunteers must still be reported in line with this policy.

Transport (Lifts)

Transporting AAR must:

- Be risk assessed.
- Avoid lone travel where possible.
- Never replace statutory or family care arrangements.

Meetings in homes

Home visits must:

- Be agreed in advance.
- Be risk assessed.
- End immediately if concerns arise.

6.8 Prayer and pastoral ministry

Prayer and pastoral ministry must be conducted safely:

- Consent must be obtained.
- Physical contact should be minimal and appropriate.
- Emotional dependency must be avoided.
- Safeguarding concerns disclosed during prayer must be reported.

6.9 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 people, with approval from the Communications Lead. Media must not be used without consent.

Reference: KCC Visual Images Policy

7 Those Who Pose a Risk To AAR

We take active steps to manage risk: Where an individual is known to pose a risk to AAR — whether through conviction or credible information — we have robust processes in place. 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

8 Final Notes

8.1 Positions of Trust

All staff and volunteers working with AAR are in positions of trust and must act with integrity, transparency, and accountability at all times.

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 Adults at Risk

9.1.1 Main Policy

Category	Name
Policy	Safeguarding Policy: Adults at Risk (AAR) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton 2025

9.1.2 Onboarding and Training

Category	Name
Procedure & Policy	Recruiting of Paid Employees

9.1.3 Sunday Teams (Duty Managers, Welcome, Stewards)

Category	Name
Guidance	Sunday Prayer Team Safeguarding Guidance

9.2 STL/SGC (CAY)

9.2.1 STL/SGC Core Documents

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

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

9.3.1 Other

Category	Name
Policy	Data Protection Policy
Policy	KCC Visual Imaging Policy
Policy	Whistle Blowing Policy

10 Contact Details

Safeguarding Team Leader

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Safeguarding Coordinator

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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: January 2027

THIS POLICY	DATE	Name given to the policy at this point
First approved by Trustees (after review tracking introduced)	June 2014	Vulnerable Adults Policy VA01 (R3) Formerly HAS
Approved by Trustees	October 2020	Vulnerable Adults Policy VA01 (R4)
Re write of policy with update of policy name	20/01/2026	Safeguarding Policy: Adults at Risk (AAR) Kings Community Church (KCC) Southampton 2026