



Policy	First Love Church Safeguarding Policy
Approved	February 2026
Approved By	Jane Hyde
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Reviewed By	Jane Hyde

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Introduction

The First Love Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, safety and well-being of all children and adults who engage with our services, activities or programmes. This policy outlines the approach and standards expected of all trustees, staff and volunteers. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all leadership and congregants.

The First Love Church aims to create a safe, respectful and supportive environment, and to act promptly and appropriately when concerns arise. We are committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of integrity and openness as an organisation. Our staff, volunteers and representatives are obliged to conduct themselves in keeping with these high standards.

As Christians, we believe that every human has immeasurable value and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We are convicted that everyone - regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin - has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. First Love Church will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by trustees, staff or volunteers.

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of safe, caring communities

Further to this:

- We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal record disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an at-risk adult, child or young person may have been harmed or at risk of harm, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who¹has suffered abuse, developing with them an

appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust, power or responsibility.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice. The First Love Church commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention: The Responsibilities of the First Love Church

The First Love Church will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with First Love Church. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Staff Responsibilities

First Love Church staff and associated personnel must:

- Read and comply with this policy.
- Complete safeguarding training as required.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Treat all people fairly and with respect and dignity.
- Avoid being alone with a child or adult at risk, where possible.
- Ensure their conduct does not bring First Love Church into disrepute and does not impact on, or undermine, their ability to undertake the role for which they are employed or engaged.
- If and when working in an international context or travelling internationally on behalf of First Love Church, be observant of all local laws and be sensitive to local customs.

First Love Church staff and associated personnel must **not**:

- Engage in sexual activity with children. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or at-risk adults.
- Subject a child or at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking.
- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour. This includes any

- exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, First Love Church trustees, staff and volunteers are obliged to:
Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a First Love Church staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

Enabling Reports

First Love Church will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by First Love Church's Whistleblowing Policy.

First Love Church will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How To Report a Safeguarding Concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for First Love Church is Joshua Okorom. The DSL may be reached by telephone on 07808299350 or email firstlovechurch.uk@outlook.com.

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead for First Love Church is Aggie Botchey. The Deputy Safeguarding Lead may be reached by telephone on 07712557678 or email aggie.botchey@gmail.com.

In cases of conflict of interest, the Trustee Safeguarding Lead (TSL) for First Love Church is Oreoluwa Joshua Adeyemi. The TSL may be reached by telephone on 07988356109 or email oreoluwaadeyemi@gmail.com.

Initial Fact Finding

- Stay calm, listen carefully and allow the beneficiary, staff member, volunteer or representative to continue at their own pace.
- Make the beneficiary, staff member, volunteer or representative aware that you will probably have to share the information disclosed with others.
- Ask questions for clarification only and avoid leading questions that will suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the beneficiary, staff member, volunteer or representative that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record the conversation in writing as accurately as you can using the other person's own words, as soon as you can.
- Ensure the record is signed and dated.

Reporting Concerns

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. Otherwise, send the written report to the DSL within 24 hours.

Further Action

The DSL must make a written record of the incident as soon as possible after the event. The record must include the following information:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address of beneficiary, staff member, volunteer or representative
- Nature of concern
- Description of safeguarding concern/incident(s)
- Time(s) and location(s) of incident(s).
- Name of alleged perpetrator(s)
- A copy of the report prepared by the person who interviewed the beneficiary, staff member, volunteer or representative (see above).

The record must be kept secure and confidential and will only be accessible by the DSL and others responsible for safeguarding.

If the allegation has been made by or on behalf of a child or adult at risk, the DSL must refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer or Adult Social Care Services and/or the police within 24 hours of receiving the report. Local Authority contact details are set out below. If the person reported provides regulated activity, the DSL may refer the concern to the DBS.

Records

All personal information that is collected in the course of working with beneficiaries, staff members, volunteers or representatives should be treated as confidential. All records will be securely kept and will only be shared where necessary. The DSL will have authority to determine who can access any particular records, unless the person of concern is the DSL in which case the Trustee Safeguarding Lead will be authorised to have access to such records. Records will only be kept as necessary and in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

Local Authority and Other Relevant Contacts

Nominated Child Protection Lead

Name: Christiana Idowu
Phone: 07712732095

Deputy Child Protection Lead(s)

Name: Faith Samako
Phone: 07853642731

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

Southwark Council Safeguarding Contacts

In an emergency please dial 999. Otherwise you can contact the Child Protection Team: Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm) on 020 7525 3297.

Response

The First Love Church will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations. If necessary, a Serious Incident Report will be made to the Charity Commission.

First Love Church will investigate any concern raised and apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of this policy.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Glossary of Terms

At risk adult

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. An at risk adult is a person who is aged 18 or over and who is or may be in need of care and support by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives assistance or services from First Love Church.

Child

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

Code of Behaviour for Safeguarding

The following Code of Behaviour applies to all staff, volunteers and representatives and is in addition to our Code of Conduct.

Do:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- Set an example for others to follow;
- Treat people equally;
- Respect personal privacy;
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour;
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues;
- Keep in mind how actions can be represented or misrepresented, however well-intentioned;
- Allow people to talk about their concerns and listen;
- Report incidents of bullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Take allegations or concerns about safeguarding seriously and refer them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- Ask for training or more information about safeguarding if required;
- Promote awareness of our safeguarding policy.

Do Not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact;
- Exhibit inappropriate behaviour or language;
- Exaggerate or trivialise safeguarding issues;
- Jump to conclusions about any issue without checking facts, or make any assumption based on age, ability or appearance.

Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- The church premises will be assessed for safety for children and adults at risk and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Church Council in written form.
- This will include fire safety procedures.
- The Church Council will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
- Any church-organised transport of children or adults at risk will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort have appropriate DBS checks and certificates.

Communicating Good Practice

A leaflet setting out the main elements of this policy will be produced and reviewed annually to be given to each worker with adults at risk outlining good practice and systems. The leaflet will be reviewed annually with this policy [Church Councils may produce their own material or use appropriate Connexional leaflets]. Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council. Adequate staffing must be provided for all events with church groups off premises. Outside users hiring church premises will be given a copy of this policy when signing the letting or hire agreement.

Recruitment

We are committed to following safe recruitment and will adhere to the following principles:

- We will develop a clear role profile and person specification;
- All applicants will be asked to complete an application form or submit a detailed CV and include the names of two referees giving consent for the First Love Church to approach the referees directly;
- Shortlisting of applicants will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager directly overseeing the role being recruited for;
- Interviews will be carried out by at least two people;
- All staff (including sub-contractors) recruited to relevant posts will receive a copy of this policy as part of the induction process.
- We will ensure that all necessary checks (including DBS checks, where appropriate) are made to promote the safe selection and recruitment of staff and volunteers and we will provide the necessary supervision, support and training to them, in order that they can undertake their roles effectively.

Training

Our training requirements are as follows:

- *All new staff sign to record they have received and understand this Safeguarding Policy.*
- *Additional safeguarding training will be made available to all staff on request.*
- *We will carry out regular safeguarding refresher training as appropriate.*

Risk Assessment

- First Love will set out identified risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which will be reviewed regularly.
- A risk assessment will be carried out in relation to any new project, activity or event. The principle of the risk assessment is to consider, in any project, new activity or event,
- the response to risk can fall into one of more of the following six options as follows:
- Accept the risk and just monitor it to ensure we have not miscalculated and that we notice if the risk changes;
- Avoid the risk by stopping the activity;
- Transfer the risk by taking out insurance cover or contracting out an aspect of the activity;
- Develop response plans to mitigate the effects of an adverse risk event, or to take advantage of an unplanned opportunity;
- Reduce the likelihood of an adverse risk event by putting controls in place;
- Take management action to increase the chances of success.

Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically and at least every year. The policy was last reviewed in February 2026.

