

tabernacle : penarth

purpose: to reflect God's love in our church,
community and world.

Safe and Sound

Safeguarding Children, Young People &
Vulnerable Adults

At Tabernacle Baptist Church we are committed to providing a safe environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults can learn, worship and develop into the people God has created them to be. We have committed ourselves to following the guidelines and good practices laid down in our child protection policy which is called “Safe to Grow.” Safe to Grow is the Baptist Union's Child Protection policy. (“Safe to Belong” is the similar policy for vulnerable adults.) We support Criminal Record Bureau disclosures, handled through the Churches Agency for Safeguarding. Disclosures are a requirement for all ministers and all persons working with people in those sectors, such as youth work, Sunday School or special programmes for dependent adults, which fall under the remit of the policies.

Each year at our Annual General Meeting we make the following commitment:

As members of the church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected, to the responsible persons or independent persons.

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church. We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or volunteer. The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to provide supervision.

The church is committed to following Home Office code of practice Safe from harm and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet Safe to Grow (revised edition). Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them.

As part of our commitment to the children and young people, the church has appointed Peter Locke and Eunice Grove to be children’s advocates. We have also appointed Mary Dyas to be the advocate representing volunteer helpers in our children’s and youth groups. Ann Niblett is our responsible person who oversees child protection issues and ensures that we are following the correct procedures.

Children and young people are part of our church today. They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in worship, learning and in community life, we will respect the wishes and the feelings of the children and young people.

What is the Minister's role?

If at all possible the minister should be independent of all the roles involved in the child protection policy. If a difficult situation arises, the minister will be responsible for offering pastoral care to the people who are involved and to the church as a whole. It may be difficult for the minister to do this effectively if they are involved too closely in the structures.

Working with offenders

Where someone attending church is known to have abused, or is alleged to have abused children or young people, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its' commitment to the protection of all children and young people will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the church and the person who has abused or who is alleged to have abused. This might include designated areas of the church building where it is/is not appropriate for the abuser/alleged abuser to be at all or specific times. The contract might also state that the abuser or alleged abuser must decline offers of hospitality from church members or attendees where there are children or young people present in the home.

What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed

- Do** take allegations seriously
- Do** follow the laid down procedures
- Do not** delay
- Do not** act alone
- Do not** start to investigate

Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to the person responsible for Safe to Grow: Ann Niblett (029 2070 0203). The responsible person and/or advocates are nominated by the church to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. The responsible person/advocates should always be ready to consult and seek advice from either the Police, Social Services or the Baptist Union Child Protection specialists at Baptist House. For the latter, the first point of

contact should be Alan Elson at Baptist House on 01235 550351.

The full text of our Child Protection Policy is to be found in the Baptist Union Publication “Safe to Grow (Revised Edition)” A reference copy can be found in the borrowing room at church. Further copies are available to borrow from the church office.