

York Vineyard Church

Safeguarding Policy

Nov 2024

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Section 1

Details of the place of worship / organisation

York Vineyard Church

York Vineyard Church, 3 Fawcett Street, YO10 4AH

Tel No: 07752 161121 (Church Phone)

Email address: safeguarding@yorkvineyard.com
hello@yorkvineyard.com (General Enquiries)

Affiliated to Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland

Charity Number: 1125764

Company Number: 6666388

Insurance Company: Public Liability with Ansvar Insurance

York Vineyard Church is established for:

- the furtherance of religious or secular public education;
- the advancement of the Christian faith including missionary activities in the United Kingdom and overseas and also including but not limited to the planting of new churches and organisations of congregations;
- the relief of the poor and needy;
- the relief of the sick and elderly;
- such other charitable objects and for the benefit of such other charitable bodies and institutions as the Committee shall in their absolute discretion see fit.

Our Activities

Our work with children or vulnerable adults involves groups on Sundays and mid-week for children in the age range 6 months to 18 years. Each group receives age appropriate input related to Christian teaching, social awareness, life skills and personal development.

Examples of our activities include:

Youth events and small groups: these take place in public places and in the church building. Youth small groups may take place in leaders' homes, in which case the leaders will have a current DBS check to include working in the home, and where possible a married couple will not serve on their own.

No person is allowed to supervise children without a current DBS disclosure. Each volunteer is fully trained and is committed to receiving continual training on matters relating to child protection and care.

Christmas Family Party: this is organised for children accompanied by their parents. It aims to serve families who might want to meet Jesus and celebrate Christmas, but do not feel ready for traditional Sunday morning church services.

Soft Play 0-3: An open and free soft-play group where parents/guardians come with their children to play. Overseers of this are DBS checked.

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York Foodbank Ministry:

In partnership with York Food Bank we hold a foodbank session once a week where we have the chance to minister to the people that come. We are aware that we may be ministering to vulnerable adults and families; the staff/volunteers are fully trained in helping and signposting to those they meet, and are also aware of our safeguarding policies and relevant practical handbooks. There will also be a representative from Peasholme Charity and a Community Advice Worker from the council at each session to offer advice too.

In all cases we recognise the uniqueness and dignity of each individual and family. We also recognise the importance of the information in this policy being available to all interested parties. To that end, a copy is held in the Church building and a copy of the Safeguarding Children Document, which supports this Safeguarding Policy, can be found amongst the Food Bank boxes. Those working with children and vulnerable adults also receive a copy of this policy and the Safeguarding Children Document when they begin their volunteering to read.

Regardless of their official role with children or vulnerable adults, all members of the staff team and trustees of York Vineyard Church have DBS disclosures. The Safeguarding Officer (SO) is Sarah Mills.

Our commitment

As a leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which state that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide ongoing safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached (see City of York CYSCB for learning and development).
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Officer(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- File a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with thirtyone:eight and the local authority (York Safeguarding Children Board) and any amendments subsequently published. The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

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Section 2

Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Safeguarding awareness

The Leadership and governance is committed to ongoing safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis using thirtyone:eight resources. The induction training is based upon this policy and subsequent training based on the ten standards listed by thirtyone:eight and VCUKI.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

- 1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Definitions of abuse

Children

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger - for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, a child or children.

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The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)'.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve:

- hitting, shaking or throwing;
- poisoning, misuse of medication or the denial of treatment;
- intentional exposure to extreme heat or cold, force feeding;
- depriving someone of their liberty, misuse or illegal restraint;
- burning or scalding;
- drowning, suffocating;
- or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve:

- conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate;
- age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another;
- serious bullying (including cyber bullying);
- causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing;
- non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images; watching sexual activities; encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse where a child is sexually exploited for money, power or status.

Sexual abuse may awaken premature sexual feelings in a child that they find hard to deal with and feel guilty about and they may need reassurance that they are not to blame for the abuse.

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Penetrative sex with a child under 13 years by an adult or another child is classed as rape.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- failure to provide access to educational services;
- ignoring a person's basic emotional needs;
- failure to take action when a person is taking unnecessary risks;
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Adults

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse' (Department of Health 2000):

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'.

Physical Abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

Sexual Abuse

The sexual abuse of adults involves sexual acts to which the person has not consented or has been pressured into consenting to.

Sexual abuse of a adults can include:

- Penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts, whether they aware of what is happening or not eg. sexual assault, oral sex, rape, attempted rape, and date rape.
- Indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, groping, sexual teasing or innuendo,
- Being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities.
- Stalking and grooming.

Domestic Abuse

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Domestic abuse (or Domestic Violence) is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse by one person against another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members.

It can include violence by a son, daughter, mother, father, husband, wife, life-partner, or by an extended family member, and happens across all sections of society, regardless of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, financial background or sexual orientation.

Both men and women can be victims, although a greater number of women experience all forms of domestic violence. Children and Young People can suffer this form of abuse directly or be impacted by the effects of witnessing or living in a household where domestic abuse is happening.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour by one person over another that is usually frequent and persistent. It can happen inside and outside the home and can continue even after a relationship has ended.

Coercive control

Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse used to harm, punish, or frighten another person. It is designed to make a person dependent by isolating them from support, exploiting them, depriving them of independence and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Domestic abuse can include:

- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, and 'honour crimes'.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviours which cause mental distress, anguish or negate the wishes of the vulnerable adult. They include any behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adults emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

Financial or Material Abuse

This is:

- the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.
- coercion or being put under pressure concerning a person's finances (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions);
- Withholding a pension or other benefits.

Neglect or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired.

Self Neglect

Self-neglect is when an adult lives in a way that puts their own health, safety or well-being at risk. It is an extreme lack of self-care that is often related to deteriorating health and ability in older age, poor mental health, or other issues such as addictions, however not everyone who self-neglects needs to be safeguarded.

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Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. People who self-neglect will often decline help from others.

There are limitations to what help can be offered if the adult has the mental capacity to make their own decisions about how they live, even if they may suffer significant harm or death as a result of their own action or inaction.

Any action taken should seek to minimise any risks while respecting the person's choices, trying to engage with the person to offer as much support as possible without causing distress.

It is important that all efforts to engage with and support the person are clearly recorded.

Self-neglect can include:

- Neglecting to care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings to the extent that it threatens personal health and safety.
- Inability to avoid self-harm
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs
- Behaviours such as hoarding.

Modern slavery

Modern slavery (or Human Trafficking) is the recruitment, movement, and holding of a person by improper means, such as force, threat or deception, for the purposes of exploitation or abuse. Victims of human trafficking can be male or female, children or adults, and may come from migrant or indigenous communities. Modern slavery is different from illegal immigration as people who are trafficked are tricked, coerced, lured or forced by criminals to work for them or others in their criminal networks around the world. People are forced into and held by threats of violence and intimidation against them or their family, fear, debt, bondage, isolation and the removal of identification or travel documents, or imprisonment and torture. Children living in the UK can also be targeted and trafficked internally.

Modern slavery can include:

- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation such as prostitution and pornography
- Bonded labour (forcing someone to pay a debt that can't be paid).
- Criminal activity
- Private fostering
- Forced marriage

Discriminatory Abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional Abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

Organisational abuse can include:

- A run-down or overcrowded environment
- Insufficient staff or high staff turnover resulting in poor quality care

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- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Not offering choice or promoting independence.

How to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse

Abuse of Children

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree.

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or childminder
- Starting to wet again, day/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for gym
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene

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- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

Abuse of Vulnerable adults

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Multiple bruising
- Fractures
- Burns
- Bed sores
- Fear
- Depression
- Unexplained weight loss
- Assault (can be intentional or reckless)

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Bruising
- Soreness around the genitals
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- A preoccupation with anything sexual
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Rape - e.g. a male member of staff having sex with a Mental Health client (see Mental Health Act 1983)
- Indecent Assault

Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Fear
- Depression
- Confusion
- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Deprivation of liberty could be false imprisonment. Aggressive shouting causing fear of violence in a public place may be an offence against Public Order Act 1986, or harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Possible Indicators of Financial Abuse

- Unexplained withdrawals from the bank
- Unusual activity in bank accounts
- Unpaid bills
- Unexplained shortage of money
- Reluctance on the part of the person with responsibility for the funds to provide basic food and clothes etc.
- Fraud
- Theft

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Possible Indicators of Neglect

- Malnutrition
- Untreated medical problems
- Bed sores
- Confusion
- Over-sedation
- Deprivation of meals may constitute “wilful neglect”

Discriminatory abuse

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

Possible Indicators of Institutional Abuse

- Inflexible and non-negotiable systems and routines
- Lack of consideration of dietary requirements
- Name calling; inappropriate ways of addressing people
- Lack of adequate physical care – an unkempt appearance

How to respond to a disclosure of abuse

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

Helpful responses

- You have done the right thing in telling someone
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

Don't say:

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

How to respond to an allegation/suspicion of abuse (Worker)

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Worker in the group

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below.

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Sarah Mills (hereafter the "Safeguarding Officer"), telephone: 07986636447. She is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to Lynne Hopwood (hereafter the "Deputy"), telephone: 07914087859.
- If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to thirtyone:eight, PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ, telephone: 03030031111. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Officer, the absence of the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy should not delay referral to the Safeguarding Teams or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

The role of the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies that have a legal duty to investigate.

Safeguarding Officer/Deputy's response where there is a concern about a child

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services directly for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Contact the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if, for any reason, they are unsure whether or not to contact LCSB. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

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Safeguarding Officer/Deputy's response where there is a concern about an adult in need of protection

If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice, contact the Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults Team who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship/organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Officer/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or if they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Officer(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

Accusations/allegations against a person who works with children

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Officer, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures, will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, She will also make a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser (SA) / Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Communicating with VCUKI National Safeguarding Team (NST)

The NST are available for support and guidance. Any Level 2 or 3 incidents (abuse within the church or by leadership away from the church) should be reported to them at safeguarding@vcuki.org.uk or 01482 462690.

Section 3

Prevention

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Safe recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all children's workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There are written job description and expectations for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed and safeguarding has been discussed
- References from previous employers.
- Where relevant, references from their church leader and small group leader have been taken up
- A DBS disclosure has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant on Safeguarding
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy or Safeguarding Children Document and knows how to report concerns

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children (section 5 of this document), young people and vulnerable adults. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' (App 3) guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

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Section 4

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and to support all those who have been affected by abuse, who have contact with or are part of York Vineyard Church. The ways in which they may do this are as follows:

- Referral to counselling professionals or appropriate medical agencies.
- The pastoral systems are already in place in the church. The support will be offered by those who have experience of pastoral care and are endorsed by the church.
- Offering practical help in attending appointments.

Working with ex-offenders

When someone attending York Vineyard Church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults, the Leadership will ensure supervision of the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. However, in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, the Leadership set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to respect.

A contract will be drawn up for the ex-offender to sign (see appendix 4 for examples of content) and will be based on the uniqueness of his/her offence, the risk posed and the ex-offender's requirements. It will also detail the consequences of breaking the contract.

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Section 5

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers, we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in. These are outlined in the relevant ministry handbooks/ guidelines.

Duty of Care and Positions of Trust

For definitions see Appendix 3.

The Children Act 2004 (England), through the Stay Safe outcome of 'Every Child Matters Change for Children' programmes, places a duty on organisations involved in providing services for children and young people to safeguard and promote their well-being. This means all workers have a responsibility to treat those they are caring for with respect and dignity as well as demonstrate competence and integrity. This is emphasised in our training programme along with training in identifying and dealing with symptoms of abuse.

Our duty of care to provide a safe environment for children and workers is reflected in our ongoing buildings and equipment maintenance schedule, our ongoing electrical appliance testing (PAT); our involving an outside agency (Sofire) to ensure our fire equipment is up to date and our risk assessment and training schedules for all activities.

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital that workers ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately.

Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, they should be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

The trusting relationship between worker and child, young person or vulnerable adult means the worker should never:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

General practice guidelines

For specific and detailed practice guidelines see the individual handbook: the Safeguarding Children Document for the Children's ministry. This is available from the church office and in all kids/youth work ministry folders..

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Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are carried out for all activities undertaken by York Vineyard Church. The regular weekly activities are reviewed and updated annually; the one-off events are assessed on an individual basis.

The person heading up the area of ministry involved will compile the risk assessment and it will be reviewed by the staff member or trustee responsible for health and safety (David Heaton).

The pro-forma used is attached in Appendix 5

Safety of buildings and equipment

An on-going schedule of regular maintenance in addition to visual checks by staff ensures the safety of the building and internal fixtures and fittings. Fire exit plans are displayed around the building (James Foster).

PAT tests are carried out on electrical equipment by a competent person.

All team members should be aware of fire procedures and there is a fire evacuation practice held annually. The fire alarm will be tested on a weekly basis.

Food and drink safety and hygiene

Where food is prepared for ministries, when necessary the person responsible for this ministry possesses a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and is aware of the issues involved in preparing, handling and disposing of food safely. All helpers are given appropriate health and safety training and then updates on a termly basis.

All helpers are trained on induction and on a termly basis on issues of health and safety in this area.

First Aid

The designated first aider is a member of staff (Nicki Abbey) and volunteers Stuart Priest, Carolyn Romer, Bex Horner (Mental Health), Jessica Farnhill-Young (Mental Health). First aid boxes are located in the kids cupboard and the welcome drawers.

Safeguarding Principles for Group or Activity

Guidelines regarding the number of adults required to manage the groups are laid down in the practical handbooks along with how to proceed if that number of adults is not available. Only those over 18 are allowed to have responsibility for children and count towards the ratios; although under 18s may be involved in the group work they may not be directly responsible for children.

Our practices on personal privacy and care are also included in the Safeguarding Children Document, which is available from the church centre and used as a key part of our training schedule.

For children's work a signing in and out procedure of all children and adults is operated.

Each individual working with children or vulnerable adults must agree to the Vineyard ethos statement.

York Vineyard Safeguarding Policy

Adult to Child Ratios

For Sunday morning activities we recommend the following ratios:

AGE	ADULT : CHILDREN
UNDER 2	1:3
2 – 3	1:4
4 – 8	1:8

For children over 8 years of age there is no legal requirement, however we assess numbers of adults required in line with the activity undertaken and the needs of children with a minimum of 2 adults present at all times.

Data Protection, Human Rights and Safeguarding

York Vineyard is compliant with the current GDPR . We also recognise that safeguarding issues take precedence over data protection. We have a privacy policy which is available on York Vineyard website.

Registration

A York Vineyard Kids Data Protection form is required for a child to participate in York Vineyard activities. The forms are reviewed and updated annually. Signing in sheets for each session are completed and retained by the church online, for a minimum of six months.

Keeping Records

Log sheets to record incidents, behaviour or significant conversations is kept, filled in by the adult concerned, dated and signed. Each entry is on a separate page to maintain confidentiality and should be recorded as soon as possible after the event. The logs are held securely.

Accidents

An accident book is kept at the church and accidents recorded are signed by the individual (or parent) concerned.

Home Visits

Home visits are not part of our programmes, however should it be necessary for workers or leaders to make home visits from time to time they should only be made with the knowledge of the Safeguarding Officer and the parents. The purpose, time of the visit and person visiting should be previously agreed.

Anti- bullying Policy and practice (children & young people)

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

- Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails or text messaging
- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual – sexually abusive comments or gestures

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- Racial – any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences
- Homophobic – any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended

We recognise the harm that bullying can cause and have a zero tolerance attitude towards bullying, which is abuse. We deal with the victim of the abuse, the parents and the bully to avoid repetition in line with our procedure outlined already.

Tobacco and Alcohol

Smoking and drinking are not allowed during York Vineyard events involving children, young people and vulnerable adults. Anyone who appears under the influence of drink is not allowed to be involved in our activities and will be excluded. Youth, if attending Cause to live for or other events for 16+, have a responsibility along with their parents to abstain from drinking alcohol. An email will be sent stating this to the parents prior to the event.

Solvents and Illegal Substances.

Workers should be alert to possession and use of illegal substances.

If a worker suspects that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be abusing solvents they should make the Safeguarding Officer aware of the situation and be encouraged to seek professional help or advice from their doctor or a counsellor specialising in this area.

For the individual involved, action may include the following:

- Ask them to stop, warning them of the consequences if they do not e.g. suspension or ban from the group.
- Inform parents/carers if the individual is less than 16 years.
- Inform the parents/carers if the individual is over 16 years (with their permission).
- Discuss with the individual the proposed course of action, particularly if they re-offend (e.g. informing the police).
- Write down the content of any discussion with the individual, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place.
- Liaise with the police to devise a strategy for dealing with the use of illegal substances.

Having said this, it is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by an organisation to supply illegal drugs or use them on the premises. In this situation the police will be contacted.

Outings

Separate and specific consent forms are required for each outing, a copy to be taken on the outing and one lodged with the church office. After risk assessment the required number of adults will accompany the children. Requirements for trips and off site activities can be found in the Safeguarding Children Document.

Residential holidays

The safety and suitability of residential accommodation will be assessed on an individual basis. All leaders and workers will be selected from our regular children's team and have appropriate DBS checks and operate under our child protection policy. Requirements for overnight stays and off site activities can be found in the Safeguarding Children Document.

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Transportation

Giving lifts to children and young people is one of the areas where boundaries can become blurred in the life of the church community. For example the leader of a group may be offering a lift to a child to attend a meeting as part of their responsibility as an appointed leader in the church, or as a friend of the child's parents, or a relative of the child.

For the sake of clarity it is better to work on the principle that whenever an appointed children's or youth worker gives a lift to children (other than their own children) to a church-run children's or young people's activity they should follow the procedures laid down by the church. These can also be found in the Safeguarding Children Document.

It is important that the church and parents are clear about the nature of arrangements for offering lifts to children to and from church based activities. If the arrangements are informal private arrangements made between parents, the following procedures do not need to be applied. However, if the transport arrangements are offered and made by the church or organisation, the procedures set out below should always be in place.

When children or vulnerable adults are transported in cars:

- Written permission from the parent/carer should be obtained.
- The driver should be fully DBS checked, understand and agree to the church's code of behaviour when transporting children or young people.
- The driver should have fully comprehensive insurance which covers voluntary work (or in the case of a paid youth worker or children's worker, insurance that covers them for transporting others in the course of their employment).
- Seat belts should always be worn and the proper child seats and child restraints should be used for young children in accordance with the law.
- If a volunteer driver who has not been appointed as a children's or young people's worker is used to transport children and young people on church activities, the driver should be appointed following the procedures outlined under the church's Safeguarding Policy and DBS checked.
- Churches should not use people as drivers for children and young people when their criminal record shows a record of driving offences that suggests that the person may not be a safe driver.

When a mini-bus or coach is used to transport children or young people:

- Many hiring organisations now ask for the driver to have a MIDAS certificate. MIDAS is the Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme organised by the Community Transport Association.
- Ensure that the mini-bus or coach is fitted with seat-belts on all of the seats and that seat-belts are always worn.
- Ensure that the number of children and adults does not exceed the capacity of the coach or mini-bus so that all can have an allocated seat with a seat-belt.

Case study 1

The parents of youth club members decide to arrange among themselves a rota to pick up their children after the youth club and drop them to one another's homes. The parents offering to be part of the rota do not need to be appointed under the church's Safeguarding Children Policy and do not need to apply for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. This is a private arrangement made between the parents. If one of the leaders of the youth club is part of this arrangement (because he is a parent of one of the members) he should comply with the code of behaviour for transporting young people.

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Case study 2

Because of concerns about the safety of young people after the youth club, a church decides to arrange a rota of drivers to take youth club members home. Some of the drivers are workers and leaders in the youth club – others volunteer solely to drive the teenagers home. These drivers will need to follow the procedures laid out above and be appointed under the procedures set down in the church's Safeguarding Children Policy, including applying for an Enhanced DBS Disclosures.

Filming and taking photographs

Filming and photographing are undertaken with full awareness of the Data Protection Act and obtaining the relevant permissions from an individual or the parents of the child must be obtained.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. There may be differences in cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of a letting agreement, will have their own policy that meets the thirtyone:eight safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

As part of Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland we have agreed to the bye-laws of the denomination, these indicate that the senior leaders of the church are DBS checked and that a Child Protection Policy is in place.

York Vineyard Safeguarding Policy

Appendix 1

Leadership Safeguarding Statement

The Leadership, in this instance the Trustees and Senior Pastors (hereafter referred to as Leadership) recognises the importance of its ministry/work with children, young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to the care of the church.

The following statement was agreed by the leadership on: 17th October 2023

York Vineyard Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being. Specifically:

- We acknowledge that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We acknowledge that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We acknowledge the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of York Vineyard Church unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Officer(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by York Vineyard Church.
- Supporting parents and families.
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people.
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in York Vineyard Church affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

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We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country, in which we operate, and their procedures followed. In addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding officers for York Vineyard Church:

Sarah Mills Safeguarding Officer

Lynne Hopwood Deputy Safeguarding Officer

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the York Vineyard Church office.

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been lodged with thirtyone:eight and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

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Appendix 3

Government Definitions: 'Duty of Care', 'Position of Trust' and 'Abuse of Trust' (sexual relationships)

Duty of Care

'The duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person involved in any activity or interaction for which that individual or organisation is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with children and young people in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally to owe them a duty of care.'

'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People' (Department for Children Schools and Families - November 2007).

Position of Trust

'Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship'.

'Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable? Guidance for Preventing Abuse of Trust (Home Office).

Abuse of Trust

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

(Sexual Offences Act 2003.Sect 16-19 re-enacts and amends offence of abuse of position of trust)

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Appendix 4

Sample contract for offenders

Below is a list of clauses we may need to consider in drawing up a contract for a sex offender. The person involved and the nature of the offence will mean that each person will be considered individually and each contract may differ in content.

Boundaries

- I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- I will attend meetings and activities as directed by the leadership.
- I will sit where directed at activities (e.g. religious meetings, social gatherings) and will not place myself near children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, nor any area where activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults are in progress.
- I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children, young people or vulnerable adults in the home.
- I accept that "x" and "y" will sit with me during activities (e.g. religious meetings, social gatherings) and accompany me when I need to use other facilities. They will know I am a sex offender.
- I accept there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children, young people or vulnerable adults for whom they care.
- I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with leaders as and when necessary (where appropriate).
- I accept that "z" will provide me with pastoral care.
- I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, I may be barred from attending activities. In such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (e.g. police, probation, Adult Services, Children's Social Services), and any other relevant organisations, as well as members of the faith community or organisation.
- I understand that any other concerns will be taken seriously and reported.
- I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every _____ months and will remain in force for an indefinite period.

Pastoral care

As well as outlining the boundaries a sex offender would be expected to keep, it is also helpful to outline the types of pastoral care and support we are able to offer.

'X' and 'Y' and 'Z' have agreed to provide you with pastoral care and support; as part of that undertaking, they and the leadership of the organisation agree to:

- Support you in finding suitable employment opportunity which will not bring you into contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- Support you in seeking any specialist help e.g. attendance on any Sex Offender Treatment Programmes, drug or alcohol or psychiatric rehabilitation or any counselling appointments.
- Liaise with any previous places of worship/organisation you have attended, with the Prison Chaplaincy Team, or any other organisation you have worked with prior to joining us.
- Work closely as a place of worship/organisation with any statutory authorities with responsibility for you, such as your probation officer, police public protection team or children's social services, cooperating with them in helping and supporting you.
- Where appropriate, ask for any risk assessment in order to determine how best we can meet your needs while protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- Attempt to meet any practical needs you may have, including assistance with options for accommodation.
- Support you in joining 'Circles of Support' or any other similar programme.
- Provide pastoral care and support to anyone with whom you are living with.

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- We recognise that partners of known sex offenders need pastoral care, and 'space' to share without judgement.

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Appendix 5

Risk Assessment Tool

Risk Assessors can either use the quantitative method (numerical) or qualitative (L, M, or H).

Risk level = Severity x Likelihood

		Severity		
		Slight	Serious	Major
		L (1)	M (2)	H (3)
Likelihood	Seldom	L	L	M
	L (1)			
	Occasionally	L	M	H
M (2)	Frequently	M	H	H
H (3)				

Risk level = (1-2) L - Low; (3-4) M - Medium; (6-9) H - High

Risk level	Action and Timescale
Trivial (1)	No action is required to deal with trivial risks, and no documentary records need be kept (insignificant risk).
Acceptable (2)	No further preventative action is necessary, but consideration should be given to cost-effective solutions, or improvements that impose minimal or no additional cost burden. Monitoring is required to ensure that the controls are maintained.
Moderate (3-4)	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk, but the costs of prevention should be carefully measured and limited. Risk reduction measures should normally be implemented within three to six months, depending on the number of people exposed to the hazard.
Substantial (6)	Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Considerable resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, the problem should be remedied as quickly as possible and certainly within one to three months.

H
I
G
H

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Intolerable (9+)	Work should not be started or continued until the risk level has been reduced. While the control measures should be cost-effective, the legal duty to reduce the risk is absolute. This means that if it is not possible to reduce the risk, even with unlimited resources, then the work must not be started or must remain prohibited.
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Appendix 5 continued

Risk Assessment Form

Location:

Risk Assessor:

Date of Assessment:

Hazard = task/activity with the potential to cause harm	Type of injury which could result if harm occurs	Type of People & number affected	Likelihood of injury occurring			Severity of Harm if injury does occur			RISK LEVEL L; M; or H.	Current Control Measures in place	Further Control Measures required	Person responsible to implement further measures required and date to implement	Date to review: <i>Assessments are annual review unless the task changes/alters</i>
			With CURRENT CONTROL in place										
			L	M	H	L	M	H					