Safeguarding Policy

**JUNCTION Christian Youth Network 25/26**

**JUNCTION Christian Youth network** abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

* We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
* All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm and abuse
* Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
* Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents/carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting children’s welfare

Purpose:

**JUNCTION** aims to:

* Protect children and young people who receive **JUNCTION**’s service from harm
* Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding
* Proactively prevent harm and abuse through robust training and safeguarding measures

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of **JUNCTION,** including the Leadership team and the members, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the network.

**Definitions:**

**The Children Act 1989** definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or are in hospital.

**Child Abuse:** Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse within their family or harm outside of the family. There are 4 main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these categories, they are:

* Bullying and cyberbullying
* Child sexual exploitation
* Child criminal exploitation
* Child trafficking
* Domestic abuse
* Female genital mutilation
* Grooming
* Historical abuse
* Neglect
* Online abuse
* Spiritual abuse

**Additionally vulnerable** children include children in care, unaccompanied asylum seekers, those with mental health challenges and those with physical or unseen disabilities.

**Safeguarding children:** Safeguarding children is defined in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e7501ab418ab055592a7b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf) as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
* Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

Legal Framework:

This policy has been drawn up in line with guidance from with the SOT Safeguarding Children Partnership Board on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/voluntary-community-groups>.

Thresholds:

**JUNCTION** refer to and seeks guidance from the Threshold Framework held by Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership.

The Threshold Framework ‘Accessing the right help at the right time’ is the overarching document for the whole of the children’s workforce. This multi-agency threshold framework is a guidance tool that all agencies, professionals and volunteers can use to consider how best to meet the needs of individual children and young people. The Threshold Framework is available on the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership website: <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/downloads/file/17/sotscp-threshold-document-aug222-1->.

Prevent Duty:

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

* Schools
* Registered childcare providers
* Local authorities
* Police
* Prisons and probation services
* NHS trusts and foundations
* Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. More information is available on the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership website - <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/>.

Training & Awareness:

**JUNCTION** will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its leadership team, members, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it.

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them, as a minimum, to have awareness training that enables them to:

* Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children
* Understand the difference between safeguarding children and child protection
* How to spot the signs of abuse and neglect
* How to respond to the indicators of abuse and neglect and keep children safe
* Understand dignity and respect when working with children
* Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy
* Recognise the signs and impact of spiritual abuse, particularly in a Christian context

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership provide safeguarding training for private and voluntary sectors. Professionals – Multi-agency Training, Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership website - <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/>.

By incorporating all the elements mentioned above into training, JUNCTION aims to equip everyone involved with the organisation to identify and respond effectively to all forms of abuse, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people in their care.

Confidentiality & Information Sharing:

**JUNCTION** expects all employees, volunteers and members to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulations, as well as guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of significant harm\* or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.

\**Please see Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership Threshold Framework – ‘Accessing the right help at the right time’ for definition*

Consent:

Whilst professionals should in general discuss any concerns with the child, their parents/carers and where possible seek their agreement to making referrals to Stoke-on-Trent Children’s Advice and Duty Service (ChAD), this should only be done where such discussion and agreement-seeking will not place the child or others at increased risk of suffering significant harm. For more information, see the Threshold Framework on the Partnership website [https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/](https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/downloads/file/17/sotscp-threshold-document-aug222-1-.)

Consent/agreement is not required for child protection referrals; however, you, as the referring professional, would need to, where possible, discuss with and inform parents or carers that you are making a referral as stated above, unless by alerting them you could be putting that child or others at risk.

Recording & Record Keeping:

A written record must be kept about any safeguarding concerns. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern(s) and the action(s) taken, the decision(s) made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) of **JUNCTION** (stored securely in a designated location accessible only to authorised personnel).

Safe Recruitment & Selection:

There is a duty under Section 11 of the Children’s Act 2004 for **JUNCTION t**o be committed to safe volunteering, employment and recruitment practices that reduce the risk of harm to children and vulnerable young adults from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

**JUNCTION** has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all volunteers.

**DBS**

In line with the local safeguarding board All volunteers & staff members working with young people / young adults will undertake an **enhanced DBS (child or child & adult workforce) check OR where possible an UPDATE SERVICE check** the results of this check will be reviewed by a member of the LT team (safeguarding lead or deputy).

**Our process is in line with the government DBS service is:**

* DBS checks of individuals are reviewed by our safeguarding lead/deputy safeguarding lead & must be within 3 years.
* As a non-constituted network, DBS checks are undertaken by a volunteer covering organisation or church - if an individual applying to be on the official team does not have one as part of their current employment or volunteering.
* We **accept** DBS checks that are under a different role (i.e role that isn’t a youth worker role) but **ONLY enhanced child workforce** **or Child & adult workforce.**
* Team members working on the official team of the BLAZE 11-18’s events must have an **enhanced CHILD workforce** DBS check- team members who work across the network with young people & young adults can have a child and adult workforce
* The update service will be recommended to new team applicants who don’t have a current DBS check or to DBS check holders who are under 30 days old.

As a non-constituted network JUNCTION network for transparency & accountability in a multi-agency approach setting it is deemed as ‘**necessary’ information (GDPR / ICO approved) as** **good practice** that we ask permission to review the paper DBS check in person to eliminate tampering and then take a WhatsApp encrypted photograph ‘live’ of such, and thereafter kept in a WhatsApp encrypted file ( not a photocopy of the DBS). This information shall be retained as ‘necessary’ while individuals are part of the Junction team & destroyed/deleted hereafter.

Use of social media /Mobile Phones & Other Digital Technology (including photography & filming):

At **open-access youth events,** Junction **will**

1. **ensure that any adverts for BLAZE OPEN ACCESS YOUTH EVENTS state that there will be filming & photography undertaken (parents/carers will be advised to get in contact prior to the event if they don’t wish for their child to be filmed/photographed - where the child will be given a coloured lanyard for ID)**
2. **Provide a FILMING & PHOTO free zone** in the MAIN AUDITORIUM where young people newly attending the evening ‘on the door’ where parental/carer contact hasn’t been able - NOT wanting or able to have their images taken (A lanyard will still be given due to other areas of the venue being photographed).
3. Vet all images before being posted on the website, social media platforms and in any other methods of distribution, to ensure that no images of young people who have not provided consent are used.

**FYI:**

**GDPR CONSENT LAW** **for photography/filming:** Children can be 13 years old to give consent.

**BEST PRACTICE (NOT LAW) NSPCC UK / SAFEGUARDING BOARD -**Children & young people need parental consent up to 16 years. (2023)

**PHOTOGRAPHY/FILMING:** **16 & 17 year olds-** organisations (in this case JUNCTION network) decide if it is deemed appropriate to need to get parental consent depending on individual event / activity & circumstances of a young person.

Escalation:

Professionals providing services to children and their families should work cooperatively across all agencies, using their confidence, skills and experience to make a robust contribution to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings, conferences and case management.

On occasions, situations may arise where there is professional disagreement in relation to safeguarding a child. Resolution is an integral part of professional joint working to safeguard children, and this policy seeks to identify how such resolution can be achieved where there are professional differences of opinion.

All professionals have a responsibility to work together and to help to prevent disagreements from escalating where possible. This policy identifies a non-exhaustive list of potential areas of disagreement, guidance and resolving disputes and procedures to be followed when disputes cannot be resolved through discussion and negotiation between professionals at the front line level.

For further information on what is expected of the leadership team, members, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons when reporting a safeguarding concern, please see Appendix One at the end of this document.

Whistleblowing:

It is important that people within **JUNCTION** have the confidence and support to come forward and speak or act if they have concerns that have not been addressed by the escalation policy. Additional knowledge, advice and guidance must be sought from designated safeguarding leads at all times.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises concerns about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by JUNCTION to protect whistleblowers.

Further information on ‘Managing allegations against adults that work with children’ visit the Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Partnership website ( <https://safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/> ).

If anyone wishes to make a report to a statutory authority, the important contacts section (below) contains the details of organisations that can be contacted. The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) provides a helpline for advice, guidance and if required, can help you take any necessary action. Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as CCPAS) is a Christian charity that provides a helpline for advice, guidance and if required, can help you take any necessary action.

Important Contacts:

**Designated Person for Safeguarding (Safeguarding Lead):**

**Name: (to be filled)**

**Email:**

**Telephone Number: 07812 774 632**

**Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding:**

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Telephone Number:**

**NSPCC Helpline**

**0808 800 5000 (Monday - Friday, 10am - 4pm)
 help@NSPCC.org.uk**

**Police**

**Emergency - 999**

**Non-emergency - 101**

**Stoke-on-Trent Children’s Advice and Duty Service:**

**01782 235100 (Monday - Friday, 8am - 6pm)**

**01782 234234 Emergency Duty Team (Outside office hours)**

**Thirtyone:eight (Christian charity providing safeguarding services)**

**0303 003 1111
 helpline@thirtyoneeight.org**

**This Policy is a working document and was adopted on Monday 12th May 2025. It will be reviewed annually by the safeguarding team.**

**Appendix One - Responding to a Concern**

**When there are concerns that a child, young person or adult is being abused, the following process must be followed.**

**A hand-written record must be made of the concern using a standard incident report form (Appendix Two) and the concern must be passed on to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) within 24 hours.**

**The written record should: be made as soon as possible after the event; be legible; include the name, date of birth and address of the child or adult at risk; include the nature of any concerns and description of any bruising or injuries that have been noticed; include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible; include any action taken; be signed and dated; be kept secure and confidential (available only to the DPS and others responsible for safeguarding).**

**The report will be reviewed by the DPS with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. See appendix 2 for examples of possible actions. Any formal referral to the police or Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.**

**Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns (this could be the church as a whole, but more specifically victims; alleged perpetrators; children; adults at risk; other family members; church workers; the DPS; Minister; members of the leadership team).**

**Where formal referrals are made, reports may need to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Charity Commission.**

**If the DPS is not available, or is implicated in the situation, any reports or concerns should be passed to the deputy designated safeguarding lead. If neither are available, or both are implicated in the situation, independent authorities (such as the NSPCC or Thirtyone:eight) should be contacted.**

| **STAGE 1 - The Worker**A worker or attendee has a concern about the welfare of  a child, adult at risk, or the behaviour of an individual. The person who has the  concern has a duty to: **RECOGNISE, RESPOND  AND RECORD** | **STAGE 2 - The Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS)**The DPS receives the report of concern and then has a duty to:**REVIEW AND REPORT** | **STAGE 3 - The Next Steps**After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken, the DPS (or DDPS) may have a duty to: **SUPPORT AND REPORT** |
| --- | --- | --- |

**If you think that anyone is in imminent danger of harm,
a report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999.**

**Appendix Two - Safeguarding Incident Form**

**This form should be completed by the Designated Person for Safeguarding or the Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding. There are 4 pages in total.**

**Name of Organisation (including contact details):**

**Name of Designated Person for Safeguarding (including contact details):**

**Name of Concerned Person or to whom the disclosure was given (including contact details):**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Individual of Concern’s Name, Date of Birth, Address and at least one form of communication (e.g. phone number or email address):**

**(Please turn over once completed)**

**The Incident**

**What Happened? (Using the person’s own words where possible. Use the body map on the final page if there are any observable bodily injuries)**

**When did it happen? (Date / Time)**

**Where did it happen? (Specific location)**

**Who was allegedly involved and in what way? (Including details of any witnesses)**

**(Please turn over once completed)**

**Have the statutory authorities been informed? If yes, please complete the section below.**

|  | **EXAMPLE** |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AUTHORITY** | **Police** |  |  |  |
| **NAME** | **Bobby** |  |  |  |
| **POSITION** | **Child Abuse Officer** |  |  |  |
| **EMAIL ADDRESS** | **bobby@police.com** |  |  |  |
| **PHONE NUMBER** | **07799 112233** |  |  |  |
| **CONTACTED BY** | **DPS (Jane Doe)** |  |  |  |
| **DATE / TIME OF CONTACT** | **1:23pm****11/2/23** |  |  |  |

**Have any other actions been taken? If yes, what actions have been taken?**

**What future action needs to be taken? (including who is responsible for actioning)**

**(Please turn over once completed)**

**Declaration**

**By filling in this form I have, to the best of my ability, recorded and reported the incident that has been presented.**

**Signature of the Designated Person Date and Time of Signature
for Safeguarding (or DDPS)**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Body Map**

**These diagrams are designed for the recording of any observable bodily injuries that may appear on the person. Where bruises, burns, cuts, or other injuries occur, shade and label them clearly on the diagram. Remember - it’s not your job to investigate or to decide if an injury or mark is non-accidental. Listen, observe and pass it on.**



**Appendix Three - Prayer Ministry Guidelines**

**As part of any Junction events we may incorporate times of Prayer Ministry. Whilst there is a full set of guidelines made available to all members of the Prayer Team, we have included below the specific guidelines that pertain to the safety and wellbeing of young people.**

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**There is no ‘right way’ to pray but we’ve included these guidelines as they are tried and tested and tend to work quite well!**

**While you’re with us please stick to the advice given. Lots of it is just straight-forward common sense!**

* **The laying on of hands to pray IS Biblical- however this wasn’t included in every healing or encounter. So to ensure we are operating where there can be no room for allegation & within a local safeguarding ‘good practice’ agenda we ask you NOT TO LAY ON HANDS WHILE PRAYING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AT AN OPEN YOUTH EVENT FOR 11 - 18 years.**
* **You CAN place your hands near or towards the young person! - God is able to do what he wants without you laying your hands on them.**
* **IF young people are attending in a youth group & It is appropriate for them to pray for each other you can encourage them to place a hand on a shoulder to pray.**
* **Keep your eyes open while praying for a young person so you can see how they are responding & what God is doing.**
* **Ask them if they are happy to hold out their hands as an act of receiving from God.**
* **Only pray for someone who shares your gender [where possible]. If you are unsure of the gender identity of a young person, please speak to the PRAYER TEAM LEADER prior to praying.**
* **Ask someone what they would like you to pray for… listen & if they say, ‘I don’t know’, reassure them, let them know God loves them & just to be open to God prompting you.**
* **Use simple phrases - there’s no need to use multiple words or pray ‘fancy’ complicated prayers . in ‘ministry times just say ‘Jesus /Holy spirit we welcome you here or if you can ‘see God doing something in them just ‘ Jesus ,do more’ ,**
* **If you can see the YP responding either with tears, shaking etc just gently ask if they are ok, reassure them they are ok & it’s normal to let tears out or feel a bit wobbly! & Use a simple phrase like say ‘Jesus do more’, ‘Thank you Jesus’ etc.**
* **If a young person gets ‘wobbly legs’ whilst praying then encourage them to sit down carefully or get comfy (don’t push them over, blow on them etc)**
	+ **[It’s very important to allow the expression of feelings and this might mean people cry, shake or respond in other ways to what God is doing. This is totally fine but be careful not to suppress or to build up the situation.**
* **Reassure a young person that if they don’t ‘feel’ anything that doesn’t mean that God hasn’t ‘turned up’- that HE often does things in us we don’t always see straightaway & keep on asking!**
* **If you have a prophetic word or picture, offer these as a prayer or in such a way that the person being prayed for can make their own decision as to how appropriate they are. Never insist that what you have to say, ‘is a word from God’ and always seek to build up, comfort and encourage the young person you’re praying for [1 Corinthians 14v3].**
* **If someone does fall over in the power of the Holy Spirit then please make sure they are in a comfortable position, not draped over anyone else and that their dignity is maintained (i.e. nothing is on show that shouldn’t be). If you can, put a jumper or jacket under the person’s head. It is not always necessary to stay with them for the whole time but if you move away encourage them to keep receiving from God and keep an eye on them to check they are safe.**

**#FYI It can be helpful to whisper to them that you will return in a little while, so they know that they are not forgotten.**

* **It can become very hot when there are lots of people together during times of prayer ministry. If the person you are praying for is sweating, offer them a drink of water (you should find water and cups at the front of the stage or ask someone on the JUNCTION Team)**
* **Listen carefully both to the person you are praying with, and to God. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and encouragement, and be prepared to wait, this is God’s work, not yours. The person you are praying for may tell you about things that have happened in their life - don’t appear to be shocked by any disclosures.**
* **Remember that confidentiality is of the utmost importance - but DO NOT promise to keep anything secret (especially with regards to claims of abuse).**
* **Your first contact in such a situation should be a member of the JUNCTION Team [ SAFEGUARDING LEAD: or DEPUTY ] if you deem that the young person is at risk or a risk to others . They are there to support you and the person you are praying with - & will be able to take things further if necessary by following our safeguarding policies & procedures .**
* **If someone has been crying for a long time, or releasing deep pain, they may start breathing too fast which can lead to spasms in their hands and legs. Encourage the person to concentrate on breathing slowly – this won’t stop what God is doing and will make sure the person is OK. Remember you can always call over another Senior member of the JUNCTION Team if you are worried.**
* **It’s brilliant to have more than one person praying for someone at a time so feel free to go over and join someone who’s praying already. That said, it’s can be distracting if a large group gather around someone when the ministry is of a sensitive nature so please ensure people have enough personal space.**

**Demonic Activity / Prayer**

* **Please ask god for WISDOM when praying & be careful not to mix up mental health or an emotional / physical reaction to being prayed for as ‘demonic’ - we are aware that on some occasions as per the bible this may be the case - but Please on NO occasion tell a young person you think they ‘have a demon’ or shout at them / take on a physical aggressive ‘casting out’ stance.**
* **If you do feel in your heart something isn’t quite ‘on point’ or is a demonic response then please also go & get another leader to pray for the young person with you- if appropriate they can be prayed for in the quieter /chill zone with 2 adults present but in an open space -not a closed room .**
* **Quietly / calmly pray the NAME OF JESUS over them or gently say ‘be free in name of Jesus’ over the young person - you may even want to get the young person to ask Jesus to fill them - following this PRAY PEACE over the young person & that the Holy Spirit will fill them up .**
* **If at any time you feel out of your depth then ask for help from the JUNCTION PRAYER CREW [ wearing specific lanyards] .**

**We all find ourselves in situations that we can’t handle alone. This is not failure and it’s often good to pray with others, plus it’s a great way to learn more!**

**#PRAYLIKEWEMEANIT.**