**1 Aim of policy:**

Guisborough Christian Centre has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the

welfare of children and young people, particularly whilst they participate in the activities of the church. This policy also helps to protect those who work or volunteer for the project.

**2 Legal Framework:**

GCF follows national legislation and guidelines in respect of Child Protection, i.e. The Children Act 1989 and local guidelines.

**3 Application of policy:**

This policy applies to all children and young people under the age of 18 years. All staff and volunteers within the organisation will adhere to this policy and procedures, which arise from it. DBS checks are carried out on all relevant personnel.

**4 Definition of child abuse:**

Physical abuse: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. This also includes exploitation and grooming.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect: 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.

**5 Role of the Safeguarding Officer:**

GCF has a designated Safeguarding co-ordinator who is responsible to the organisation for overall supervision of safeguarding issues.

This adult must be a Trustee or Elder who does not have regular involvement with the children's activities.

There must also a named deputy when the co-ordinator is unavailable.

The co-ordinator is expected to be familiar with current safeguarding issues and local pathways for reporting of concerns.

It is the responsibility of the safeguarding co-ordinator to:

1. Record the concerns raised at the earliest opportunity
2. Share concerns with a fellow elder or trustee
3. If deemed appropriate, discuss the concerns with the child's parents
4. If deemed appropriate, report the concerns to the relevant statutory authority - usually the local safeguarding board within social services.
5. Record action taken.
6. Ensure an up-to-date record of her/his contact details, plus those of the deputy, elders and trustees, are stored in the front of the contacts folder.

These records are confidential and will only be seen by those directly involved. They will be kept securely by a designated elder with other legal documents associated with the organisation.

**6 Role of volunteers and staff:**

Staff and volunteers must be aware of and follow Child Safeguarding procedures .

They must be aware of the location of the contact details for the Safeguarding Co-ordinator

They must maintain confidentiality at all times.

Please note - it is not their role to investigate concerns. To do so informally might put the child at risk.

**To be read and applied in conjunction with the GCF Child Safeguarding Policy**

**What to do if abuse is suspected:**

Report concerns as soon as possible to the designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator or deputy. If unavailable report to a Trustee.

Write a record of the circumstances giving rise to the concern and give the record to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The person receiving the report will liaise with parents and / or local Social Services departments as necessary, following appropriate discussion with another elder or trustee.

All records are confidential and will only be seen by those directly involved.

Maintain absolute confidentiality beyond those who need to know.

The names and contact details of the Safeguarding co-ordinator, trustees and elders can be found in the Records/Contacts folder

**Supervision of Children’s / Youth activities**

1. All such activities must be supervised and run by adults who have been approved by the elders/trustees.
2. There must always be at least 2 adults present with children at all times.
3. Ratios for more children must be as follows: Age 0-2 yrs   1 adult to 3 children

Age 2-3 yrs.  1 adult to 4 children

Age 3-8 yrs   1 adult to 8 children

1. Physical contact with a child must be kept to the minimum necessary for reassurance. Habitual physical contact must be discouraged.
2. Where children require assistance with going to the toilet, this should be sought from family members if available or, if not, from an adult of the same gender as the child.
3. Where possible parental consent and emergency contact information will be obtained for each child. This information will be retained in an accessible folder which is kept with the other Children's work information.
4. When activities take place away from the church base the folder must be taken along by the supervising adult. It is that adults responsibility to ensure the folder is returned to the church base at the earliest opportunity.

**Supervision on the Mini Bus**

1. Ratios of children to adults should be the same as at church. The driver plus;

Age 0-2 yrs   1 adult to 3 children

Age 2-3 yrs.  1 adult to 4 children

Age 3-8 yrs   1 adult to 8 children

2. All children have to wear seat belts and if children are under three they need suitable car seat inserts. Children over three and under 1.35m should have a boaster seat if one is available, but if not need to use the three point seat belt.

3. Children need to have consent form completed by a parent before going off church premises in the minibus.

4 No drinking while driving and take a break every 2 hours!