



Safeguarding Policy

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Definitions

In this document the following terms are used:

Adult at risk of harm will be defined in this policy as the following: anyone over the age of 18 years old

Child - for the purposes of this policy, a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old

Gap - means The Gap (Midlands)

Workers - means both paid staff and volunteers

DSL - Designated Safeguarding Lead

DDSL - Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead

Leadership - means the Trustees of The Gap (Midlands)

Headspace Coordinator - has the role of coordinating records of all mentee/mentor sessions and records all causes for concern and passes these to the DSL/DDSL

Safeguarding disclosure - when a child or young person communicates or discloses they have been (or worried they may be) abused or neglected. Any other person reveals they have seen an incident of abuse or neglect or found evidence that indicates it may be or is occurring.

Safeguarding concern or issue - anything that might impact on a child or young person's safety and welfare, cause them harm, or put them at risk of harm.

SG Log - safeguarding log (used to be called YPER)

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Source: **Thirtyone:eight** policy template updated Jan 2025

Section 1

Details of the organisation

Name of the Organisation: **The Gap (Midlands)**

Address: **Banners Gate Community Church, Westwood Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 6UH**

Telephone Number: **07599 912 670**

General email address: **office@thegap-midlands.org**

Chair of Trustees name:

Reuben Pearse

Email: **trustees@thegap-midlands.org**

Designated Safeguard Lead (hereafter "DSL") name:

Lynda West-Mullen

DSL email: **safeguarding@thegap-midlands.org**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (hereafter "DDSL") and Trustee for Safeguarding name:

Philip Palser

DDSL email: **operations@thegap-midlands.org**

Charity Number: **1127347**

Company Number: **06641980**

Safeguarding Advice: **Thirtyone:eight membership number 12113**

Insurance Company: **ANSVAR**

The following is a brief description of the organisation and the type of work / activities undertaken with children and adults with care and support needs:

The Gap (Midlands) run a number of projects for young people 12-18. The Venue is a drop in centre for young people every Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons 15:30-17:30 and is a safe space to meet others, play games and be encouraged and supported if they are experiencing challenging times. HeadSpace is a project working in schools and colleges delivering KS2, KS3 and KS4 assemblies, workshops and one to one mentoring. Mentoring sessions are on a referral basis by the school or college. External youth work is another project called Out-There, where the charity will go out to find young people not in school or college and signpost to The Venue or other organisations if appropriate.

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Section 2:

Governance and leadership

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and 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 states 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.

A model safeguarding statement can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight ([Our Ten standards](#) | [Thirtyone:eight](#)).

Governance

The Gap (Midlands) board of trustees is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility. This includes having a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (IICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).

The board of trustees will have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation.

In addition to the Charity itself there is a responsibility to report issues to the Charity Commission

England and Wales [Charity Commission] – Reporting Serious Incidents [RSI]

[How to report a serious incident in your charity - GOV.UK](#)

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures
- with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people
- and there is open communication

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Section 3

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults with care and support needs 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 adult.

For the purposes of this policy, a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old.

An adult at risk of harm will be defined in this policy as the following: anyone over the age of 18 years old. The Care Act 2014 in England states that adult safeguarding duties apply to any person aged 18 years or older who:

- Has care and support needs.
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- Is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

To safeguard those in our organisation 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:

1. States 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.

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

This policy is in line with the following legislation:

In the UK, child protection is primarily driven by the [Children Act 1989](#) and the [Children Act 2004](#). This legislation legally requires local authorities, police, and health services to safeguard children, investigate abuse, and promote welfare, while also enforcing laws against abuse, discrimination, and online harms.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy. Please see guidance notes for a list of these. [Appendix 2](#).

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England and Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

Safer recruitment

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

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A self-declaration form and the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland (Scotland) or AccessNI (Northern Ireland) has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme and induction is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going 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.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead undertaking advance safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

Please Note: If operating in Wales or Scotland, there are national standards for training that Safeguarding Leads and Deputy Safeguarding Leads are required to meet which should be included in your policy.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the governance board/board of trustees which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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. This is also available on the website.

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs 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 potential harm or abuse and false or unfounded accusations.

We have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in.

For some activities additional information will be required, e.g. consent forms, risk assessments etc.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct for supporting children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and outside of their role. They will also receive further training as necessary.

The code of conduct policy can be found in the Gap Manual M18, as well as guidance in the current Gap Handbook.

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Section 4:

Partnership working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with 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 the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets our safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults with care and support needs and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

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Section 5

Responding to allegations of abuse

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

Documenting a Concern

The worker or volunteer in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible by one of the following ways:

School and college such as Headspace mentoring situations:

- Report findings to the schools DSL and follow their schools' procedures.

- Inform The Gap DSL/ Headspace Coordinator as soon as possible and complete a Gap Safeguarding form M17. The HeadSpace Coordinator will issue the Safeguarding Log (SG log) number and retain the report.

In Venue/OutThere/Studio

- Report the incident to the senior youth worker or member of staff in attendance. If no one is available contact the DSL or DDSL immediately.
- The senior youth worker in attendance will complete the safeguarding report M17 and inform the HeadSpace Coordinator, or in an emergency contact the DSL/DDSL/Operations Manager or if unavailable a Trustee.

All other situations:

- If the individual is in direct danger call the emergency services.
- Inform The Gap DSL and Headspace Coordinator asap and within 24 hours ideally.
- Complete Gap Safeguarding form M17 and send electronically to the DSL/ Headspace Coordinator within twenty four hours.

The Gap SG log will reflect all cases of concern. This is kept in a secure setting by the Headspace Coordinator. They will follow up all school incidents with an email affirming that a concern has been raised by a Gap worker.

The Gap safeguarding contacts are:

Title: **Headspace Coordinator**
Name: **Ann Richardson**
Telephone: **07718 153 116**
Email: **headspace@thegap-midlands.org**

DSL Name: **Lynda West-Mullen**
Telephone: **07557 252 889**
Email: **safeguarding@thegap-midlands.org**

In the absence of the DSL or, if the suspicions in any way involve the DSL, then the report should be made to:

DDSL Name: **Philip Palser**
Telephone: **07599 912 670**
Email: **operations@thegap-midlands.org**

The above are nominated by the Trustees 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.

If the suspicions implicate both the DSL and the DDSL, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Chair of Trustees: **Reuben Pearse**
Telephone: **To be confirmed**
Email: **trustees@thegap-midlands.org**

The above is nominated by the Trustees 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 above it should be referred to:

thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133

Swanley

Kent

BR8 7UQ

Telephone: 0303 003 1111

The DSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern

Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding may need to liaise with the insurance company or the Charity Commission to report a serious incident.

Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Suspicion 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.

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required: Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the cause for concern form and share this with the Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding Deputy or Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible.

The Safeguarding Lead may first ring the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. Based on the concern, they may then contact the relevant statutory services.

The Safeguarding Lead may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as:

- Chair of Trustees or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity regulator (Charity Commission for England and Wales, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) to report a serious incident/raise a concern (Scotland).
- Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO (England and Wales), Child's Named Person (Scotland) or the Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Concerns 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 disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should not delay referral to the statutory services, the police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead 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 organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Lead(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct.

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

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse:

- If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:
- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.
- Contact Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) (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.
- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).
- For lower-level concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carers to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of harm.
- Where the parent/carers is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Care direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).

Allegations of sexual abuse:

In the event of allegations or concerns of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- Contact the Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) for children and families and police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) on 101.
- Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland)/police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Allegations of financial abuse (Wales):

- In the event of allegations or concerns of financial abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:
- Contact Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) to report the concerns and the police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about an adult at risk:

Concerns or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services on 999, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions required. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Lead will:

- Identify support services for the Survivor i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people:

- If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead, will:
- Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO (England and Wales), Child's Named Person (Scotland) or the Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland (Scotland) or AccessNI (Northern Ireland) for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Local Authority Designated Officer (England and Wales), Children's Social Care (Scotland) or the Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) if they are involved.
- Share information about the concern with the police, police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:

- The safeguarding Lead will:
- Liaise with Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service DBS (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland (Scotland) or AccessNI (Northern Ireland) following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the police, police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI).

The legislation across all four UK nations (The Care Act 2014, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents 2015 (Northern Ireland) and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014) places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Care to decide not the organisation.

Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult:

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above).

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the Police (England and Wales), Police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). If the adult does not wish to report this to the police, then the Safeguarding Lead can pass on the information relating to the alleged Perpetrator, however, must not share details of the Survivor.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO(England and Wales), Children's Social Care (Scotland) or the Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland) or Adult Social Work Services (Northern Ireland) to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role within your organisation, contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

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Section 6

Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering wellbeing support/pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation.

Please see below the details for the individual responsible for wellbeing support/pastoral care:

Name: Lynda West-Mullen

Telephone: 07957 252 889

Email: safeguarding@thegap-midlands.org

Working with those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the organisation is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing support/pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

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Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the Trustees and will be reviewed annually or earlier if legislation or circumstances change:

Signed:

Date: **14th July 2026**



Print name: **Philip Palser**

Position: **Trustee and Operations Manager**

Document Control

Document Title: **M03**

Date Approved: **14th July 2026**

Version: **6.0**

Date of Next Review: **14th July 2027**

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Appendix 1:

Safeguarding statement

Model Policy Statement on Safeguarding

To be displayed in a prominent place

Protection of Children and Adults Policy Statement

Name of organisation: **The Gap (Midlands)**

The following statement was agreed by the trustees of the organisation:

- This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or Abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
- We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the organisation.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as an organisation all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this organisation.
- Supporting all in the organisation affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Care (England, Wales, Scotland), Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police, police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding contacts for this organisation.

Lynda West-Mullen, Lead Designated Safeguarding Lead

Philip Palser, Trustee responsible for Safeguarding, and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Reuben Pearse, Chair of Trustees

Signed by the Trustees of The Gap (Midlands):

Signed:

Date: **14th July 2026**



Print name: **Philip Palser**

Position: **Trustee and Operations Manager**

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Appendix 2

Definitions of Abuse together with signs and indicators – children and adults at risk

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or a child or children. There are many different ways in which people suffer abuse. The list below is, sadly, not exhaustive.

Type of abuse	Child	Adult at risk
<i>Physical</i>	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.	To inflict pain, physical injury or suffering to an adult at risk.
<i>Emotional</i>	The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.	The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.
<i>Sexual</i>	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.	Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour. No one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.
<i>Neglect</i>	Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.	A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.
<i>Financial</i>	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.	
<i>Spiritual</i>	The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g. minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.	

<i>Discrimination</i>	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.
<i>Institutional</i>	The mistreatment or abuse of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.
<i>Domestic Abuse</i>	Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of their age, gender, sexuality or social status. Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually there is a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner.
<i>Cyber Abuse</i>	The use of information technology (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, etc.) to repeatedly harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner.
<i>Self-harm</i>	Self-Harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An individual may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.
<i>Mate crime</i>	'Mate crime' is when people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.
<i>Modern Slavery</i>	Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. It is illegal in every country of the world.
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.

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