



Mandarin Evangelical Church London

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

LONDON

| 伦敦普通话福音教会 |

Mandarin Evangelical Church London

www.meclondon.org.uk



1. Context

Mandarin Evangelical Church London ('MEC London') is an independent charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, charity number: 1195862.

The church was established in 2018. Our beliefs are outlined in our Statement of Faith which is available on our website (www.meclondon.org.uk). As a place of sharing God's love and grace, the church is open to all, and has a group of Christians who meet for Sunday services and midweek for Fellowships in Centre London, mainly in the building of Covent Garden Dragon Hall Trust. We have always had a high proportion of university students in regular attendance, and also run irregular activities for students.

The church does not provide any activities specifically for children or young people. However, we recognize that during the course of our ministry we may come into contact with vulnerable people.

2. Scope

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility. This policy applies to everyone who associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and adults at risk of abuse whether trustees, senior leaders, group leaders, paid staff, volunteers, or others working on our behalf.

The policy and procedures apply to activities of the Church which are conducted 'off-site', subject to amendment to address specific risks which have been identified in a risk assessment and the particular requirements of an event.



3. Our Responsibilities

“Safeguarding” means the action that the church takes to promote a safer culture, to protect the health and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We recognize that both as a charity and as Christians, we have responsibilities to:

- Protect and promote the wellbeing of all who attend the church; paying particular attention to those who may be more vulnerable than others.
- Provide an environment in which children, young people, and vulnerable adults will feel safe and secure.
- Challenge any abuse of power within the church communities by ensuring church workers adhere to safe working practice and are supported in challenging bullying and abusive behaviours.
- Ensure that children, young people, and adults will be listened to, supported, and knows that they will receive care.

Seeking to fulfil these responsibilities, we will:

- Ensure that we have suitable systems and processes in place to manage safeguarding risks, including the appointment of a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Ensure that our conduct and practice is accountable and transparent and that we care well for those to whom we minister.
- Identify non-safeguarding risks and manage them effectively.
- Report any safeguarding concerns that meet the threshold to the appropriate statutory services as soon as possible.
- Ensure that if problems occur or dissatisfaction is expressed, we examine these in an impartial and careful way and manage any conflict of interest effectively.

4. Our Commitments

MEC London is committed to the safeguarding, care, and nurture of everyone within the church. We are committed to:

- Promote a safe environment and culture.



- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibilities for children and adults within the church.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Care pastorally for victims and survivors of abuse and other people who have been affected.
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns of allegations of abuse and others who have been affected.
- Carry out risk assessment and put safeguarding measures in place where individuals pose a present risk to children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

We will work to continue to strengthen and review these environments. This will be done by training, support, and communication, we will carefully select and train all those with any responsibilities with MEC London, in line with safe recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service Criminal record checks.

5. Governance

The officers will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the church by:

- The trustees will include a statement on safeguarding in their annual return as required by the Charity Commission.
- The trustees will ensure that those who act on behalf of the church are competent and appropriately trained.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be trained in the role and will update their safeguarding training every two years in line with best practice standards and Local Authority requirements.
- Ensuring that the church leadership promote the importance of safeguarding and lead the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable.
- Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is in place and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the DSL at least annually.
- Any allegations that may require a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission will be passed to the trustees as a matter of urgency and certainly within 48 hours. The



Trustees will file the Serious Incident Report with the Charity Commission in accordance with their legal responsibilities.

6. Safer Recruitment

The church will ensure that the main leader(s) are DBS checked in accordance with national guidance.

Although the church does not engage in regulated activity with either children or young people, reasonable and proportionate assessment of the suitability and competence of staff and volunteers will be made and decisions recorded. The church will provide training for formal roles where required.

7. Training and Awareness

7.1 Recognition of Abuse

One of the purposes of this policy is to provide the pastors, ministry workers and volunteers of MEC London with guidelines and support on the subject of abuse and how they can assist in the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults in the setting.

It is not in the remit of members of teachers and helpers to identify the specific category of abuse that a child may be experiencing but rather to highlight any causes of concern to the relevant personnel and organizations. The following list although not exhaustive may be indicative of some of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, it should be noted that some children may display some of these signs in times of stress; it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused.

People may also suspect abuse due to the role that they have or because of those that they come into contact with. This might be a general concern about a person's well-being or something that they see or hear which could be abusive. In these circumstances, people

should pass on concerns to the Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator in the church immediately. The following list although not exhaustive may be indicative of some of the signs and symptoms of adult abuse. This must recognize that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

7.2 Category of Abuse

Child abuse may manifest in a variety of ways, including:

- **Physical Injury:** This is defined as any injury inflicted or knowingly not prevented by any person having custody or care of a child. Physical abuse is often defined by injuries that cannot be explained by the normal play activities and is defined as hitting or hurting a child on purpose.
- **Neglect:** This is defined as the wilful failure to meet the basic needs of a child. For example, not clothing, feeding, or caring for a child adequately and leaving them without adequate supervision.
- **Emotional Abuse:** This is defined as any abuse or torment which would have an effect on the mental health and wellbeing of a child. Most common emotional abuse is categorized as shouting at a child, making a child feel worthless, exposing a child inappropriately and inconsistency of behaviour towards a child.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This is defined as the exploitation of children in order to meet the demands of adults or other children. Sexual abuse may include involvement of children in masturbation, involvement of children in pornographic activity such as taking pornographic photographs and involving children in watching or viewing pornographic materials, involvement of children in sexual activity such as rape, sodomy, oral sex, and sexual intercourse with a child even with their consent.
- **Bullying:** Bullying is defined as any form of abuse on a child which is inflicted upon them by their peers. This abuse can be subtle, including teasing, being ignored or left out, being pushed or pulled about, or having money or possessions taken away.

The Care Act gives guidelines on the types of abuse associated with adults:



- **Physical Abuse** is to inflict pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Examples include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, hair pulling, misuse, or using inappropriate restraint or sanctions and the misuse of medication.
- **Sexual Abuse** is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented, or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent. It may occur where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses it to override or overcome lack of consent or to which they felt pressurised into consenting such as rape, or sexual assault, being made to watch pornography would also be within this definition.
- **Domestic Abuse** Includes physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse for those in family or close relationships as well as so called ‘honour’ based violence.
- **Psychological or Emotional Abuse** is acts or behaviour which causes mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult’s emotional health and development - or any other form of mental cruelty. This includes verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, blaming, the use of threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, or being prevented from receiving services or support.
- **Financial or Material Abuse** is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions including theft, fraud, exploitation, applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern Slavery** includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Discriminatory abuse is the inappropriate treatment of an adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability.
- **Discriminatory Abuse** exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individual.
- **Organisational Abuse** includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice, or ill treatment.

- **Neglect** or acts of omission are the repeated deprivation of help that an adult-needs which, if withdrawn, will cause them to suffer. This includes failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult or to others.
- **Self-Neglect** includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

7.3 Training

All new members of staff and volunteers who fall within the scope of this policy will receive initial safeguarding induction training, and all staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular safeguarding training.

- Trustees will receive initial training. There is no requirement for formal update training, however, the trustees must ensure that they are competent in their role and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance are up to date.
- Volunteers and staff involved in working with children or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years.
- The DSL is required to attend formal update training at least every two years.

The record of Safeguarding training and DBS checks will be maintained by the DSL.

8. Working Safely

There are many factors that impact and contribute to environmental safety within the church. The following outlines some helpful procedural factors, but it should be noted that other aspects, such as cultural factors, are not included.

When ministering to Adults at Risk of Abuse or Adults with additional support needs:



- If the individual is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their carers.
- If the individual is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact them with a view to establishing open communication and transparency.
- Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the individual is adequately protected.
- Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

When young people (those who have entered or are about to enter university, but are under the age of 18) are present at activities that are primarily aimed at adults and participating in that activity in their own right:

- Although there are not specific procedures for such meetings, the normal principles of safeguarding will apply.
- If the young person is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their parents/carers.
- If the young person is believed to be competent to consent to attendance, they will be encouraged to be open and transparent with their parents / carers and consent will be sought for the church to contact the parents and establish open communication and transparency.
- Leaders of the church or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the young person is adequately protected.
- Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

General Provisions:

- The church will ensure that information relating to safeguarding, including contact details and other relevant information is prominently displayed in the building and online.



- Leaders will promote the need for every member to be vigilant to safeguarding concerns through the processes, teaching and culture of the church and by personal example.

9. Responding to Concerns

9.1 Managing immediate risk:

Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, the worker involved should make an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect the individual. The worker may seek advice from the team leader or from the DSL, however, the seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm.

In such urgent situations and if the DSL cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or the local authority's Children's Social Care department to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the DSL should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity.

9.2 Managing general concerns:

Any concerns that are identified or disclosures that are made must be reported to the DSL:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Yulun Chu.

They can be contacted by phone on 07871 693943 or email at may.chu@meclondon.org.uk

If the concern involves the DSL, or if the DSL is unavailable, the report should be made to:

Safeguarding Officer Hua Zhou.

They can be contacted by phone on 07421 775560 or email at michelle.zhou@meclondon.org.uk

The details of the concern will be clearly and accurately recorded and stored securely.



The DSL will ascertain whether any action needs to be taken. If required, support and advice will be sought from the relevant statutory services.

The DSL will make any necessary referrals according to local procedures.

The DSL or Safeguarding officer will cooperate with statutory services and provide the link between the church and those professionals involved in responding to the situation.

Records of all discussions, advice sought, decisions made, and actions taken will be retained in the confidential file.

9.3 Handling Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

MEC London takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We recognise that that we have a responsibility to take all allegations seriously, to manage the situation effectively while the investigation takes place and to support the person accused throughout the process.

Allegations against staff or volunteers will be passed to DSL:

The person to whom allegations should be reported is Yulun Chu.

They can be contacted by phone on 07871 693943 or email at may.chu@meclondon.org.uk

If the allegation is against the DSL it will be passed to Safeguarding Officer:

The person to whom these allegations should be reported is Hua Zhou.

They can be contacted by phone on 07421 775560 or email at michelle.zhou@meclondon.org.uk

Upon receipt of an allegation, advice will be sought to ascertain whether a statutory threshold for reporting has been reached:



If a statutory threshold has been reached, the matter will be handed to the responsible statutory authority, and the church will fully cooperate with the process of investigating the allegation.

- If the person handling the allegation on behalf of the church is unsure whether the statutory threshold has been met, they will consult with the statutory services to establish this.

If the statutory threshold has not been met, a proportionate response will be developed and implemented. Where necessary (including for the avoidance of conflict of interest) advice and support will be sought from relative organizations, who will support in developing a plan to address the concerns raised.

9.4 Managing Ex-Offenders, Those Who Are on a Barred List, or Others Who Pose a Risk to Vulnerable People

As a church, we believe in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

- Where the church becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the church leaders will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.
- A formal risk assessment will be made which will include input from statutory services. Advice and support will be sought from relative safeguarding organizations where required.
- A formal contract will be drawn up that outlines the church's commitments to the individual and any control measures required.
- The contract will be formally reviewed and monitored on a regular basis.
- All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.
- If the individual chooses to leave the church to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the church leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on.



Note: We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that its underpinned by scripture as a command to "love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34). We will review this policy annually and making sure that our policies are up to date.





Appendix

External Safeguarding Contacts

Local Authority: Camden Council

Safeguarding Children

Camden Children's Social Care Team:

Telephone (9 am - 5 pm): 020 7974 3317

Out of hours: 020 7974 4444

Email: LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk

Secure email: LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk.cjsm.net

Safeguarding Adults

Camden Safeguarding Adults Board:

Telephone: 020 7974 4444 and when prompted say "Safeguarding/ Adult Social Care"

Email: asc.mash.safeguarding@camden.gov.uk

Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Referral Form:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/0/Camden+SAPB+multi-agency+safeguarding+adults+referral+form+updated+13.7.23.docx/76be8fd7-af78-e1de-4603-a3c79171cad2?t=1689246972078>

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is Jacqueline Fearon. To manage allegations against staff and volunteers working with children, email to

LADO@camden.gov.uk

Notify Police:

999 Urgent

101 Non-urgent