

How does Immanuel work: Safeguarding

What is safeguarding?

- seeking to keep people safe from certain forms of harm (especially children & vulnerable adults).
= ONE way in which we love each other, by taking seriously what the Bible says about each other.

Some Bible basics: how does the Lord view us and the church?

- God created all people *in his image*.
- All people are *fallen and sinful*.
- All people are *weak or infirm* – and some more so than others.
- The *church* is called to be a loving and Christ-like family.

The purpose of this session

- What it is... and isn't
- Overall = raise awareness... of us ALL... to protect the most vulnerable from the effects of other people's sins.
 - Especially children
 - Also vulnerable adults = unable to protect or safeguard themselves or their own interests, with risk of harm from others.

Our safeguarding policy – seeking to prevent harm

The policy sets out how we seek to prevent abuse or harm, and also what steps are taken where there are concerns or allegations of abuse.

A key part of seeking to prevent safeguarding issues arising is our **Safer recruitment** processes. All those responsible for leading and delivering Immanuel's ministry and activities are appointed and trained in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

When harm occurs - what is abuse?

A complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. ThirtyOne:Eight identifies ten different types of abuse:

- Physical abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Self-neglect.
- Organisational abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Domestic abuse.
- Modern slavery.
- Neglect.
- Financial abuse.
- Discriminatory abuse.

Signs and indicators of abuse

The signs and indicators of abuse can be **physical, behavioural, or emotional**. There may not always be obvious physical signs of abuse, but conversations may give indications that a person needs help. A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she:

- Is frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed
- Is left in unsafe situations or without medical attention
- Is constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- Low self-esteem, attachment issues, depression, anger, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Seems afraid of parents/ carers or an adult who has power or influence over him/ her
- Has unexplained injuries or bruises which do not seem likely to be accidental
- Displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age
- Is growing up in a home where there is domestic abuse
- Is living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse

Who are the perpetrators of abuse?

- Rarely strangers, can often be people in a position of trust

We are all involved in safeguarding

Immanuel has a leadership team, and a safeguarding team. However, everyone has a responsibility to be aware of safeguarding issues, to help prevent abuse and a responsibility to report any abuse that we discover or suspect. Sadly, we all need to adopt an attitude of 'it could happen here'.

Responding to a concern well. Five steps:

- **Recognise** that a person may be at risk of harm or abuse by spotting the signs or indicators of abuse or when a person makes a disclosure of abuse.
- **Respond** by taking appropriate action in a sensitive and timely way.
 - Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling someone and that the information will be taken seriously.
 - Ensure the immediate safety of the person.
 - if a disclosure is made by an alleged victim we cannot promise confidentiality i.e. that it will not be shared; we may have a legal obligation to share.
- **Record** the concerns or disclosures of abuse that have been made.
- **Report** any concerns to the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.
 - If the Safeguarding Coordinator can't be contacted and the issue needs urgent action, report any concerns to the Police or Social Services
 - If the suspicions concern the leadership or safeguarding team the concern should be made directly to the Council of Reference or to Thirtyone:eight
- **Reflect** on what happened and act on any learning.

Even if a concern seems relatively minor it is important to bear in mind that it could be just the tip of the iceberg.

Pray in groups

- That we would be a church family who seek to love one another sacrificially
- For healing for those hurt by abuse
- Where issues arise, the safeguarding team would deal with them appropriately