

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Essential Christian is committed to the highest standards of care for children, youth and adults at risk. This commitment extends to all guests of Spring Harvest and other physical and online events for which Essential Christian is responsible. Jesus showed compassion and care for all those he met, including children and those who were vulnerable, and in practicing its core value of Christlikeness, Essential Christian seeks to demonstrate biblical integrity in its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk.

As Essential Christian commits to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, youth and adults at risk, it does so in seeking to:

- protect them from maltreatment
- prevent impairment of their health or development
- and ensure children are growing up with the provision of safe and effective care.

Background Checks

All trustees, staff (including contractors), invited team members and volunteers who work with children, youth and adults at risk at Essential Christian events, are subject to background checks before being accepted onto the team. These include:

- satisfactory references being obtained directly by Essential Christian from a person in leadership within a church community who has regular contact with the applicant.
- an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service which ensures the applicant is suitable to be working with children, youth and adults at risk.
- a “barred list” check.

Recruitment decisions for roles working with children, youth and adults at risk are made in principle by the Safer Recruitment Team. In exceptional cases, where an allegation or a criminal background is disclosed, the Head of Human Resources will be responsible for the recruitment decision in liaison with the leader of the team for which the applicant has applied and the Group Chief Executive Officer, if further consultation is required.

Training

All team members are provided with written guidelines on safeguarding, including the reporting procedures that must be followed should concern be raised about a specific individual or an allegation or disclosure be made which needs to be handled within the Safeguarding Policy. These procedures are documented in our Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy which are available on request.

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On-site briefings are then given to all teams working in regulated activity with children, youth and adults at risk, in order to explain and ensure full understanding of these policies and procedures.

An Event Safeguarding Officer, employed by Essential Christian, is appointed for each Spring Harvest event to ensure that the correct procedures are followed in all safeguarding matters. On all occasions where a concern, allegation or disclosure is raised, the following key principles are respected:

- the welfare of the child, youth or adult at risk is of primary importance
- confidentiality should be maintained as much as possible
- reporting and documentation should be carried out with minimum delay
- There is a need to maintain a balance between
 - a) taking seriously all concerns, disclosures and allegations, and
 - b) the principle that a person is innocent until proven otherwise.

It is of course the right of any individual to make direct referrals to Thirtyone:eight, Children's Services, Social Services or the Police. Although we hope team members will follow the Spring Harvest procedure, if a team member or guest feels that the Spring Harvest Leadership Team has not responded appropriately to his or her concerns, then it is open to them to contact one of these agencies directly.

Photography, filming and recording

Attendance at Spring Harvest and other events organized by Essential Christian implies permission for Essential Christian and agencies authorized by Essential Christian to reproduce guest and team images, likenesses and voices on albums, publicity material, websites, online platforms, television and radio broadcasts.

From time to time official photographers will take promotional photographs in the Spring Harvest children's and youth venues. For all official Spring Harvest promotional photography in children's and youth programmes, an opt-out policy is operated. Posters are displayed in children's and youth venues 24 hours before an official photographer visits the venue, accompanied by a member of Essential Christian Head Office staff. Parents/Guardians are asked to contact the Programme Leader should they not want their child/young person included in any photography.

Unauthorized photography or filming (including use of a mobile phones for this purpose) of any child or young person whilst they are in their programme or taking part in programme activities off the resort, is not permitted.

Contact after the Event

Team members are not permitted to maintain contact with a child, youth or adult at risk following the event, without the knowledge of the child's/ young person's/adult at risk's parent/legal guardian and the Team Leader. If such contact is agreed, it is made clear that the team member is no longer acting on behalf of Spring Harvest.

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Compliance

The trustees of Essential Christian have responsibility for ensuring that children, youth and adults at risk are protected under its Safeguarding Policy. The Police, Local Authorities and Disclosure and Barring Service have statutory responsibility for safeguarding matters and incidents of abuse. The Charity Commission has a regulatory role for ensuring that trustees comply with legal duties and responsibilities in managing and administering Essential Christian as a charity, including the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. The Event Safeguarding Advisor, Head of Human Resources and Safer Recruitment Team have responsibility for ensuring that concerns about children, young people and adults at risk, allegations and disclosures are handled within the framework of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policies for Spring Harvest.