OCCA

The Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics

Safeguarding children, young people, and adults

November 2026

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Section A: Safeguarding Statement

The OCCA is committed to creating a healthy environment. We want everyone who comes into contact with us to feel safe, valued, and cared for. We believe that each person is made in the image of God, and as a result have an inherent dignity and worth.

To support this, we have implemented policies, procedures codes of conduct and systems that support the positive culture that we seek to create by ensuring that those responsible for leading safeguarding are competent and that our safeguarding arrangements are effective.

We actively seek to encourage a culture where concerns about the way that individuals or groups have been treated, or about anything that we do as ministry, can be raised openly. When concerns are raised, we commit to examining them carefully and impartially, establishing truth and upholding justice for all involved. We strive to reflect, learn, and grow as we consider such concerns; particularly where we fail to meet the standards that we have set for ourselves. Any concerns can be raised with one our Safeguarding Leads. Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available on our website.

As a ministry we are committed to safeguarding everyone who participates in our ministry life, regarding care for the vulnerable as a biblical imperative and not just as a legal requirement. We work with local and national partners, doing all we can to keep everyone safe. We will strive to fulfil all our legal duties to protect both children and Adults at Risk of Abuse, but we aim to go above and beyond and to discharge our safeguarding duties in a way that is biblically faithful and pleasing to our loving heavenly father, who calls us to act with justice, love kindness and to walk humbly before him.

Section B: Ministry Context

We are a charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales Charity number 1067314.

Our mission is "To glorify God through confident connected evangelism to see people saved for eternity."

We do this by: Engaging the world; Equipping the church; Working in partnership.

Our Speaking and Operations teams run ministry projects throughout the year. We also work in partnership with other organisations and churches.

Ministry projects include:

- Speaking engagements: Evangelistic talks, Training days for churches, Talks to equip believers, Youth events, conferences.
- Training: Courses for small groups, Online and Hybrid courses, an annual summer school, training and developing evangelists and apologists.
- Youth ministry: Online events for youth leaders, courses for youth leaders, schools events.
- Digital content: Training courses and online content.

We work with partners to ensure safeguarding at all events we particiate in is in line with our policy.

Section C: Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines our moral and legal responsibilities and sets out our commitments in light of those responsibilities. It aims to establish a framework and appropriate standards that apply to the whole organisation and to supports the trustees in their responsibilities to safeguard everyone who engages with our ministry, with a specific focus on those who have particular vulnerabilities.

Scope

The requirements of this policy apply to everyone who acts for the OCCA whether staff or volunteers. It applies to all the official activities of the organisation.

Our responsibilities and commitments

1. General duty of care.

We recognise that we have a general duty of care to everyone who is involved in the life of our ministry . We therefore commit to:

a. Ensuring that we identify and manage risk appropriately through our policies and procedures, our risk register and our risk assessments.

b. Developing, monitoring, and maintaining a culture that is healthy and nurturing across all areas of ministry life. This includes promoting the spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing of those who engage with us.

2. Those who are vulnerable.

We recognise that we have a particular responsibility to those who are more vulnerable including children and young people (i.e. those who are under 18 years of age), adults with care and support needs, and adults at risk of abuse / in need of protection (As defined in the 2014 Care Act). This is a responsibility under God who commands us to protect and care for the weak and vulnerable. We therefore commit to:

a. Establish proportionate safeguarding arrangements.
b. Develop a culture that is protective and healthy.
c. Ensure that our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our biblical values and that it is fully legally compliant and in line with safeguarding best practice.

3. Dignity and respect.

The Bible teaches us that all human beings, including unborn children, are made in God's image and therefore have in intrinsic value to him. We therefore commit to:

a. Treat everyone who engages with us as loved by God and precious in his sight.
b. To treat everyone as equal in God's sight, showing neither fear nor favour.

4. Sin and the fall.

The Bible teaches us that since Adam and Eve fell into sin, all human beings have a sinful nature. While the good news of forgiveness of sin and eternal life with God are at the heart of the gospel message, in this life, even Christians continue to sin, and as such we recognise the need to be vigilant and to oppose all forms of abuse, exploitation or other injustice in our midst. We therefore commit to:

a. Establishing clear expectations and standards for all who act on our behalf.
b. Establishing clear processes for handling abuse that is discovered or disclosed; whether that abuse has occurred during ministry activities or elsewhere.
c. Ensuring that we have clear processes for handling complaints, allegations, grievances, whistle blowing or any other expression of dissatisfaction.
d. Promoting across the whole ministry community, the importance of caring well for everyone who engages with us through the various activities.

5. Governance and leadership.

Effective servant-hearted leadership that focuses on authenticity, integrity and effectiveness are key priorities for the OCCA biblically. We also recognise our

responsibilities under charity law and Charity Commission guidance. We therefore commit to:

a. Modelling biblically-grounded servant hearted leadership.
b. Ensuring that we appoint a Safeguarding Trustee, who will champion safeguarding on behalf of the trustees, who share the final legal responsibility for safeguarding.
c. Ensuring that we appoint a competent Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and at least one deputy to perform specific delegated tasks.
d. Visibly demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding throughout the ministry.
e. Providing support, oversight and accountability to everyone who works (whether paid or voluntarily) on our behalf; including providing accountability and challenge to each other as leaders.
f. Monitoring the effectiveness of the arrangements that we have implemented.
g. Creating an environment of ongoing reflection, learning and improvement.
h. Ensuring that delegated safeguarding roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and that appropriate accountability and support are provided to those fulfilling the roles.

6. Safeguarding arrangements.

We recognise that we have a responsibility to the state to ensure that we have compliant and effective safeguarding arrangements in place. We therefore commit to:

a. Appointing a suitably trained, competent and experienced safeguarding lead and at least one deputy and that we will support them in their roles.
b. Maintain a compliant safeguarding policy, procedures, and systems to ensure that we fully meet legal and best practice standards and ensure that they are regularly reviewed.
c. Ensure that relevant safeguarding information, including our safeguarding policy documents and contact details for our safeguarding leads is publicly available.
d. Ensuring that a healthy culture is supported by processes for listening to expressions of dissatisfaction (complaints, allegations, whistleblowing etc.) and that such expressions are encouraged, taken seriously, and responded to positively.
e. Ensuring that we keep records of safeguarding concerns in line with safeguarding expectations and that we share information appropriately as required.

7. Suitability and competence of staff and volunteers.

We recognise that we have a responsibility to ensure that those who act on our behalf are competent in and suitable for the roles that they take. We therefore commit to:

a. Implementing proportionate safe recruitment processes.
b. Ensuring that our leaders are competent, fulfilling their responsibilities and leading the organisation with humility, clarity, and biblical faithfulness.
c. Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are supported and that we provide appropriate guidance, oversight, and accountability.
d. Providing appropriate training and skills development as required.

e. Ensuring that as a ministry we are alert to the risks within society, including risks associated with grooming, online abuse, radicalisation, gender-based violence, exploitation, domestic abuse etc. and report appropriately as required.

8. Healthy culture.

We recognise that we have a responsibility to encourage a healthy environment that is transparent, accountable, and biblically faithful. We therefore commit to:

a. Developing a ministry context that reflects biblical principles; encouraging growth in obedience to God and his word with equity, transparency, and sensitivity, in accordance with our fundamental beliefs as laid out in our statement of faith, charitable aims, and governing documents.
b. Value, respect and listen to the wishes and views of every member of our community, including children and young people, and others who are vulnerable or find it difficult to make their voice heard.
c. We will develop a culture that challenges any form of bullying, harassment, abuse, exploitation, or any other harmful contact; both in the online and the physical environments.
d. Ensuring that we set clear standards and expectations of those who participate in our Minstry community and that we have clear processes to challenge and address failure to live up to the standards that we have set for ourselves.

9. Partnership working

We will ensure that we work appropriately with statutory and other services; sharing information in accordance with legal requirements and involving parents, children and young people and adults with support needs or in need of protection in the decisions that affect them as far as they are able.

10. Supporting those who have experienced abuse or other trauma.

When working with those who have experienced abuse or trauma, we will seek to do so with sensitivity and keeping them at the center of the work we do. We will seek to give them a voice and allow them to progress at their own pace while recognising the limits of our own competence and signposting to specialist support where required.

Section D: Safeguarding Procedures

1. Governance and oversight

The Trustees will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the ministry by:

a. Ensuring that they appoint from amongst their number a nominated Safeguarding Trustee who will act on their behalf to provide strategic leadership and guidance on matters related to safeguarding including compliance.
b. Ensuring that the ministry leadership promote the importance of safeguarding and lead the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable and that safeguarding is appropriately prioritised, and its profile maintained.
c. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained and skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a deputy are appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced.
d. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is implemented and that it is reviewed by the trustees with input and support from the DSL and Deputy DSL at least annually.
e. Ensuring that clearly defined safeguarding procedures and systems are in place, that they are understood and implemented by all staff, volunteers, and anyone else who acts on our behalf.
f. Ensuring that the DSL provides a verbal update to all trustee meetings (which will be conveyed by the safeguarding trustee) and that a written annual report is provided to the trustees by the Safeguarding Trustee, the DSL, and Deputy DSL.
g. Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures.
h. Ensuring that safeguarding roles and responsibilities are clearly defined (see appendix 1), and that appropriate accountability is provided.
i. That a clear statement in relation to safeguarding is included in the annual Charity Commission submission.
j. That any "Serious Incidents" (as defined in the Charity Commission Guidance - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity) are reported accurately and in a timely manner.

2. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

The recruitment / appointment and support of staff and volunteers is of critical importance to The OCCA and to our work and ministry. To fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

3. Management of recruitment processes

a. At least one person who is involved in the process of recruitment of staff or appointment of volunteers will be trained in Safe Recruitment.
b. Staff and volunteers will be provided with written Job / role descriptions and person specifications prior to deciding whether to take up the position / role.
c. Roles that involve regulated activity and which consequently are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be clearly identified as exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
d. Appropriate records will be kept of all recruitment processes and decisions.
e. A "Single Central Record" of recruitment checks and a training log will be maintained by the DSL and / or their deputy.

4. Recruitment process

a. Prior to appointment, all staff and volunteers will be required to submit an application form, (see appendix 4a) which includes a self-declaration of fitness and suitability for the role. Where necessary and appropriate (e.g., lack of literacy skills, English as a second language etc) support can be provided for completion of the forms.

Paid staff positions.

b. Prior to appointment all paid staff will be required to attend a formal interview, regardless of whether a competitive process is in operation.
c. Prior to appointment of staff, references will be sought including, where possible, a reference from the current or previous employer.
d. Upon commencement of their position, all staff will be required to complete a formal induction process as outlined in their role description and including any matters identified during the recruitment process.
e. The Single Central Record, training Log and Personnel file will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

Volunteer positions.

f. Prior to appointment, all volunteers will be required to attend a formal discussion to ensure their suitability and clarity of understanding of the role and its requirements.
g. Prior to appointment, references will be sought. Where an appropriate reference was obtained at the time of application for paid employment, this may be used, and internal references are acceptable.
h. A volunteer agreement will be signed by the volunteer and the recruiter
i. Following appointment, volunteers will be required to complete a formal induction process as defined in the role description.
j. The Single Central Record, training Log and Personal File will be updated as appropriate throughout the process.

5. DBS Checks

a. Following appointment and prior to commencement of the role, staff and volunteers involved in regulated activity will be required to complete a DBS check.
b. Under normal circumstances, the individual will not commence their role until the result of the DBS check has been received.
c. Under exceptional circumstances and where it is necessary for the person to commence prior to receipt of the DBS check result, a formal risk assessment will be completed by the DSL or their deputy and signed off by the Safeguarding Trustee. The person will not be permitted to have unsupervised access to children and must be supervised by someone who is DBS checked.
d. A formal agreement that outlines the duties that are permitted, and all measures implemented to prevent the individual having unsupervised access to vulnerable people will be drawn up and signed by the appointee and the DSL or the Safeguarding Trustee.
e. Once formal notification of a clear DBS check has been received, the Single Central Record will be updated with the relevant information.

6. Blemished DBS Checks

a. The applicant will be asked to present the DBS certificate to the Lead Recruiter (the DSL).
b. The applicant may, if they wish to, withdraw their application.
c. If the application is withdrawn, consideration will be given to whether this required the triggering of the procedure for the "Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people" (see section D13).
d. If the applicant self-declared the blemish and it has been discussed previously, the recruiter will check to ensure that the detail provided in the self-disclosure is consistent with the information on the DBS certificate.
e. If the applicant did not self-disclose, an open conversation about the circumstances of the blemish will be discussed with the applicant.
f. Whether the discussion arises from self-disclosure or examination of the certificate, a formal assessment will be conducted to ascertain the applicant's suitability for the role by the DSL and / or the Safeguarding Trustee, and the outcome will be recorded in the personal file.
g. Advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services if required.
h. The applicant will be given every opportunity to provide input to the assessment and the outcome will be explained to them.
i. A blemished DBS check does not necessarily prevent the individual from engaging in regulated activity. The risk assessment may conclude:
    i. That the individual is unsuitable for the role.
    ii. That further investigation is required.
    iii. That the person is suitable for the role with restrictions.
    iv. That the blemish does not indicate unsuitability.

j. If the risk assessment concludes that the individual is unsuitable for the role, consideration will be given to:
    i. Whether there are other roles for which the individual would be suitable.
    ii. Whether the "Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people" (see section D13 of this policy) process needs to be triggered.
k. Once the details of the certificate have been recorded in the Single Central Record, the certificate will be returned to the applicant and no copies will be retained.

7. Probationary / settling in periods.

The precise nature and expectations of probationary / settling in periods will vary from role to role as described in the role description, however, they are intended to be supportive of the volunteer / employee and to provide a framework that provides accountability to both the individual and the organisation. Probationary periods will not be used for punitive purposes.

a. All staff and volunteers will be subject to a probationary period.
b. Prior to commencement of the role, a clear statement of the criteria for successful completion of the probationary period will be provided.
c. Regular support, guidance and review will be provided throughout the probationary period and the outcome (passed, extended, failed) will be communicated to the employee or volunteer prior to the end of the probationary period and records will be retained of all discussions.

8. Ongoing support and supervision

a. All staff and volunteers will receive proportionate supervision and pastoral care. Supervision will include both personal wellbeing and performance management.
b. Where DBS checks are required, these will be updated at least every three years.

9. Training

a. All staff and volunteers in roles that involve regulated activity or those who manage such staff will be required to attend regular safeguarding training.
b. Trustees will receive initial training. While there is no legal requirement for formal update training, the trustees will ensure that they are competent in their roles and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance up to date.
c. Ministry leaders will refresh their training every three years.
d. Volunteers and staff involved in working with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse are required to update their training at least every three years.

e. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy DSL are required to attend formal update training at least every two years.
f. All staff, volunteers and trustees will undergo some informal update activity annually.
g. Training should include themes on domestic abuse and trauma and the impact on victims including children.
h. A training log will be maintained by the DSL / Deputy DSL.

10. Ensuring a safe and healthy environment

The OCCA fully recognises that there are many factors that impact on and contribute to the safety of the environment for everyone; some of these being procedural and others cultural. Here we describe only the procedural aspects.

a. Health and Safety

The officers aim to ensure that the health and safety of everyone who enters our ministry is protected by:

i. Regularly reviewing our health and safety policy to maximise effectiveness and ensure ongoing legal compliance.
ii. Maintaining and implementing proportionate Risk Assessments for both the premises and the activities of the ministry.
iii. Maintenance and analysis of Accident and Incident Reports on receipt to ensure appropriate lessons are learned and timely responses are implemented and an overview analysis of reports that examines trends and recurring themes will be conducted at least annually.
iv. Ensuring that adequate First Aid cover is available, and that only qualified First Aiders administer First Aid, except in emergency situations when instructed to do so by Emergency Services.
v. Ensuring that appropriate safety equipment such as First Aid kits, Fire Extinguishers etc are available and maintained on an ongoing basis.
vi. Key Health and Safety information will be prominent and best practice will be promoted through announcements, effective signage etc.

b. Awareness raising

The OCCA recognises that any member of our ministry community could discover or receive a disclosure of abuse, and therefore all members need a basic awareness and competence, regardless of whether they engage directly in ministry to children, young people, or vulnerable adults. We will raise awareness by ensuring that:

i. Information about our policies, procedures and codes of conduct are publicly available and promoted by our leaders.
ii. Details of our safeguarding team are prominently displayed.
iii. We set clear expectations of conduct and that clear processes for identifying, challenging, investigating, and dealing with inappropriate conduct are implemented.

iv. We implement and promoting clear and transparent processes for the raising of concerns or complaints, supported by a culture that encourages and welcomes these as opportunities to learn and improve.

c. Ministry to children and / or young people

When engaging in ministry to children and / or young people we will:

i. Ensure that registers of children attending, and leaders present are maintained.
ii. Ensure that those involved in such ministries have been appointed in accordance with our Safe Recruitment procedures.
iii. Ensure that consent is obtained for their attendance at the group and that contact details and information about any additional or specific needs are recorded.
iv. Ensure that appropriate child: adult ratios are maintained in line with guidance from the NSPCC:

0 - 2 years - one adult to three children
2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children

v. Ensure that appropriate accident / incident reporting is in place and that any accidents or incidents are reported to parents / carers in a timely manner.
vi. Ensure that appropriate order and discipline are maintained.
vii. Ensure that children are encouraged and empowered to raise any concerns that they may have with leaders or their parents as appropriate.

d. All age group meetings

When children or young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and childcare is not provided and their parents are present

i. During these times, children remain the responsibility of their parents who are responsible for their safety and care.
ii. Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

When young people are present at meetings that are primarily aimed at adults and participating in that meeting in their own right:

iii. Although there are not specific procedures for such meetings, the normal principles of safeguarding will apply.
iv. If the young person is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their parents / carers.
v. 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 ministry to

contact the parents and establish open communication and transparency.

vi. Leaders of the ministry or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the young person is adequately protected.

vii. Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

e. Ministry to Adults at Risk of Abuse or Adults with care and support needs

i. If the individual is not believed to be competent to consent to attendance, consent will be sought from their carers.

ii. 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 ministry to contact them with a view to establishing open communication and transparency.

iii. Leaders of the ministry or of the meeting in question will be vigilant to ensure that the individual is adequately protected.

iv. Any concerns or support needs identified will be recorded and reported to the DSL in the usual way.

f. General provisions

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

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

11. Responding to safeguarding concerns or disclosures

a. Managing immediate risk

i. 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.

ii. 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.

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

b. Reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

i. Once it has been established that the individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to the DSL using the Concerns Reporting Form (see appendix 4b).
ii. The concerns will be discussed with the DSL at the earliest opportunity, to ensure clarity of understanding.

c. Managing the risks: the role of the DSL

i. In discussion with the worker reporting the concern, the DSL will review any immediate actions taken and will be responsible for follow-up or further action that may be required.
ii. Upon receipt of the completed form, the DSL will establish a "Confidential File" in relation to the person at risk.
iii. A Chronology (See appendix 4d) will be established and inserted at the front of the confidential file.
iv. The confidential file will be updated with any further discussions or actions, including any advice sought or referrals made and updating will continue on an ongoing basis.
v. The DSL will confirm to the person raising the concern that the matter has been actioned. The DSL will not provide any unnecessary information. Information is only shared on a "need to know" basis.
vi. Where the concern meets the statutory threshold, the DSL will notify the parent or carer of the individual concerned (or the individual themselves if they are a competent adult) that a referral is being made to Social Care.

    Information will not be shared with the parent / carer in situations where:

    - To do so would place a child at increased risk of harm or abuse.
    - To do so would place an adult at increased risk of harm or abuse.

vii. The referral will be made to the appropriate Social Care service (See appendix 2 for contact details).
viii. If the referral has not been acknowledged within 2 working days, the DSL will follow up with Social Care (or other agencies as required).
ix. The DSL will work with the Local Authority and other partners on behalf of the ministry to ensure that we fully participate in the safeguarding process.
x. All conversations, correspondence, and documentation etc will be placed into the confidential file and the "Record of action" and Chronology will be maintained on an ongoing basis.
xi. Confidential files will be stored in a secure folder, only accessible to the DSL, the Deputy DSL and the Safeguarding Trustee on a password protected cloud-based drive.
xii. The DSL / Deputy DSL / Safeguarding Trustee will share information as necessary with other individuals in the ministry to facilitate effective safeguarding.

12. Allegations against or concerns about staff and volunteers

The OCCA will always take allegations against our staff or volunteers seriously; ensuring that they are investigated proportionately, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner; recognising both our responsibility to keep vulnerable people safe, and our responsibility to support the person accused throughout the process.

a. Allegations against staff or volunteers within the ministry should be sent to HR@theocca.org
b. If the allegation is against the safeguarding trustee, it should be reported to one of the other trustees, the DSL (Zachary.jackman@theocca.org) or the Deputy DSL (olivia.ramsay@theocca.org)
c. Full details of the allegation will be recorded.
d. The trustees will nominate an investigating officer (on a case-by-case basis) from amongst their number, who will assess whether any immediate action is required to ensure the safety of everyone involved.
e. Dependent upon circumstances and the immediate action required, notifying the individual that an allegation has been received may be unavoidable.
f. If so, care will be taken not to compromise the gathering of evidence.
g. If it is necessary to notify the individual at this stage, details of the allegation will not be divulged.
h. Support must be offered to the subject of the allegation as well as any potential victims.
i. At the earliest opportunity, the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) should be consulted.
    i. If the LADO cannot be contacted due to working hours, initial advice can be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services (CSS)
j. If the allegation meets the threshold for LADO, the ministry's investigating officer will work with LADO to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed.
k. If the allegation does not meet the threshold for LADO, the investigating officer will consult with CSS, who will provide independent support and advice to ensure transparency.
l. Thorough records of all aspects of the handling of the allegation will be retained throughout the process.
    i. These records will be held confidentially in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.
m. The investigating officer will seek and follow specialist advice throughout the process as required.

13. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others, particularly to vulnerable people.

As a ministry, 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.

a. Where the minsitry becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the ministry leaders will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.
b. With the consent of the individual (if required), the ministry will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate.
c. The leaders will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated.
d. A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the ministry leaders. The agreement will include:
    i. The ministry's commitments to the individual who poses the risk.
    ii. The steps the ministry will take to support the individual while simultaneously protecting everyone in the ministry community.
    iii. The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the ministry.
    iv. The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement.
    v. When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed.
e. All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.
f. The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with staff members by the leaders either:
    i. With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk.
    ii. Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared.
g. If the individual chooses to leave the ministry to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the ministry leaders will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on.
        i. All records of risk assessments and formal agreements will be stored in a secure folder on a password protected, cloud-based drive.

14. Complaints and concerns

a. The OCCA recognises the importance of listening to all members of our ministry community, including those who find it hard to make their voices heard and those who hold contrary views to the ministry leadership. The organisation will proactively seek the views of all who engage with the ministry in a variety of ways; however, we also recognise the importance of responding well when concerns, criticisms or complaints are raised with us.
b. Any complaints that have a safeguarding element or implication will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Trustee who will ensure that the safeguarding aspects are identified and managed in a proportionate way.
c. The overall process will be as per the Complaints Procedures.

Section E: Codes of Conduct

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with children or young people

Those working with children and young people will:

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented.
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the ministry leaders and that they are open to discussion with and challenge from parents.
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of the children in their care.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about adults who may pose a risk to children.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or authority as adults and leaders within the group.
- Only take responsibility for children if they are physically and mentally fit and able to do so.
- Treat them with respect and dignity.
- Treat them in an age-appropriate way that recognises their developmental stage and ability.
- Provide them with appropriate levels of choice.
- Treat them as individuals.
- Respect their views and wishes.
- Promote and ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Refrain from physical play (e.g. Rough and tumble games that involve physical contact).
- Ensure that age-appropriate boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure that any age-appropriate physical contact is child led.
- Ensure that physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual child or the group.
- Refrain from any physical chastisement.
- Refrain from making any social media connections with them.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them.
- Act with fairness and treat children equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers working with Adults

Those working with vulnerable adults including adults at risk of abuse will:

- Ensure that they understand the policies, procedures, systems, guidelines, and risk assessments etc that are provided and that they are implemented.
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the ministry leaders.
- Ensure that their conduct embraces their responsibility for the safety of those with whom they are working.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual.
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit.
- Treat them with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that support is client led and that their views, wishes, and choices are respected.
- Treat them as individuals.
- Promote and seek to ensure appropriate behaviour towards one-another.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- If working in groups, seek to ensure that necessary behavioural and interpersonal boundaries are clearly explained and consistently implemented.
- Ensure that any physical contact is client led.
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them.
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.
- Support the participation of the vulnerable person (and their carers where appropriate) in the planning of support or other decisions that affect them.

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers providing pastoral care

(Please note: this code of conduct is not intended to cover disciplinary issues, although the broad principles would still apply)

Those involved in providing pastoral care will:

- Ensure that support provided is led by the person receiving the support.
- Ensure that the dignity and wishes of the individual are always respected.
- When delivering challenge or difficult messages, will do so in a respectful, compassionate, and gentle way that is in line with their best interests (including their emotional and spiritual wellbeing).
- Will seek to ensure that the individual's right to question or ignore any advice or suggestions is fully understood.
- Attend safeguarding training on the frequency stipulated in this policy.
- Work in a transparent and responsible manner that ensures that they are accountable to the ministry leaders.
- Maintain a state of vigilance to identify and report any safeguarding concerns, including concerns about people who may pose a risk to them.
- Refrain from any abuse of their power or position and will always seek to act in the best interest of the individual.
- Only engage in activity for which they are physically and mentally fit.
- Ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- Ensure that any physical contact is client led.
- Ensure that proportionate physical intervention is only used as a last resort to ensure the safety of an individual or the group.
- Will not engage in any sexualised, aggressive, humiliating, demeaning or discriminatory (etc) language or behaviour with them.
- Act with fairness and treat each person equitably, avoiding discrimination or favouritism.
- Seek to avoid any language or behaviour or adopting any attitude that could lead to misunderstanding.

Section F: Appendices

Appendix 1: Safeguarding responsibilities

Governance of safeguarding

The trustees will ensure that they provide leadership of safeguarding across the organisation by:

- Ensuring that legally compliant policies, procedures, codes of conduct and systems are implemented.
- Ensuring that a suitably skilled and knowledgeable Safeguarding Officer and at least one deputy is appointed, supported, and resourced.
- Providing accountability to those responsible for various aspects of safeguarding
- Reviewing the safeguarding arrangements to ensure that an effective and proportionate approach is thoroughly implemented and consistently enacted across the ministry.
- Ensuring that the Safeguarding Officer and deputy provide regular updates to the Trustees.
- Ensuring that Charity commission requirements, including the responsibility to report any serious incidents are fully met.

Leadership and management of safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy, will ensure that:

- The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed, updated and any changes signed off by the trustees.
- Safeguarding concerns are managed in a timely and proportionate manner, including making referrals to statutory agencies as required, working with partner agencies such as the Local Authority and the Police and the maintenance of accurate records and systems.
- Leading the implementation of the safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensuring that those engaged in ministry on behalf of CSS are provided with proportionate and appropriate training and that they are competent to discharge their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensuring that regular reports are provided to the trustees and that any urgent issues are communicated to the chair of trustees in a timely manner.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and promoting its importance across the organisation

Individual responsibilities

Everyone working on behalf of the OCCA is required to:

- Act in accordance with the policies, procedures and codes of conduct provided.
- Adhere to local legislation, guidance, and procedures.
- Ensure that they remain vigilant to the risks of harm.

Appendix 2: Key safeguarding contacts

Key Safeguarding Contacts

Organisational
The OCCA

Phone: 01865 302900

E-mail:
HR@theocca.org

Leadership – Zachary Jackman – Director of Operations
Zachary.jackman@theocca.org

Safeguarding Trustee – Chris Brindley
safeguarding@theocca.org

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Zachary Jackman
Zachary.Jackman@theocca.org

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Olivia Ramsay
Olivia.ramsay@theocca.org

Our policies and other useful information about safeguarding can be found at:

www.theocca.org

The roles and responsibilities of those involved in safeguarding can be found in Appendix 1

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP)

- https://www.oscp.org.uk/
- OSCP@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB)

- https://www.osab.co.uk
- OSAB@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:

- Link

Oxfordshire's Adult Social Care Information and Advice Hub (Public Portal)

- Link

Local Authority details

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

- Link

Email:
lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk
01865 810603

Reporting concerns
https://www.theocca.org/reporting-concerns/

Allegations against staff or volunteers should be reported to hr@theocca.org or anonymously via Safecall: www.safecall.co.uk/report.

For whistleblowing you can contact ***Protect*** for assistance – whistle@protect-advice.org.uk
020 7404 6609

(Please remember that e-mail is NOT secure so confidential or sensitive data should not be included)

Appendix 3 - Basis of the policies and procedures and the legal framework

The OCCA Internal framework

- Our statement of faith
    - This policy reflects the organisation's fundamental biblical beliefs and should be read in conjunction with the statement of faith. https://www.theocca.org/statement-of-faith/
- Our governing documents

National guidance

Safeguarding children

- National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding Children)
    - Children Acts (1989 & 2004)
    - Children and Families Act 2014
    - Children and Social Work Act 2017
    - Working together to safeguard children (2023)
    - What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (Department for Education, 2015)
    - Protection of Children Act 1999
    - Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006
    - Protection of freedoms Act 2012
    - Disqualification under the childcare act 2006 (2018 amended)
    - Prevent duty guidance 2016
    - Sexual offences Act 2003
    - The Safe Network Standards (available from the NSPCC website)
    - The policy also takes account of the principles outlined in:
        - Keeping children safe during community activities, after school clubs and tuition
        - Keeping children safe in education 2023
        - FGM duty guidance
        - Prevent duty guidance
        - Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Safeguarding adults

- National legislation and guidance (Safeguarding adults)
    - The Care Act 2014
    - Human Rights Acts 1998
    - Care Standards Act 2000
    - Mental Capacity Act 2005
    - Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007
    - Sexual Offences Act 2003
    - Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 of Fraud Act 2006
    - Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
    - Health and Social Care Act 2008
    - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
    - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
    - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
    - LSAB Multiagency Policy and Procedures

Local guidance

- Local guidance and procedures
  - OSCP@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
  - https://www.oscp.org.uk

- Local guidance and procedures
  - OSAB@Oxfordshire.gov.uk
  - https://www.osab.co.uk

Appendix 4: Standard Document Samples

a)	Application to volunteer
b)	Concerns reporting form
c)	Role description
d)	Confidential file chronology
e)	Confidential file record of conversations and actions
f)	Template report from DSL to trustees
g)	Complaint form

The OCCA: Volunteer application form

About You	
Full name	Address
Phone number	
Mobile number	
E-mail address	

About the role	
Department /Group / ministry area	Role applied for
Is the role subject to a DBS check?	

Children only	Adults only	Children and adults

Personal statement
Please briefly describe your reasons for applying for this role and any appropriate experience in similar roles.
Do you have any questions or concerns about the role, or your ability to fulfil it, that you would like to discuss with us?
Please supply details of 2 people who can comment on your suitability for this role.

Reference 1	Reference 2
Name	Name
Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them	Relationship to you or capacity in which you are known to them
Address	Address
Phone	Phone
E-mail address	E-mail address

Self-declaration		
	Yes	No
Do you have any criminal convictions that would affect your ability to perform this role?		
Is your state of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health adequate to fulfil this role?		
If the role involves working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, are you, or have you ever been barred from such work?		
Are you in agreement with the OCCA's statement of faith?		
Do you agree to abide by the policies, procedures, codes of conduct, risk assessments etc that are relevant to this role?		

Is there anything that you wish to add or that you wish us to consider in relation to this self-declaration?

I confirm that the information supplied in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date:

For office use only: Form reference / volunteer reference as per Single Central Record.

The OCCA: Staff / volunteer role description

Role title:	
Responsible to:	
Role purpose	
Role description	
Person specification	
Date last reviewed.	Reviewed by

The OCCA: Incident / concern reporting form

About this form and the person completing it			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: *Please tick the appropriate box(es)*	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Department /Group / ministry area			Date completed.
About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / (where appropriate)
Please insert more lines as required			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern			
What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?			
Context of the incident / disclosure / concern			
Where / when / who else was present etc.			

Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety.	
Other action taken or advice sought.	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	

Notes for completion

About this form and the person completing it

Please complete all sections

About the person or people, we are concerned about or involved in the incident.

When reporting a concern involving a child or young person, please complete all sections.

When reporting a concern about an adult, the parent / carer details may not be required. Where this is recorded, please include the relationship to the person involved. Please insert additional lines as required.

Details of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

When reporting a disclosure, please quote the individual where possible. Please also comment on their body language or any other non-verbal communication that might be useful.

When drawing conclusions, please include the evidence that has led to that conclusion.

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern

Please include as much relevant detail as you can.

Action taken to ensure immediate safety.

Please provide details. If no action was required, please indicate by writing "None".

Other action taken or advice sought.

If any advice was sought, please provide details including who you spoke to, their contact details and what advice was given or action that was taken.

Signature

Please ensure that you sign the form.

The OCCA: Confidential File Chronology

Date	Document reference	Document type	Brief summary of content	Entered by

The OCCA: Record of safeguarding conversations and actions

Date of action / conversation	Document reference.
Description of record	
Information given.	
Advice received.	
Actions to take.	
Outcomes	
Recorded by	Date recorded

Report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy covering the period from		
Report completed by:	Date	
Summary of safeguarding activity		
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to children		
Number of concern / incident reports received in relation to adults		
Number of cases referred to Children's Social Care		
Number of cases referred to Adult Social Care		
Number of allegations received		
Number of allegations investigated by Local Authority		
Number of reportable incidents reported to charity commission		
Were there any common themes or issues in the reports submitted?	Yes / No	
If so, what?		
Do you have any concerns about the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place?	Yes / No	
If so, what?		
What training or informal update activity been completed this year?		
Any recommendations to or requests of the trustees?		
Declaration from Safeguarding Leads	Yes	No
Has the policy been reviewed for legal compliance and effectiveness? *(CSS can be consulted to check whether any significant changes have occurred)*		
Are DBS checks up to date for all staff and volunteers?		
Is the Single Central Record up to date?		
Is staff and volunteer training up to date?		
Is DSL training up to date?		

Is the training log up to date?		
Any other comments		

The OCCA: Complaints and concerns

Complainant details	
Name:	Home address:
Phone:	E-mail:
Details of the concern or complaint	
Details of the complaint:	
Have you raised this matter with anyone from the OCCA before completing this form? If yes, please provide details of who.	
Handling of this complaint	
Please delete statement that does not apply I would like this complaint to commence at stage 1 of the complaints process (informal resolution) I would like this complaint to be considered at stage 2 of the complaints process (formal investigation)	
Date completed	
Office use	
Complaints log reference:	

Complaints Log

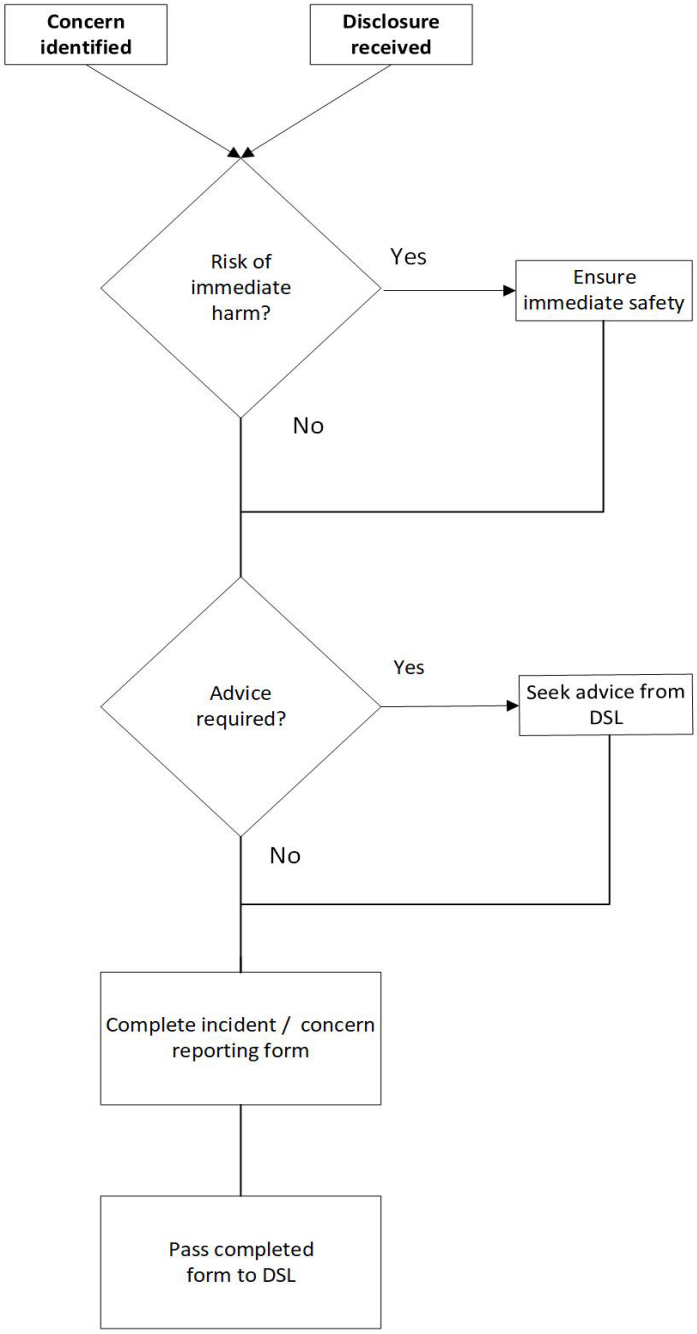
Reference	Date Rec'd	Complainant name(s)	Nature of complaint / key theme(s)	Acknowledged	Stage 1 commenced	Stage 1 complete	Stage 1 coutcome	Stage 2 commenced	Stage 2 complete	Stage 2 outcome	Appeal commenced	Appeal complete	Appeal outcome	Closed
2021-1														



Microsoft Excel Worksheet

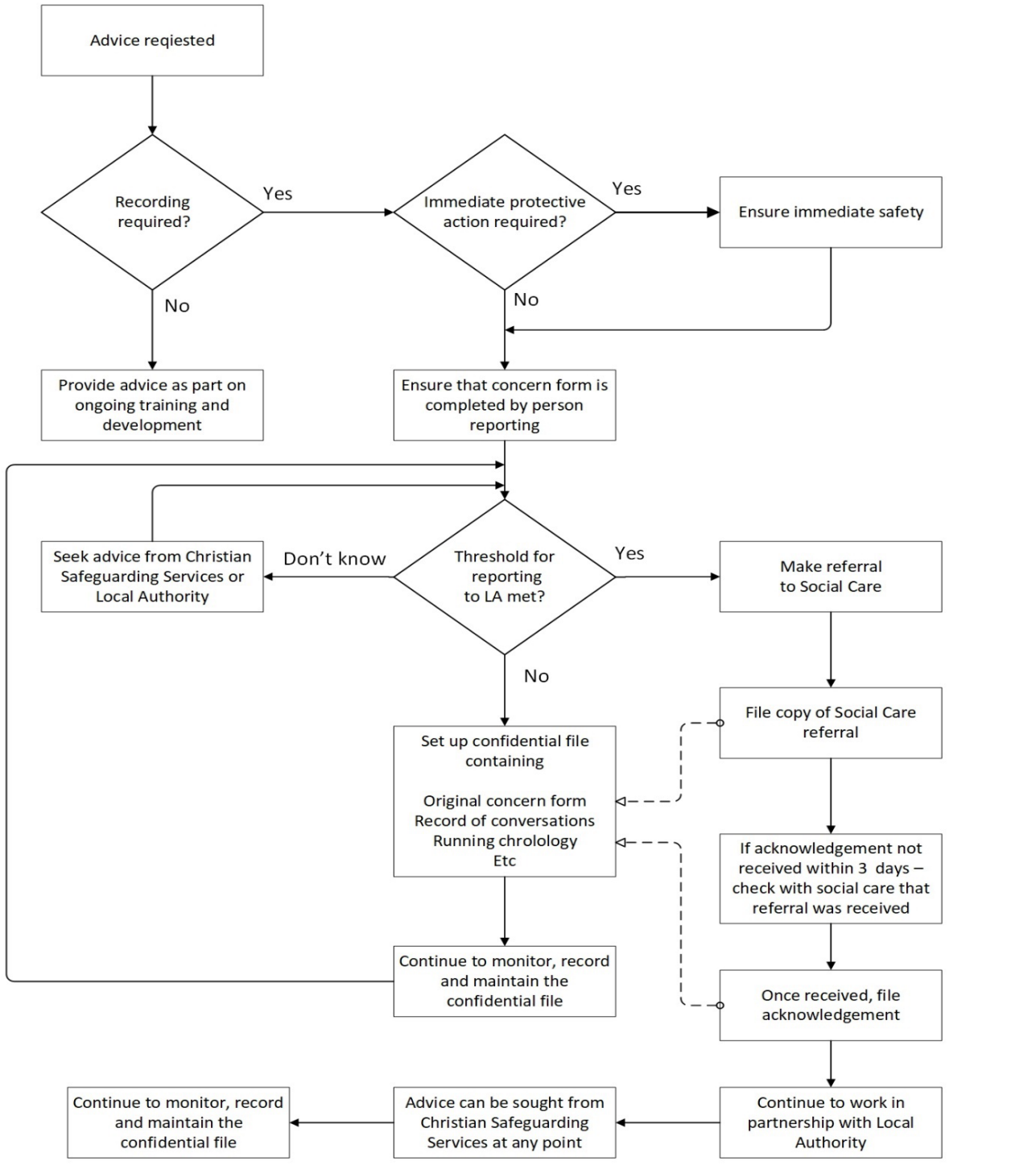
Appendix 5: Process flowcharts

Reporting concerns or disclosures



Christian Safeguarding Services can be contacted for advice at any point in the process
Phone 07960 751778 or e-mail advice@thecss.co.uk

Processing concerns or disclosures: the role of the DSL



Christian Safeguarding Services can be contacted for advice at any point in the process
Phone 07960 751778 or e-mail advice@thecss.co.uk