Banchory Christian Fellowship Church

Safeguarding Policy Statement

1. Introduction and Statement of Commitment

This church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children, young people and protected adults. We believe that every person is made in the image of God and should be treated with dignity, respect, and care. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and a core part of our Christian witness and ministry.

We seek to create a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where all can worship, learn, serve, and grow in faith without fear of harm, abuse, or neglect.

This policy is written in line with:

- Scottish legislation and guidance, including the *Children (Scotland) Act 1995; Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*, *Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007*, *Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.*
- Guidance from OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator).
- Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All children and young people under the age of 18.
- Protected adults.
- All church members, office bearers, trustees, employees, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of the church.
- All church activities, whether on church premises or elsewhere (including online activities).

3. Principles

We are committed to the following principles:

- The welfare of children and protected adults is paramount.
- Everyone has the right to be protected from abuse.
- Safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.
- Confidentiality will be respected, but information will be shared where necessary to protect someone from harm.
- We will work in partnership with statutory agencies where appropriate.

4. We will:

- Ensure safeguarding is taken seriously and embedded in the life of the church.
- Implement appropriate procedures to ensure we respond appropriately and in a timely manner to any safeguarding concerns whether from a direct disclosure, observations of behaviour or physical signs or information from a third party.
- Appoint a Safeguarding Co-ordinator to be the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns and be the person to liaise with statutory authorities where required and ensure safeguarding training and awareness are promoted within the church.
- Implement safer recruitment practices and procedures in the selection and appointment of all those who work with children and protected adults whether volunteers or paid staff and ensure that no one is permitted to work with children or protected adults until all safeguarding checks are satisfactorily completed including PVG Scheme membership where legally required.
- Only share information on a need-to-know basis and in line with data protection legislation. Confidentiality will never be used as a reason to withhold information where someone may be at risk of harm.
- Support and appropriately manage the behaviour of any individual who may pose a risk to children or adults.
- Treat seriously any allegation made against a member of the congregation, a volunteer or paid member of staff. The church will cooperate fully with statutory authorities and seek appropriate advice.
- Approve and regularly review this policy and associated practices and procedures.

Approved by: BCFC Safeguarding Lead Trustee
Date: 28/01/2026
Review Due: January 2029