WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING CONTD.

It's not only about children

Safeguarding is most usually associated with children's and youth work, but it also includes adults too. Many people may be more vulnerable at different times of life because of several factors, including age, physical or mental health, addiction or other life circumstances.

Churches often provide support to people in exactly these situations through various activities, which is another reason safeguarding is so important.

Is safeguarding a legal requirement for churches?

In the UK, safeguarding is not optional. If your church works with children or adults at risk, you are expected to have safeguarding arrangements in place. While the specific legal requirements differ across the UK, the expectation is consistent: organisations must take reasonable steps to prevent harm and respond properly to concerns.

For most churches, this means not having basic safeguarding measures in place could leave people at risk and may also place the church and its leaders on the wrong side of the law.



What does good safeguarding include?

Every place of worship should have (at a minimum):

- A **safeguarding policy** and clear reporting processes
- A named **Safeguarding Lead** (and deputy where possible)
- **Safer recruitment** for anyone working with children or adults at risk
- Appropriate **background checks** where roles are eligible - DBS in England & Wales, PVG in Scotland, Access NI in Northern Ireland.
- **Training** so people know how to recognise concerns and respond well
- A culture of **healthy boundaries**, accountability, and listening

So what can we do?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The simplest starting points are to know the policy, notice concerns, speak up early, record appropriately, and refer to the Safeguarding Lead.

For more safeguarding guidance check out the Thirtyone:eight Knowledge Hub and link to **thirtyoneeight.org/help-and-resources/knowledge-hub**

A safer church is built when every person understands: *protecting people is part of our worship and welcome.*