



AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

HELPING PEOPLE FOLLOW CHRIST

Safeguarding Policy

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6	10/04/2023	Muriel Inard	Edited name of ministry leads (see p. 3)
7	06/09/2024	Muriel Inard (with Andy Cheung & Guy Hewson)	Disclosed phone number of both safeguarding officers, added a few categories and definitions of abuse (see p.9), update due to changes in personnel (p3), added a recently passed hk bill on mandatory reporting of child abuse, minor editing on wordings.

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Introduction

The Leadership of Ambassador International Church is committed to the safeguarding both of children and of adults at risk of harm. We recognise the important role that the church has in caring for both young and old alike and to that end we seek to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised in our society.

Therefore, we fully commit to adhere to the following safeguarding commitments:

- Promoting a safe environment and church culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility within the church related to children, young people, and adults at risk of harm
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are subject to concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding appropriately to those who may pose a present risk to others.

These commitments and the principles and practices that flow from them underpin all the safeguarding work in our various ministries to children or adults at risk of harm:

- We make every effort to be open and transparent, respectful, and ready to listen, and to demonstrate great integrity in all that we do.
- We seek to actively manage risks, encourage informed vigilance, and ensure clear and appropriate accountability.
- We are committed to the prevention of abuse through collaboration with key statutory authorities and other partners (including the use of professional safeguarding advice and support).

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in the life and activities of Ambassador International Church is of paramount importance and is the responsibility of the whole church family. We see promoting a safe church environment which protects the most vulnerable as a key aspect of our call to share the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Part A

General Safeguarding Information

1 Safeguarding Responsibilities (including contact details)

Safeguarding at Ambassador International Church is a whole-church responsibility: everyone, including all leaders, staff members, volunteers, and members of the church family, have an important role to play in keeping people safe from harm.

A. The Safeguarding Officer

Particular responsibility of oversight and leadership of safeguarding rests with the Safeguarding Officer, who is accountable to the Senior Pastor and the Elders of Ambassador International Church.

The Safeguarding Officer at Ambassador International Church is Muriel Inard.

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is Guy Hewson, who should be spoken to if Muriel Inard is unavailable.

If an allegation/concern involves one of the Safeguarding Officers, you should contact either Andy Paterson or the Thirtyone:eight helpline (see contact details below).

B. Contact details

Responsible officers	Role	Contact Details
Muriel Inard	Safeguarding Officer	6747 2324
Guy Hewson	Deputy Safeguarding Officer	5564 4378
Andy Paterson	Senior Pastor	andy@ambassador.org.hk
Thirtyone:eight helpline		+44 0303 003 1111 (Monday - Friday, 9am – 5pm GMT)

Contact details for Hong Kong Social Care

Department	Hotline	Email
HK Social Welfare Department	2343 2255	swdenq@swd.gov.hk

If you are concerned that the person is not in a place of safety or will be an immediate risk to themselves or others, ring the Police on 999.

C. Responsibility for groups and activities at Ambassador International Church involving children or adults at risk of harm

The following people have responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding policy and practice is consistently followed in their specific ministry area.

Adult ministries

Group name	Lead responsible person
Sunday services	Andy Paterson
Community Groups	Will Zong
Men's Bible Study Groups	Will Zong
Women's Bible Study Groups	Muriel Inard
Wednesday Women's Bible Study Group crèche	Muriel Inard

Children & Youth ministries

Group name	Lead responsible person
Sunday Club	Miles Bennett
Ambassador Youth	Miles Bennett

2 Recognising abuse in children and young people

Effective safeguarding occurs when all organisations work together to understand and promote the needs of the child. For those up to the age of 18, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*¹ defines safeguarding of children as:

- protection from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of their health or development;
- ensuring they grow up in circumstances of consistent, safe, and effective care;
- and taking action to ensure they have the best outcomes.

Significant harm is defined as *'the persistent and consistent failure to meet the needs of the child or protect them from harm, in such a way as to have a long-term detrimental impact on the wellbeing of that child'*.² That may be the immediate risk of death from physical abuse or the longer-term impact of emotional or sexual abuse.

There are four broad categories of abuse, and they are outlined below:

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also be caused by a parent fabricating symptoms of, or deliberately inducing illness in, a child.

2. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations. These may include interactions beyond a child's developmental capability, overprotection, or limitation of exploration/learning, or preventing a child participating in normal social interaction;

¹ *'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children'* is the UK government's statutory guidance for all organisations and agencies who work with, or carry out work related to, children.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

² A new HK bill "Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance" (not yet passed into law) which lists multiple examples of "Serious harm" in Schedule 2. <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2024/english/ord/2024ord023-e.pdf>

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. due to domestic violence/abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting and corrupting children for sexual favour, servitude, or any other reason.

A particular form of emotional abuse we need to be aware of in church is **spiritual abuse**. This refers to a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. It may involve threatening, manipulating, or putting pressure on someone to behave in a certain way, enforced accountability or public humiliation.

Such behaviour is very different to faithfully sharing the truths of the Bible with love, respect, and sensitivity. We must work openly as a team to ensure that we steer well clear of any such behaviour (see 2 Corinthians 4:2).

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities (including electronically), encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including online). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, but can also be committed by women or other children.

Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual.³ See also section 9 of this document for guidance on grooming.

Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations and relationships where young people receive something (e.g. food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) in return for engaging in sexual activities. It can take many different forms from a seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organised crime involving gangs. Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. Some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.

³ Part XII of the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200). <https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap200>

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse, mental ill health or learning difficulties, or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social, and educational needs.

Included in the four categories of child abuse and neglect above are a number of factors relating to the behaviour of parents and carers which have significant impact on children. These include domestic violence, parental mental health, or parental substance misuse.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Children can be affected by seeing, hearing, and living with domestic violence and abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target. Recent studies have also found 16 and 17-year-olds to be increasingly affected by domestic violence in their peer relationships.

The Department of Justice's *Policy for Prosecuting Cases Involving Domestic Violence*⁴ refers to "domestic violence":

"a general term which describes a range of behaviour often used by one person to control or dominate another with whom they have, or have had, a close or family relationship. It is often a series of abusive incidents, whether physical or not, that has a cumulative effect on the victim."

⁴ *Policy for Prosecuting Cases Involving Domestic Violence* (2009).
https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/publications/domesticviolence_2.html

As a reference, the UK government updated Home Office definition of domestic violence and abuse (2013)⁵ is:

‘Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, and abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender and sexuality.

This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance, and escape, and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.’

There is further information on supporting people affected by domestic abuse on the FamilyClic website <https://familyclic.hk/en/topics/daily-lives-legal-issues/domestic-violence-and-assistance/assistance/> and the Social Welfare Department website https://www.swd.gov.hk/storage/asset/section/271/en/Updated_contact_information_en.pdf or by contacting the helplines listed in Appendix 5 of this document.

⁵ *Information for Local Areas on the change to the Definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse (2013).*
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/142701/guide-on-definition-of-dv.pdf

3. Recognising abuse in adults at risk of harm

In the case of adults (anyone over 18 years of age), safeguarding is '*protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect*'. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse and neglect. At the same time, the wellbeing of the adult must be promoted including, where appropriate, having regard for their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who is:

- Needing care and support (whether or not any agency is meeting those needs).
- Experiencing, or at risk of, abuse and neglect.
- Unable to protect themselves from the risk of abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs.

The *Making Safeguarding Personal*⁶ approach lists six key principles for safeguarding adults who may be at risk of harm:

- **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership:** Local solutions through local services working with their communities.
- **Accountability:** People clear about the role of those involved in their lives.

Signs of abuse and neglect in adults may include:

1. **Physical abuse:** Including assaulting, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
2. **Domestic violence:** Abuse between intimate partners or family members that includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, 'honour'-based violence or forced marriage.
3. **Sexual abuse:** including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to

⁶ *Making Safeguarding Personal* (2013) is an initiative from the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) in the UK, which aims to develop a person-centred and outcome focused approach to safeguarding work.

<https://www.adass.org.uk/AdassMedia/stories/making%20safeguarding%20personal.pdf>

pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

4. **Psychological abuse:** including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
5. **Financial or material abuse:** including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance, financial transaction or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.
6. **Modern slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
7. **Discriminatory abuse:** harassment, slurs, or similar treatment; because of race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.
8. **Organisational abuse:** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.
9. **Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs; failure to provide access to appropriate healthcare and support or educational services; withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, nutrition, or heating.
10. **Self-neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviours neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.
11. **Non-suicidal self-injury:** the deliberate, self-inflicted destruction of body tissue without suicidal intent and for purposes not socially sanctioned, includes behaviours such as cutting, burning, biting and scratching skin.⁷
12. **Spiritual abuse:** Spiritual abuse is not a category of abuse recognised in statutory guidance but is of concern both within and outside faith communities, including the Church.⁸

"Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use

⁷ Zetterqvist, M. The DSM-5 diagnosis of nonsuicidal self-injury disorder: a review of the empirical literature. *Child Adolesc Psychiatry Ment Health* 9, 31 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-015-0062-7> (Accessed: 30 Aug 2024)

⁸ Protecting All God's Children 2010, Church 4th edition.

of sacred texts or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism."⁹

⁹ Oakley, L & Humphreys, J; 2018 Understanding Spiritual Abuse within Christian Communities – Summary findings published by CCPAS.

4 Responding to disclosures

Under no circumstances should a church worker/volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. It is not our role to investigate, but to pass on any concerns or information received.

A. The conversation

Most people find it very difficult to talk about what has happened to them. If someone has summoned up the courage to talk, and has chosen you as the person they are going to tell, it is important to listen carefully. Now is not the moment to ask them to come back at a more convenient time, or to start an investigation. Simply listen.

Try to let the person go at their own pace. Do not ask questions, do not jump in to fill awkward silences; the teller might need this silence to process what is going on inside their head and your questions could confuse and divert the flow. Show that you are keeping up, and understanding what is being said: nod encouragingly, make eye contact, repeat back the last thing said, and so on.

If they are struggling to keep going, or you do not understand, use the TED formula:

- **Tell** ‘Can you tell me about that?’
- **Explain** ‘Could you explain what you mean?’
- **Describe** ‘I’m not sure I understand; can you describe that to me?’

However difficult it is to believe what you are hearing, it must be taken seriously. It is devastating to a victim of abuse when the person they have chosen to tell refuses to believe them. Be prepared to believe the unbelievable and accept the unacceptable, while somehow remaining calm and open-minded.

Thank the person for telling you what has happened, and reassure them that they have done the right thing and that you will do your best to help. Explain that this kind of thing has happened to lots of other people before, and that is why there are people you can talk to who will know what to do.

Never promise not to tell: you will probably have to share the information to keep that child or adult – or others – safe.

Let the teller talk for as long as they need to. Once you know that this is a safeguarding matter, you do not need to gather any more details: it is time to pass on what you have been told to someone with designated safeguarding responsibility.

B. Actions after the conversation

The person in receipt of a disclosure must do the following:

1. **Make notes** as soon as possible of their suspicions or the allegations made to them, preferably within one hour of the disclosure. They should write down exactly what the person said and when it was said, what they themselves said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Dates and times of these events and when the record was made must be recorded.
- 2 **Report all concerns** as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Officer or their Deputy but do not discuss suspicions with anyone other than those named below. The Safeguarding Officer is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse. They will ensure that written safeguarding concerns are kept secure (stored in a protected section of the Ambassador International Church server, where they will be kept for an indefinite period, including scanning of all hand-written notes). They will also then refer the matter on to the statutory authorities who have a legal duty to investigate.
- 3 If the Safeguarding Officer or their Deputy cannot be contacted, or if the suspicions in any way involve them, then the concern should be reported to Andy Paterson. Advice can also be sought from the Thirtyone:eight helpline.
- 4 The absence of the Safeguarding Officer should not delay a referral to Social Care services if advised by the Thirtyone:eight helpline. The Safeguarding Officer should then be informed as soon as possible afterwards.
- 5 If an individual believes that the Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement as to the appropriateness of a referral, they have the right to make a direct referral to statutory safeguarding agencies or seek advice from an advisor via the Thirtyone:eight helpline or social care.
- 6 The Ambassador International Church leadership will support the Safeguarding Officer and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

5. Expectations for those working with children or young people

The following is a guide for all those involved in ministries to children or young people at Ambassador International Church. It is not an exhaustive guide but simply sets out some expectations around behaviour and organisation.

A. Supervision of children's activities

1. **Ratios:** We must ensure wherever possible the following ratios of adults to children:

Child's age	Adult : Child ratio
Under 2 years	1:3
2 to 3 years	1:4
4 to 8 years	1:6
9 to 12 years	1:8
13 to 18 years	1:10

2. **Registers:** A register of children or young people attending each group or activity should be kept, plus all leaders/helpers. These registers are to be stored securely.

3. **Leaders & helpers:** All regular leaders must have completed the safer recruitment process. Occasional parent helpers do not need to go through this process, but must remain under the supervision of the group leader throughout (e.g. should not take another child to the toilet). Where possible the gender of the adults should reflect that of the group (i.e. at least one woman if girls are present and vice versa).

4. **Supervision:** Children or young people attending a group should not be left alone at any time. No person under 18 will be left in charge of any children of any age.

5. **Check-in:** When families arrive, they will be greeted by the Floor Manager at the check-in desk. This desk will be clearly marked with a sign. Visitors will register their children via the Sunday Club Registration Form. Parents with children regularly attending Sunday Club will tick their name off on their class clipboard. Each child will receive a sticker with the child's first name, and parents will then receive a pick-up tag for each child with the child's first initial and surname. During dismissal time, parents will bring the child to the assigned classroom, but will keep the tag with them during the service.

6. **Collection:** After service, parents will bring the pick-up tag to the child's classroom. Parents will return the pick-up tag to the teacher, and the child can now leave the classroom. *ONLY the registered parents or carers can pick up - other family members/friends will not be allowed.* Leaders will tick off on the class clipboard that the child is now checked-out.

7. **Young Leaders (11-18):** We want to encourage young people to learn about ministry through involvement with children's work. At the same time, young leaders should not be

given inappropriate levels of responsibility. They will be supervised and supported in their roles by adult leaders at all times. Young leaders will not need to complete the process of volunteer recruitment for children's work but the young person and their parents will be asked to sign a code of conduct.

8. One-to-one situations: Avoid working one-to-one with children at any time. An exception to this might be when working with children with special needs, but only with prior agreement of the parent/carer and safeguarding officer.

9. Unexpected lone situations: If for any reason you find yourself alone with a child (or group), ensure that another adult is nearby and made aware, and that doors are left open.

10. Parent & child groups: During the mum's morning Bible study group, parents or carers remain entirely responsible at all times for the children in their care. However leaders/helpers will still be safely recruited in the same way. Any concerns about children attending these groups should be referred to the Safeguarding Officer.

11. Concerns: Any unusual or concerning behaviour or comments made by a child or young person (however casual or one-off) should be recorded and passed on as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Officer. This is to protect both children and workers.

12. Accidents: Any accidents or injuries should also be recorded and the overall group leader informed.

12. Transport: Children or young people must only ever be transported by a leader with prior agreement of the overall group leaders and a church staff member, and only once a parental permission has been obtained. In exceptional circumstances where it is necessary for a leader to transport a child in a taxi, the child should travel in the back of the car and wear a seatbelt. The leader must acquire permission from the parent(s). They will also take a photo of the number plate of the taxi which the child was sent on and send the photo to the parent(s).

B. Managing toileting

Children under 3 (Crèche):

Leaders in crèche do not provide intimate care, such as nappy changes. If a child needs changing, leaders will fetch the parent/carer to do so. For those children being potty trained we will ask the parent to stay with them in the crèche, so they are on hand to take their child to the toilet until they have achieved some degree of independence.

Children aged 3 & 4 (Scramblers):

Any help with toileting in children aged 3-4 should be provided with the knowledge and agreement of the child's parents/carers. If a child needs to use the toilet during Sunday Club one of the leaders will take them. Where possible the leader will stand outside the door. Leaders will avoid doing anything that a child is able to do for themselves, but help may be given when needed, seeking at all times to respect a child's dignity. Accidents do occasionally happen, in which case parents/carers will be asked to come and take over.

Older children:

Children aged 5 and above should generally be able to use the toilet independently. However, children aged 5-6 should still be escorted to the entrance of the toilet to prevent them getting lost. The leader will stay in the corridor while they use the toilet. Children aged 6+ can take themselves to the toilets independently but the leaders must be aware and keep a close eye out to ensure the child returns safely.

C. Physical contact

- Physical contact between children and leaders must be public and open to scrutiny. It should be age-appropriate, kept to a minimum and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult. It should always be for the child's benefit, not the adult's.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Team members should watch out and support one another in the area of physical contact, pointing out anything which could be misconstrued or misunderstood.

D. Behaviour management – General principles

1. Behaviour is a team issue:

- Each member of the team has a part to play.
- Agree roles and responsibilities and a common approach.
- Identify each other's strengths and differing levels of experience.
- Be consistent and predictable (the same behaviour has the same consequences).
- Each team will have its own agreed procedures for managing behaviour, which will be clear to all team members.
- When disciplining a child over inappropriate behaviour, do not do so in a way that humiliates and never one-to-one behind closed doors.
- Never shout or use physical discipline.

2. Behaviour is a planning issue:

- Be aware that inadequate preparation or delivery of a session can result in poor behaviour because the children are bored and frustrated. However, it does not follow that poor behaviour is always caused by this.
- Try to encourage both the whole group and specific individuals with positive affirmation, publicly and privately, whenever possible.
- Seek help from your team leader if the behaviour of an individual or group is proving particularly challenging.

3. Behaviour is a gospel issue:

- Inappropriate behaviour prevents others from hearing God speak. This should motivate us to tackle it, rather than accepting it.
- Behaviour is a means of communicating – try to work out what the child’s behaviour might be telling us (e.g. Are they anxious? Do they feel they belong? Are they aware of the impact of their behaviour on others?)
- Always model forgiveness and offer the child a way out and an opportunity to change their behaviour.
- We work in partnership with parents, commissioned by them to care for and teach the Bible to their children for a short time each week. We want to regularly speak to parents about their children, about encouragement as well as any behaviour issues.
- Parents will be informed of inappropriate behaviour when team members and Sunday Club leaders agree that this will be helpful to all concerned.

E. Communication guidelines for youth leaders

These guidelines seek to clarify and set the boundaries for communication between the youth leaders and young people at Ambassador International Church. All communication with young people should be appropriate and open to scrutiny. It should be for the young person’s benefit and with their permission. The context for all communication with young people is that parents are responsible for their children, not the youth leaders. Parental consent to attend youth group is required annually and further consent obtained for any additional meetings. At least termly, an email is sent to all parents explaining dates of events.

1. Online Meetings (Zoom)

- In the case when youth group meetings happen over Zoom. Parental permission will be sought in advance and only those with permission will be allowed to join. In accordance with Zoom guidelines, parents of under 16s will be asked to confirm that the young person is joining under their supervision. All recommended steps will be taken to prevent malicious visitors (e.g. password protection, restricting screen sharing, etc.).
- Group meetings for younger children (0-11) may also happen over Zoom. The same safeguarding steps will be taken as above, with the additional requirement that all children must be directly supervised throughout by an adult.
- All Zoom groups (including any small groups) will always have at least 2 leaders present. Only safely-recruited volunteers will be permitted to join (see p.6).
- No 1-1 meetings will take place with young people over Zoom.

- No other online meeting/video conferencing software will be used for group meetings without direct permission in advance from the Safeguarding Officer.
- All Zoom meeting any children and/or youth will be recorded and saved securely in the Ambassador church server.

2. One-to-one Meetings

- Where a leader meets up one-to-one or in a smaller group outside of regular meetings, parental consent will initially be obtained. This consent can be done verbally, but should be followed up by an email to them confirming the arrangement.
- 1-1 meetings should also only be arranged with permission from the overall youth group leader, who will keep a record of who is meeting with whom.
- The meeting will take place either in the member's home (with the parents around), or in a public place, such as a café or a walk outdoors in a non-secluded public area.
- 1-1 meetings take place on a strictly same-sex basis – i.e. male leaders to male members and female leaders to female members.
- A regular (e.g. weekly) 1-1 meeting may take place between a leader and senior youth (14-18s) once permission from parents has been obtained. Any future changes to a meeting time or place should be agreed with parents.
- For teenagers over 16 years old, parental consent will be obtained before any 1-1 meetings begin, but afterwards the leader may communicate to arrange the meetings by text, email, or social media message. This communication should be of an organisational rather than a personal and pastoral nature, and the parent or safeguarding officer may ask to see the communication at any time.
- One-off 1-1 meetings may also take place between a leader and member of junior youth (age from 11 to 14). These will not usually become regular meetings, except under exceptional circumstances and agreed with the Safeguarding Officer.

3. Other Communication

Communication between youth leaders and members occurs on a strictly same-sex basis – i.e. male leaders to male members and female leaders to female members (except for mass emails/messages).

Junior Youth (ages 11-14)

- Parents will be informed by email about details of advertised events. Where details change or new events are arranged, parents will be informed via email. All Zoom meeting links will only be sent to a parent's email address.
- Junior Youth leaders will not communicate with young people individually by mobile phone, message, or any other form of electronic communication or social media.

- Junior Youth leaders will not add a young person as a friend on *Facebook*, or any other social media platform.
- Junior Youth leaders may phone young people in their small group for occasional pastoral catch-ups, with the agreement of the overall Junior Youth leader. These calls will be made to the parent's mobile and the leader should ask to be passed back to the parent at the end of the conversation.
- Junior Youth leaders may send occasional cards to young people in their small group to encourage them. This should only be done with the agreement of the overall Junior Youth leader.

Senior Youth (ages 14-18)

- Parents will be informed by email about details of advertised events. Where details change or new events are arranged, parents will be informed via email. All Zoom meeting links will only be sent to a parent's email address.
- Senior Youth leaders may phone young people in their small group for occasional pastoral catch-ups, with the agreement of the overall Senior Youth leader. These calls should be made to the parent's mobile, except under exceptional circumstances agreed with parents and other senior leaders.
- Senior Youth leaders may send occasional cards to young people in their small group to encourage them. This should only be done with the agreement of the overall Senior Youth leader.
- Leaders and members may be friends on social media services, but should communicate via public messages rather than privately.
- Leaders should remember that being a friend with a young person on social media often gives them access to the whole of the leader's profile (including some content of their friends). The leader must be above reproach in their online behaviour.
- A *WhatsApp* group for those who are over 16 may be set up for ongoing encouragement by leaders and within the group. Due to *WhatsApp* age restrictions these groups will not be used with younger youths.
- Electronic communication between a leader and a young person (e.g. to send birthday messages or encourage with Bible verses) should generally be done through a public rather than a private medium. For example, posting on a member's *Instagram* wall or other public social media forum (rather than a private message) or sending an email copied to parents or another leader.
- Senior Youth leaders may send occasional short, private messages of encouragement to individual senior youth of the same sex via *WhatsApp* or text. However, these should be of a limited number (i.e. up to twice a week, exchanges of no more than 2-3 messages per person). A Senior Youth leader must seek permission from the overall leaders before they initially start to message a senior youth (the leaders will

keep a record of this). The overall leaders or Safeguarding Officer may ask to see the message history at any point – no messages should be deleted.

- All communication between leaders and members is to occur between 8am and 8pm (or 10pm if necessary on a Senior Youth evening). In circumstances where leaders are texted or contacted by members outside of these times, the leader will not reply until the following morning except in cases of emergency.
- If a young person initiates private communication with a leader by text, email or other means, the leader should ensure that another Senior Youth leader is shown the full conversation to ensure full transparency.

If a youth leader has any concerns about communication from a young person (e.g. inappropriate or persistent messages or phone calls), they should contact the Safeguarding Officer for advice and to agree a plan for how to respond, including how to involve the young person's parents.

The rapidly changing nature of social media means that other forms of communication may become available between youth leaders and young people. The Safeguarding Officer should be consulted before any new form of social media starts to be used.

In all communication, leaders are encouraged to be above reproach and exercise wisdom to protect both themselves and the members from accusation or incrimination of any kind. Rather than hinder communication, this policy is intended to encourage youth leaders to communicate appropriately.

F. Photography

Photographs are a great way to share information about events and activities. However, there are a few guiding principles that should be observed when taking and storing photographs of people during church activities. Those using their own cameras in order to take pictures for the church must be clear that the resulting pictures are not to be duplicated or stored for personal use.

- Make sure you have everyone's permission. Where children or adults at risk are involved, get the permission of the parent or carer as well. For children this is done on each separate occasion; for young people annually through the Junior Youth or Senior Youth registration form. There may be good reasons why an individual does not want a photo displayed or published: for example, if the person has fled a violent partner, or has fostered or adopted children whose parents are not allowed to know their whereabouts.
- Make sure people know in advance how the photo(s) will be used, e.g. will they be only on the notice board in the church hall, or will they be sent to the local paper or posted on a website? Be careful to stick to what you say you are going to do; do not widen your audience without going back for further permission.
- If you are planning to take 'roving,' informal pictures during a church event, then a written information note can be included along with the advance publicity, giving people the opportunity to let you know that they do not wish to be included in those photographs.

Photographs of individuals should be taken with their permission, even if there has been a general or implied agreement to informal photographs during an event.

- Photographs at Ambassador International Church events should only be taken by photographers who have been approved by the church staff (or agreed children's/youth leaders). Those photographers will make themselves aware of the permissions in place and avoid those who have not given permission for whatever reason.
- Particularly with children, do not label pictures with names, ages etc. Ideally, take photographs of children in small or mixed age groups, with a general heading.
- Give careful thought to storage of photographs, especially if they accompany names, addresses and other personal identifiers. Photographs should be stored on the church server in a secure area with specific permissions and those stored online (e.g. to share with parents), should be password protected and only available for a limited time.
- Do not store images/photographs of those for whom you hold a professional duty of care on your personal phone, computer, or any internet device.
- For youth events, a nominated leader may take photos using their own phone or camera. As soon as possible after the event, these photos will be transferred onto the church server, and the originals deleted from their device. The leader will confirm with another leader once that has happened.

6. Expectations for those working with adults at risk of harm

The following is a guide for all those involved in ministries to adults who may be at risk of harm or vulnerable in some way. It is not an exhaustive guide but simply sets out some expectations around behaviour and organisation.

In church ministry, the boundaries between work and private life can be difficult to distinguish clearly. These guidelines are not intended for informal friendships between church members, but rather where help is being offered more formally by or on behalf of the church. Church workers, both staff and volunteers, are expected to endeavour to uphold Christian values in both 'public' and 'private' areas of their lives.

A. Safety

- Where possible, arrange visits to a person's home beforehand rather than 'cold-calling.'
- Try to visit a person during daylight hours.
- Try to ensure before a visit that somebody else knows where you are going and for how long, and knows when you have returned home.
- Consider if it would be wise to take someone with you to visit the person.
- Make sure that you are carrying a mobile phone with you and that you have someone you can call in an emergency.
- Consider if you are aware of any risks that you may face in the location you are going to, and what you will do should you come across an emergency situation.

B. Transparency

- Make clear from the outset what help you are offering and discuss with the person how they would like to be supported where possible.
- Keep a written note of your visits, e.g. in a journal or diary. Log all visits made: times, dates, the purpose of the visit and any concerns that arose. Include the reason for the visit or session, and a note of any concerns that arose.

C. Respect

- Respect a person's independence and right to personal space/privacy. Always knock before entering their room/home;
- Consider the appropriateness of initiating or receiving physical contact when greeting someone.
- Remember that someone who lacks capacity in one area of life may nonetheless be quite capable in other areas; ensure you include them in any decisions wherever it is possible. Remember also that every adult who has capacity retains the right to make decisions that we might consider to be unwise.

- Be aware of any particular issues that might make communication more difficult, e.g. use of hearing aids, a speech impediment or learning disability. Where this may be an issue, you could ask the adult if they are comfortable involving a family member or friend to help communication, and let the adult choose who this should be.

D. Acting wisely

- Where you are seeking the views of a person, or asking him or her to make a choice, offer clear, unbiased choices and allow them time to consider and express a decision.
- Remember to be sensitive to a person's own beliefs and faith; be careful not to pressurise the person to adopt your own views.
- When dealing with financial affairs, be very cautious. Integrity and transparency are vital. Do not engage in any activity that involves a personal financial gain or accept church donations from those who may be vulnerable.
- Do not accept gifts, other than small unsolicited tokens of thanks or a birthday/Christmas present of low value (e.g. an ordinary, small box of chocolates).

E. Seeking support

- Be alert to any signs of a developing dependency upon you, especially where the person's vulnerability has arisen in a time of personal crisis. Where you feel an inappropriate attachment might be forming, seek advice from an appropriate source (e.g. a Senior Minister or the Church Safeguarding Officer).
- If ever you feel that you are moving out of your depth in a relationship with a person or you do not feel competent to deal with a developing situation, step back and seek advice from a member of the senior ministry team.
- In working on behalf of the church with an adult at risk of harm, it would never be appropriate to promise total confidentiality. Always make clear that, although you will keep matters confidential if you possibly can, you reserve the right to share information with appropriate people if you feel someone is at risk of significant harm.

Part B Leadership of Safeguarding at Ambassador International Church

7 Safeguarding Framework

The legislative framework that underpins the guidance contained in this policy (both parts A and B) is as follows:

- CAP 136 Mental Health Ordinance
- CAP 200 Crimes Ordinance
- CAP 212 Offences against the Person Ordinance
- CAP 213 Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance
- CAP 579 Prevention of Child Pornography Ordinance
- Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance

As safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, this policy is relevant to the whole church family. It is particularly relevant to those who undertake work in a paid or unpaid capacity that is linked to the work of Ambassador International Church, including:

- Staff and elders.
- Leaders and helpers of mid-week and Sunday groups for children.
- Leaders and helpers of ministries to elderly people or adults at risk of harm.
- Congregation members to whom disclosures are made from those who need to seek help.
- Congregation members who may be concerned that they may pose a risk to adults or children.

8 Role of the Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer at Ambassador International Church is Muriel Inard. Her contact details are muriel@ambassador.org.hk or via the Church Office.

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is Guy Hewson, who should be spoken to if Muriel Inard is unavailable. If the allegation/concern involves one of the Safeguarding Officers, you should contact Andy Paterson or the Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding helpline directly (see contact details in section 1).

The Safeguarding Officer is accountable to the Senior Pastor and the elders of Ambassador International Church.

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officer are as follows:

- Act as an advocate for children, young people, and adults at risk of harm.
- Ensure that the safeguarding policy is shared, adhered to, reviewed, and updated.
- Ensure regular training for all those who work with children or adults at risk and provide ongoing advice and support to leaders and congregation members.
- Receive and report any concerns or allegations of abuse, liaising with the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding services statutory agencies, as appropriate, in order to safeguard and support children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm.
- Advise church leadership on matters of good practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensure that those in positions of leadership (voluntary or paid) within the ministries of Ambassador International Church have been appointed according to the principles of 'safer recruiting'.
- Oversee the keeping of church safeguarding records.
- Communicate regularly with Team Leaders for each ministry area to ensure that they are supported in leading their teams and that they discuss safeguarding matters or concerns as a regular part of team meetings.

9 Safer Recruitment and Training

At Ambassador International Church we are committed to following best practice in carefully recruiting those who work with children, young people, or adults at risk of harm, in a paid or voluntary role.

The following steps will be taken **before someone begins to serve**:

1. Role description and advertising

For employed posts, a job description and person specification will be produced, clearly setting out the responsibilities of the role and the skills/experience required. For voluntary posts, a volunteer agreement will be used to outline the role (see appendix 3). Posts will be appropriately advertised.

All job descriptions are to include this Safeguarding Statement:

Ambassador International Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people & adults who may be at risk of harm. The church requires all employees & volunteers to share this commitment & abide by our Safeguarding Policy.

2. Application

A full C.V. or resumé will be required for all paid posts (and ministry trainee volunteer roles), and any appropriate shortlisting will take place. For other volunteer roles, the relevant information will be gathered at the interview stage (see step 3).

All applicants will be required to complete a Confidential Declaration (see appendix 2) which includes the names of appropriate referees who will then be contacted.

3. Interview and recruitment

All applicants for paid roles will be interviewed by at least two people, usually including the Senior Pastor. For volunteer roles as youth or children's leaders, applicants will first be approved by the Senior Pastor before being interviewed by the most appropriate senior group leader (see appendix 4 for interview questions to be used for volunteers). Notes of that interview will be made and discussed with pastoral staff (including the safeguarding officer) at a ministry meeting. Applicants for other roles (e.g. creche helpers) will be interviewed more informally, still subject to pastoral team approval.

4. Appointment and induction

If all parties (including senior leaders), agree that the applicant is right for the position, the necessary contract for appointment will then be signed. An appropriate period of probation will be used to ensure the worker is suited to the role and is supported to settle well into it. Appropriate training and induction will take place.

5. Ongoing spiritual and personal accountability

All Staff and senior leaders are required to be church members, and volunteers are encouraged to be church members and part of a home group or its equivalent, for their own encouragement and support.

Staff members receive regular accountability/supervision sessions from their line manager. The leaders of groups receive regular accountability/supervision from an appropriate member of the staff team. Group leaders will take responsibility for oversight of the members of their team as they carry out their roles.

Workers with children and adults at risk of harm will be given opportunities to meet with a leader to discuss their work and areas of concern. During group team meetings, safeguarding will be a standing agenda item. Anyone who has concerns relating to safeguarding is always able to discuss them with one of the Safeguarding Officers.

6. Training

As a church we are committed to ongoing training in safeguarding. All Staff, Leaders and Volunteers will be required to attend training on an annual basis. This will incorporate the appropriate modules from the Basic Safeguarding Awareness course by Thirtyone:eight.

10 Managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff, leader, volunteer, or member of the congregation

As a church we are committed to reflecting God's character in maintaining the highest possible Biblical standards of integrity and accountability in the work we do. Everyone serving at Ambassador International Church is obliged to conduct themselves in keeping with these high standards and to treat others with dignity and respect. We ask you to report any concerns you may have about the behaviour of any Ambassador International Church staff, leader, or volunteer.

If you have concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff, leader or volunteer who works with children, young people, or adults at risk of harm, you need to inform the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. You need to document your concerns as soon as possible after you notice them. You must not discuss your concerns with the person involved or seek to investigate them yourself. If the allegation involves the Safeguarding Officer, you must not inform them, but should contact either Andy Paterson, the Deputy Safeguarding, or seek advice from the Thirtyone:eight helpline (see contact details in section 1).

The Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from Thirtyone:eight instead of contact the relevant authorities. Where an allegation concerns a child, the Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSUs) of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will be contacted on 2343 2255. This needs to happen within 24 hours of recognition of the concern, if possible. The FCPSU has a citywide responsibility for managing allegations against adults who work or volunteer with children across all agencies and settings.

11 Responding to and supporting adults who have been abused

Abuse in childhood can be so devastating that it may lead to vulnerability in adult life. Each abusive situation is unique, and it is impossible to predict how children involved will cope when they grow up. Some will come to terms with what happened and move on to reach their full potential; others may have their life chances irreparably damaged by the abuse and may never recover from the effects. Some of the lasting effects of childhood abuse that may be seen in adults are depression, fear of others, inability to cope with situations of conflict, self-harm, abusive behaviour, misplaced guilt, very low self-esteem, an inability to relate to partners or children. However, none of these patterns in a person's life are exclusively linked to abuse.

Adults who become targets for abuse because of their vulnerability may suffer the same damage in their daily lives as adults who were abused as children. In both cases, it is important for them to find people who will take what they say seriously and act to support them. Where abuse has occurred, the person may find it difficult or impossible to react to situations that others might see as 'normal' or completely innocent, e.g. the greeting time in church services, safe hugs and other physical gestures shared between friends. Images and examples used in the service around selflessness and submission and obedience to the will of God, which many Christians take for granted, may have been twisted and manipulated in the context of abuse to wield control and fear rather than the reassurance of grace and mercy.

Often, someone who has been abused cannot talk about abuse they have suffered until many years later. This is especially true of sexual abuse, where the victim feels ashamed, or thinks no-one will believe what they say. These cases are described as 'historical' and they are taken just as seriously as new cases. If someone has sexually abused or assaulted someone, it is highly probable that there will be other victims; if the abuser is alive, whatever the age, they are likely to pose a risk to others, now and in the future. Police, Social Care agencies and the Church are well used to dealing with historical allegations. The Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Adviser can advise and support you in this situation.

Historical allegations of sexual abuse can come as a complete shock to members of the family and community around the alleged abuser. They may refuse to believe the allegation and can place intense pressure on the alleged victim to withdraw what has been said and on other people not to believe him/her. The Safeguarding Officer should ensure that all those involved have access to support, which can come from inside or outside the church circle (but not usually from the same person, as there may be conflicts of interest).

It is important to recognise the vulnerability of those who are coping with an abusive past, and to ensure that pastoral care is kept within respectful, well-defined boundaries.

12 Safeguarding people who may perpetrate abuse

There is the potential for any individual to seek to perpetrate abuse against children, young people, or adults at risk. This is important to stress because our natural tendency is to trust others and doubt the possibility that abuse could happen in our church family.

Grooming behaviour can go unnoticed for many years. People who are seeking to groom children, young people or adults at risk may:

- Engage in subtly manipulative behaviour.
- Be perceived as warm or helpful.
- Take weeks, months or even years before they act.
- Make their victims feel trapped and guilty, coercing them into keeping secrets.

Their behaviour may include (but not be limited to):

- Giving special attention to their victim without the knowledge of their parents, carers, or staff.
- Using social media and other methods of communication inappropriately.
- Spending time alone or in private isolated areas with their victim.
- Seeking inappropriate or unnecessary personal contact.

The Leadership seeks to create and foster a culture of vigilance and transparency across the whole church, where any concerns about the behaviour of individuals can be appropriately raised and addressed. Such a culture helps deter people from seeking to abuse children, young people, or adults within our care.

We would seek to appropriately support those who fear they may be a risk to others, ensuring they take action to protect themselves and others. This would be in discussion with the Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Advisor and in conjunction with other authorities as appropriate. We will also provide appropriate pastoral oversight for individuals who may lack self-awareness of how their behaviour is perceived by others.

The Leadership recognises that due to the addictive and persistent nature of abusive behaviour, those attending the church who are known or believed to pose a risk (having committed or been accused of sexual or other crimes against children, young people, or adults at risk), will need robust measures put in place to ensure that other children and adults are kept safe.

Part C Appendices

Appendix 1 Declaration of Leadership of Ambassador International Church

For display in church meeting premises

Ambassador International Church (hereafter: AIC) is committed to the safeguarding of children and of adults who may be at risk of harm. We recognise the important role that the church has in caring for both young and old alike and to that end we seek to provide a safe and caring environment that promotes the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised in our society.

The elders of AIC will ensure that we have the following in place to enable this to happen:

- There is always a Safeguarding Officer and a Deputy Safeguarding Officer appointed.
- Staff, Leaders and Volunteers recruited in accordance with the principles of safer recruitment
- Staff, Leaders and Volunteers informed and supported to behave in a way that is appropriate and above reproach
- Staff, Leaders and Volunteers trained in the recognition and response to the needs of children and of adults who may be at risk of harm.
- Staff, Leaders, Volunteers, and the Congregation made aware of who to contact within the church when they have a concern about a child, adult, or person with responsibility towards these groups.
- Staff, Leaders, Volunteers, and the Congregation supported when they are affected by abuse.

The elders of AIC recognise that:

- The gospel compels us to protect the vulnerable and marginalised as part of our witness
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Our church culture should be characterised by integrity, transparency, and vigilance.
- The Church is a place where people who have been abused may come for care and support.
- All people have the potential to perpetrate abuse against another person.
- Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child or adult at risk.

- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

The nominated Safeguarding Officer for Ambassador International Church is Muriel Inard. In Muriel's absence please contact her deputy.

Responsible officers	Role	Contact detail
Muriel Inard	Safeguarding Officer	6747 2324
Guy Hewson	Deputy Safeguarding Officer	5564 4378
Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding helpline		+44 03030031111

Our full safeguarding policy is displayed in all our church meeting premises and can also be obtained electronically on our website or from the church office: info@ambassador.org.hk

The Policy was endorsed at the elders on 9 September 2024 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed

Senior Pastor Andy Paterson (on behalf of the leadership of AIC)

Appendix 2 Confidential Declaration Form

For people intending to work with children

This declaration must be completed by all those (including staff & volunteers) who are to be in substantial contact with children and/or adults at risk of harm. If you do not give true, accurate and complete information in response to these questions, this may amount to misconduct. The information you supply is confidential but may be shared where necessary in order to protect children.¹⁰

Full Name

Date of Birth

Address

Telephone Number

E-mail address

Answering “yes’ to any of these questions will not necessarily disqualify you from participating in children’s ministry at Ambassador International Church.

1. Have you ever been accused of, participated in, pleaded guilty to, or been convicted of child abuse, child neglect, or any other crime against a minor?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

2. Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime (other than minor traffic violations)?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this

3. Have you pleaded guilty or “no contest” to any criminal offense?

¹⁰ The Privacy Notice which accompanies this form explains how the information you supply in this Confidential Declaration is used and your rights with respect to that data as required by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (the “GDPR”) and the Data Protection Act 2018, (the “DPA 2018”).

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

4. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of physical or sexual abuse of children or adults?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

5. Have you pleaded guilty or “no contest” to any neglect or abuse offense?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

6. Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children ever been made against you?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

7. Do you have any ongoing sin struggles that you think would keep you from ministry to children?

- Yes
- No
- I would like to discuss this.

Declaration

I declare the above information is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

After I have been appointed, I agree to inform the Ambassador International Church Safeguarding Officer if I am charged, cautioned, or convicted of any offence or if I become subject to a Police/Social Services/Social Work Department (Children or Adult’s Social Care) investigation.

Signed:

Full Name:

Date:

References¹¹

Please give the names of two people who would be able to provide a reference. They should be people who have known you for at least two years. They should not be in your family, or on the staff at Ambassador International Church. At least one should know you in a context other than just as a friend, and at least one should be from outside the Ambassador International Church family. If possible if you are employed, one of the referees should be your current employer

Referee 1:

Name

Address

Tel:

Email:

How does this person know you?

Referee 2:

Name

Address:

Tel:

Email:

How does this person know you?

All information declared on this form will be carefully assessed to decide whether it is relevant to the post applied for and will only be used for the purpose of safeguarding children, young people and / or adults at risk of harm.

Please return the completed form to your Safeguarding Officer

¹¹⁷ Referees contact details should be provided and references applied for when a person first applies for a position in the parish. Although completion of the confidential declaration form is repeated every 3 years, the references do not need to be – **Unless there has been a break in service.**

Appendix 3 Example Volunteer Agreement

Name:

We welcome you as _____

On behalf of the members of Ambassador International Church therefore, we undertake to support you and the work you do by praying for you and equipping you with the necessary resources and training.

*As _____, you are directly responsible to _____

They are there to discuss any matters of concern that you may have.

The responsibilities of your work as _____ are as follows:

- **Follow the church's safeguarding policy and practice.**
- **Undertake appropriate safeguarding training each year.**
- **Attend regular team meetings and other relevant training.**
- **Seek to live in obedience to Christ, commending him to the children both by example and words.**
- **Be fully committed to the body of Christ at Ambassador International Church (e.g. be a church member and seeking, where possible, to regularly attend prayer meetings).**

**Please refer to "Roles Breakdown" document for a more detailed description.*

Once a year you will be given the opportunity to review and discuss any concerns you may have as well as opportunities for development and training.

Working with children and young people is a responsibility but it also brings great rewards. We hope you will enjoy the work you have undertaken and that you will grow in your faith in Christ through it.

In signing this document, I indicate my agreement with the aims and responsibilities stated above, as well as the responsibilities listed in the "Roles Breakdown" document.

Signed

Volunteer

Date

Signed

Associate Pastor

Date

A copy of this form should be kept by you and another will be kept on church records.

Appendix 4 Interview Proforma for Recruiting Volunteers

Name of Interviewee:	Name of Interviewer(s):	Date:
1. Why would you like to get involved with children/youth work at Ambassador International Church? Why do you think it is important?		
2. What experience have you had working with children/young people?		
3. What aspects of being a children's/youth leader are you most excited about? Most worried about?		
4. Could you tell me some ways you would try to care well for all the children/young people you worked with?		
6. In taking up this role as a leader, what do you think are some of the aspects of your Christian life/ discipleship where you would need to make commitments?		
7. Is there any reason you should not be working with children/young people?		
8. Are there additional ways as a church we can encourage you and support you in your Christian walk?		

Copies of interview notes may be shared with pastoral staff at the next pastoral meeting and securely stored in the Pastoral - 'Ministry Interviews' section of the Ambassador International Church server.

Appendix 5 Charities/sources of help for those suffering abuse, who have been abused

Social Welfare Department

Tel: **2343 2255** or <http://www.swd.gov.hk/>

Harmony House (men's hotline)

For male victims of domestic violence and abuse

Tel: **2295 1386**

Harmony House (women's hotline)

For female victims of domestic violence and abuse

Tel: **2522 0434**

Call Mira

For those being forced into marriage or need help leaving a forced marriage

Tel: **9682 3100** or <https://www.zubinfoundation.org/callmira>

Samaritans

Confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day, for those experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide

Tel: **2896 0000** or www.samaritans.org.hk

CEASE Crisis Centre

Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre

Tel: **18281** or <http://ceasecrisis.tungwahcsd.org>

Rape & Sexual Violence Project (RSVP)

Support for those affected by rape and sexual violence abuse

Tel: **2375 5322** or <https://rainlily.org.hk/>