



## Volunteer Policy

Walsgrave Baptist Church (WBC) recognises its responsibility to safeguard its members; particularly its children, young people and adults at risk, which involves a wise and appropriate method of recruitment for its staff members, group leaders and volunteers. All volunteers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. Those wishing to volunteer with WBC should be committed to the Values of WBC. Please note this Volunteer Policy only applies to volunteers working with children, or individuals at risk.

### 1. Safe Recruitment

- 1.1. WBC will provide a written role description for each volunteer post.
- 1.2. Those wishing to volunteer must read the relevant Volunteer Role Description before completing a Volunteer Application Form.
- 1.3. An enhanced DBS check must be successfully completed for each volunteer working with children, young people or adults at risk before they can begin their post.
- 1.4. Two references must be taken for each volunteer. At least one of which should come from an individual who is not a member or attendee of WBC. Where difficult to find an outside reference, two references from members of WBC can be provided, providing the person wishing to volunteer has been a member for a minimum of 2 years.
- 1.5. Volunteers will be provided with a copy of each WBC policy relevant to their position regarding Safeguarding, Health and Safety, General Data Protection Regulations, Communication and WBC's Ethos Statement.
- 1.6. Each volunteer must complete a Self-Disclosure Form and sign a Volunteer Agreement, stating that they have read, understand and will comply with the Safeguarding Policy Handbook and any other WBC policy relevant to their post.
- 1.7. The volunteer should be invited to observe the area of service within the existing teams of the WBC, to check this is the area they wish to volunteer in.
- 1.8. The first priority of a Christian volunteer should be their own spiritual welfare and as such, they should be part of a regular church meeting/Life Group and should set a good example as a Christian in their personal life.
- 1.9. Each volunteer should attend relevant meetings and training days.

### 2. Training and Supervision

- 2.1. Volunteers will have access to the Baptist Union *Safe to Belong Policy*.
- 2.2. Volunteers will receive full training relevant to their position, for example, Safeguarding training. Some training will occur prior to their position beginning and some will involve on-the-job training.

- 2.3. New volunteers will agree a probationary period with their group leader and will be supervised in their role until this period is completed. Volunteers will not be left to lead a children's/youth/adults at risk group without supervision for any reason until this period is completed.
  - 2.4. Volunteers will have support from the WBC Leadership and Safeguarding teams, who will be available to answer questions, concerns and provide further training where necessary.
- 3. Investigating Concerns**
- 3.1. If a volunteer has a concern about the safety/welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk under their care, they must report the issue to a senior member of the Leadership team, or WBC's Safeguarding team. The concern will be dealt with according to WBC's Safeguarding Policy. The volunteer may be interviewed in order to clarify the nature of their concerns and to give any evidence available which back up these concerns.
  - 3.2. If a child, young person or adult at risk, or another member of the Leadership team has a concern about the conduct of a volunteer, this must be reported to a member of the Leadership or Safeguarding team and whilst the matter is under investigation, the volunteer will be asked to cease their position.
  - 3.3. A volunteer under investigation will have the opportunity to respond to any accusation made against them/explain the circumstances of any incident reported. They will receive fair, impartial and sensitive consideration.
- 4. Young Leaders**
- 4.1. By law, leaders under the age of 18 are still classed as children and therefore cannot be treated as adult team members. For example, when considering ratios of staff, a Young Leader cannot be considered to be a supervising adult.
  - 4.2. Young Leaders will not be left unsupervised to lead groups of children or youth. They will continue to be supervised in their position until they turn 18 years of age, when they can apply for an adult leadership role and follow the procedures as laid out in **1. Selection Procedure** and **2. Training and Supervision**.
  - 4.3. Young Leaders are subject to the same rules as Adult Leaders regarding Safeguarding, training and investigating concerns.
  - 4.4. The permission of a parent/guardian must be sought for a young person to become a Young Leader.
  - 4.5. If residential activities are undertaken, a Young Leader should have separate accommodation from both the Adult Leaders and the children or youth they are leading.
  - 4.6. A Young Leader should not be leading a group of individuals older, or the same age as them. A gap of at least two years should be in place between the Young Leader and the oldest member of the group they lead, except in peer-led groups.
- 5. Confidentiality**
- 5.1. Volunteers are bound to the WBC's requirements for confidentiality. Volunteers may be asked to sign a confidentiality document.

## **6. Changing or Ending of Volunteering**

- 6.1.** The volunteer and/or team leader should give reasonable notice if the role and placement of the volunteer are changing or ending.
- 6.2.** Should a volunteer's behaviour be found to be totally unacceptable, the placement may be ended immediately. In all cases the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken. The team leader will report any such terminations to the WBC Pastor(s).

## **7. Expenses**

- 7.1.** No expenses shall be incurred without express permission of the team leader. If the team leader is happy for the expense to be undertaken receipts must be produced in order for reimbursement to take place.

## **8. Insurance**

- 8.1.** Volunteers will be covered by WBC's public liability insurance. All volunteers using their car for project activities should check with their team leader if they need business insurance beforehand.

## **9. Health and Safety**

- 9.1.** Volunteers will be instructed in Health and Safety matters as part of their induction process (see separate Health and Safety Policy).

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

- 10.1.** It will be the responsibility of the team leader to monitor and review the volunteer's progress.