



Child Safeguarding Policy & Handbook

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SECTION 1 CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1.1 Background and Introduction

- a. This document has been formulated with the aim of protecting both the children in our programmes and the leaders who work with them. Since we are commanded by God to submit to the authorities that he has set over us (1 Peter 2:13), it shall be the goal of Gracefields Church to uphold the objects of the South African Constitution with regards to child protection. The Gracefields child safeguarding policy statement is informed by the Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005), as amended, and its focus on the rights and care of children.
- b. In formulating both this document and the Child safeguarding Handbook, the following documents have been considered:
 - i. The South African Constitution (Chapter 2, Section 28)
 - ii. Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005) / Amendment Act (No 41 of 2007) / Amendment Act (No 17 of 2022)
 - iii. REACH SA Child Protection policy 2014
 - iv. Christ Church Midrand Child Protection Policy 2016
 - v. Co-Missions Churches Safeguarding Policy 2015/16
 - vi. King of Kings Baptist Church Child Protection Policy 2010
 - vii. Connections Church Child Protection Policy 2015
 - viii. The London Child Protection Procedures 4th Edition 2014
 - ix. Anglican Diocese – Safe Ministry Pathways 2017
 - x. St Stephens Church Child Protection Policy 2021
 - xi. Co-Mission Churches Trust Safeguarding Policy V5 July 2024

1.2 Purpose of the Policy

- a. We believe that God has given us His mandate to protect the children within our care, and this policy is the starting point of safeguarding children on the following levels:

- i. To prevent abuse of children within the structures of Gracefields Church.
- ii. To provide clear boundaries of behaviour expected from all leaders thereby protecting them and the children in our care and the Church.
- iii. To manage the reporting of any complaints received regarding abuse of children in the course of ministry undertaken by Gracefields Church.
- iv. To manage the reporting of suspected abuse of children by parties not affiliated to Gracefields Church.

1.3 Definitions

Child: According to the Children's Act, any person under 18, unless married or emancipated by Order of Court, is a child.

Adult: Any person over the age of 18 years.

Abuse: Any act or omission that results in a child being hurt, injured, or that interferes in the normal emotional, physical or intellectual functioning or development of a child. There are five types of abuse listed below and elaborated on in more detail in Appendix 2:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Negligence
- Spiritual abuse

Leaders: Volunteers serving in any Gracefields Church ministries with children. Volunteers offer their time and skills to serve in Gracefields Church ministries without receiving financial payment or employment benefits.

Safeguarding: Activity of keeping from harm or injury.

1.4 Legal Environment

- a. The South Africa law pertaining to children is implemented and maintained through two legal vehicles: The Constitution (Chapter 2, Section 28) and the Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005) as Amended through the Children's Amendment Act (No 41 of 2007) and the Children's Amendment Act (No 17 of 2022).
- b. The South African Constitution provides the following special rights to children:
 - i. To be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation;
 - ii. To be protected from exploitative labour practices; and
 - iii. Not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that are inappropriate for a person of that child's age or place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development.
- c. The Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005) includes the following articles which relate to the protection and rights of children:
 - i. Children's Act 38 of 2005, Articles 123, 124 and 126
 - ii. Children's Amendment Act of 2007, Article 110 (See Appendix 1 for full text of articles).

1.5 Policy Statement

- a. The Gracefields child safeguarding policy statement is informed by the Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005), as amended, and its focus on the rights and care of children, specifically:
 - i. The protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.
 - ii. That the best interest of a child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.
 - iii. That no person whose name appears in Part B of the National Child Protection Register or on the Sexual Offenders Register may participate or assist in providing welfare services to children, including church ministries.

- iv. Prior to commencing ministry, every leader must apply for a Police Clearance, Child Protection Register Part B clearance, and a Sexual Offenders Register clearance. These checks must be initiated as early as possible and may be obtained through a trusted and accredited service provider (e.g. The Guardian) where applicable. No individual may commence work or duties involving children until all vetting checks has been successfully completed and verified or a certificate of submission is available.
 - v. Any worker or leader worker at Gracefields Church who, on reasonable grounds, concludes that a child has been treated in a manner causing physical injury, sexual abuse/harm or deliberate neglect, must report this to the Church's designated Child Protection Officer or any senior ministry staff who will direct the complaint accordingly to be escalated to the necessary authorities.
 - vi. ***Emergency numbers include: Childline (021) 762 8198; Social Services (021) 001 3033; Fish Hoek South African Police Service (SAPS): (021) 784 2700.***
- b. Children are entitled to be safe and protected. They have the right to be respected, listened to and their particular needs addressed in all Church activities. Ministries where children are involved requires absolute trustworthiness. To ensure adherence to the policy statement, Gracefield's Child Safeguarding Policy is supplemented by the Gracefields Child Safeguarding Handbook, to help our leaders implement the policy in varied contexts. The Policy and Handbook are supplemented by Child Safeguarding training.
- c. Gracefields Church, in the interest of the safety of our children and of Christ's name in our community, will always err on the side of caution. All our actions are required to be beyond reproach in all matters, particularly in matters relating to the safety of our children. Our aim is to create a safe environment in every case for children in our care and to combine good leadership with a safe environment and safe practices. The more our leaders are equipped in this area, the closer we will be to achieving a safe ministry.

1.6 Children's Ministry leader requirements

- a. Before commencing ministry, every leader must:
 - i. Be in attendance at Gracefields Church for at least 6 months, or, where an urgent need for volunteers arise, may volunteer before this period along with existing, long-term leaders.
 - ii. Read this policy and complete the Safeguarding Training.
 - iii. Complete the Code of Ethics during the Safeguarding Training.
 - iv. Provide two certified copies of his/her ID (for the Child Protection Register check).
 - v. Provide full address and contact details (for Child Protection Register Check).
 - vi. Get a Police Clearance, Part B of the Child Protection Policy Clearance and a Sexual Offenders Registry Clearance. The latter can be obtained through a trusted and accredited service provider (e.g. The Guardian) should the need arise. No individual may commence work involving children until all vetting checks has been successfully completed and verified or a certificate of submission is available.

1.7 Monitoring the Policy

- a. It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officers to implement a monitoring procedure and, when necessary, update this policy.
- b. It is further the responsibility of the Child Protection Officers to review the policy periodically to ensure relevance to the Children's Ministry.

SECTION 2: CHILD SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

The following handbook provides the practical guidelines on our child safeguarding policy. It will expand on the following four areas, as per the policy statement.

- a) To prevent abuse of children within the structures of Gracefields Church.
- b) To provide clear boundaries of behaviour expected from all leaders thereby protecting them and the children in our care and the Church.
- c) To manage the reporting of any complaints received regarding abuse of children in the course of ministry undertaken by Gracefields Church.
- d) To manage the reporting of suspected abuse of children by parties not affiliated to Gracefields Church.

2.1 Prevention process at Gracefields Church

- a. The objective of screening all leaders with any contact with children is to put reasonable restrictions at the point of access to our children. We will do everything in our power to protect children in our care. The screening process will also provide protection for leaders. Please co-operate fully and honestly for your own sake and for the sake of those who will be in your care.
- b. All screening requirements, as per Section 1.6, will be completed in confidence with a Child Safeguarding Officer. The Church may, where required, solicit the services of a trusted external service provider to assist leaders to obtain the necessary documentation. Temporary Holiday Club leaders need to undergo the same screening process if they will be in contact with children.

2.2 Guidelines for conduct and behaviour of leaders

a. General guidelines applicable to all leaders

- i. Two leaders, both of whom must be over 18, should always be present during a particular ministry that involves children.

- ii. If for any reason a leader is alone with a child, they should ensure that there is a second adult nearby or other leaders and groups nearby. Leaders will leave doors open when seeing a child individually.
- iii. No person under the age of 18 shall be left in sole charge of any children of any age.
- iv. Children will not be left alone at any time.
- v. A record or register of children and adults attending ministries needs to be kept and stored securely indefinitely.
- vi. All after hour's interaction must be restricted to the Gracefields Church premises, or other suitable facilities, unless parents/guardians are present or have provided written consent (See Appendix 4).
- vii. Leaders should never do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves (please see later toileting details).
- viii. Leaders should ensure that a sense of accountability exists between them, so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.
- ix. Children must be transported according to the South African law, i.e. they must be strapped in properly, preferably in the back seat. Drivers must have legal licenses and keep to the speed limits. When transporting a number of children, suitable vehicles must be used and drivers with the required passenger transportation licenses must be used (Please see Appendix 4 with regards to transport and teenagers).

b. Guidelines on touch

- i. Whilst we encourage a warm and caring approach to children, leaders must be wise and careful in their physical behaviour toward children in their care. This must be guided by age, hugging and holding a baby on a lap may be essential in Sprouts, but may not be appropriate in Children's Church ages onwards.
- ii. Keep everything public – a hug in a group context is very different to a hug behind closed doors.
- iii. Touch must be related to the child's need, not the leader's.
- iv. Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.

c. Photography

- i. Parents need to give written permission for their children's photographs to be taken.
- ii. No photography of individuals by leaders of children. Children must always be in a group context.
- iii. Where Gracefields asks a photographer to be present at events or for promotional material where children are present, all photographs of children should be sent to Gracefields to be stored.

d. Parents in Kids Ministry

- i. Unless a parent is a parent helper, we do not encourage parents to stay during any Children's Ministry slot.
- ii. If a parent is needed to help settle a child, it will be the responsibility of the leader to make sure that the children are not left alone with the parent. Ask a parent how to help settle the child to make the transition easier.
- iii. A leader should encourage the parent to not stay longer than absolutely necessary (About 5-10 minutes). This time should also preferably be during the group time of Kids Church/ Cool Club or Crew.

2.3 First Aid and Emergency procedures

- a. First Aid:** Gloves and emergency kits are stocked by the office and are available in the Children's Centre, the Church's kitchen, the office and in the iThemba hall. Please familiarise yourselves with the location of the medical kits, as well as their content. There are also ice packs available in the fridges. Familiarise yourself with the leaders who have a valid First Aid Level 1 certificate.
- b. Emergencies:** If there is an emergency requiring assistance, secure the area and immediately call **CMR (Cape Medical Response): 0827824444 or (021) 7824444** of which Gracefields is a member. It is wise to save this number on your phone for easy access. Once the call has been made, alert one of the staff or leaders of the ministry. First Aid training will be provided to some of the Gracefields staff and other leaders who volunteer to handle minor injuries. A person with a currently valid First Aid qualification should be present at a ministry involving children at all times.

- c. Medication:** No person is allowed to provide medication to a child, unless the parent has given written consent. This excludes covering wounds or life-threatening emergencies, such as helping an asthmatic, diabetic or a child suffering from anaphylactic shock with his/her own medication.
- d. HIV:** HIV is a reality in the Western Cape. All wounds should be treated as if the wounded or helper are infected with HIV, i.e., no wounds should be touched unless gloves are worn, and ALL wounds must be covered immediately.

 - i. The cleaning of wounds should always be done with running water or the provided swabs. Where running tap water is not available, containers should be used to pour water over the area to be cleansed.
 - ii. Blood that splashes on the face (mucous membranes of eyes, nose or mouth) should be flushed with running water for at least three minutes.
 - iii. Skin exposed accidentally to blood should be cleaned promptly with water and disinfectant.
 - iv. If blood has contaminated a surface, that surface should be cleaned with fresh, clean bleach solution and the person responsible for this should wear latex gloves. Other body fluids and excretions that could be stained or contaminated with blood (for instance tears, saliva, mucus, phlegm, urine, vomit, faeces and pus) should be cleaned up in similar fashion.
 - v. Children should be instructed to never touch blood or open wounds. They should be taught to call for the assistance of an adult
 - vi. In the event of possible contact with HIV infected blood, the person should be referred to the local clinic, General Practitioner or hospital to receive appropriate treatment.

2.4 Fire Emergency

- a) The processes for fire emergencies are as follows:

 - i. Familiarise yourself with all the exits signs. Familiarise yourself with the exit route from the building your particular group is meeting in.
 - ii. In the case of a fire, raise the alarm (shout, inform as many leaders as possible – there is no actual alarm in the buildings) as quickly as possible and follow the exit signs in the church and centre to a safe exit, making sure that you do not leave any of the children in your care behind. Gather in the parking lot of the church. Leaders are responsible for checking that everyone

from their small group is on the field. Take your register with you if it is safe and possible to do so.

- iii. The **Fire Emergency Number** for Fish Hoek is: **(021) 400 7111**
- iv. There are fire extinguishers in strategic places throughout the premises. Leaders should familiarise themselves with their locations, and their use in emergencies.
- v. The primary responsibility of leaders is to get the children in your care to safety.

2.5 Extra guidelines for conduct and behaviour

a. Leaders under 18

- i. No adult leader may pursue a romantic or physical relationship with a person under 18.
- ii. Gracefields is keen to support young people (teen leaders: grades 8 to 12, and junior leaders grades 5 to 9) to learn about ministry through involvement with children's work in the church, with the permission of their parents. They will not be placed in a role that will require a protection register or police check. Young leaders will not be considered the responsible adult, and a responsible adult needs to be present at all times. The relevant church leadership will work with the teen and junior leaders to familiarise them with their roles, responsibilities and general behavioural guidelines.

b. Guidelines on communication for youth leaders

- i. The context for all communication with members is that parents are responsible for their children rather than the youth leaders. At least 2 weeks' notice will be given before an outing or event, especially when it is off site. Where a leader meets up one to one, or in a smaller group, parental consent will also be requested. In the event of any pastoral concerns a leader may have about an individual member, a leader will always take the issue to the ministry leader first. All communication in this policy is assumed to be between leaders and parents only (Please see Appendix 4 for more information on communication with our teenagers).
- ii. With regards to Children's Church, Cool Club and Crew, communication will only be to the parents. The leaders may in no circumstance communicate to the children via sms, social media

or e-mail. (Appendix 4 gives exceptions with regards to teenagers between the age of 13/14-18).

c. *Managing toileting for pre-school ministries*

- i. We do not provide nappy changes for children in our care. If a child requires a nappy change in Sprouts or Pre School, leaders are to contact the parent via text message on the number provided on the register, or by finding them in the congregation to come and provide the necessary care.
- ii. *Toilet Trained Children:*
 1. Any help with toileting in these children should be provided with the knowledge and agreement of the child's parents/ carers.
 2. Children must be given as much privacy as possible.
 3. The toilet door should stay slightly ajar, but not wide open.
 4. Children should be encouraged to go into the toilet cubicle alone.
 5. Leaders should avoid doing things for the child that they can do themselves.
 6. 2 Leaders should always be present in the children's centre as to not leave children unattended.
 7. The assisting adult leader will stand outside the cubicle, leaving the toilet cubicle door slightly ajar as well as the children centre's door and wait for the child to finish.

2.6 Behaviour management in Kids Church

a. *General principles:*

- i. Discipline is a team issue.
- ii. Each member of the team has a part to play.
- iii. Agree on roles and responsibilities.
- iv. Be consistent, loving and predictable (the same behaviour produces the same consequences).
- v. When disciplining a child over poor behaviour, do not do so in a way that humiliates and do not do so one to one behind closed doors.

- vi. Never use physical discipline.
- vii. Discipline is a planning issue.
- viii. Be aware that a poor lesson can result in poor behaviour, because the children are bored and frustrated. It does not follow that poor behaviour is always caused by a poor lesson.
- ix. We work in a context of continual conversation with parents. We want to be speaking to parents about their children, irrespective of their child's behaviour. This acknowledges that we only teach because they have commissioned us to teach their children the Bible for an hour a week.
- x. Poor discipline prevents others from hearing God speak. That should be motivation enough to act.
- xi. Seek to encourage with positive affirmation both the whole class and individuals, publicly and privately, whenever possible.
- xii. Offer the child a way out by them changing their behaviour.
- xiii. Model forgiveness.
- xiv. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form.

b. Specific Group Management for small groups ¹

- i. Leaders are not there to be liked by the children nor to be their friend. Leaders lead!
- ii. Leaders need to be firm and clear in their expectations.
- iii. Leaders should not physically discipline any child (no corporal punishment).
- iv. Establish one rule: respect (respect leaders, respect other children, respect property...).
- v. Leaders must not show favouritism.

c. Managing children under five

- i. Keep your instructions and expectations clear and simple (e.g. don't grab toys off of others. These toys are for everyone to share).
- ii. Redirect their attention when upset or frustrated (e.g. leader reads a book, give them another toy, completes a puzzle with them, plays playdough with them...).
- iii. Preschool age group: warn once, if behaviour persists act:

¹ Copyright: MBM/ Sandy Galea)

1. Remove the equipment from the child
2. Remove the child from the activity (e.g. take the child to an area of the room not being used and tell them to remain there no more than three or four minutes)
3. Remove the privilege of a future activity (e.g. sit out of next game, miss out on craft...)
4. If tantrums occur, move furniture/equipment away from the child so they don't hurt themselves and move other children away from the child. Don't talk to the child, simply keep an eye on them (for safety reasons) but ignore their behaviour until the tantrum subsides.

d. Managing School Age Children

- i. Never send a child back to their parents. The main leader of that ministry is the only one who is to call parents to come and collect children.
- ii. Keep your instructions/expectations clear and simple (i.e. don't push in line or you'll miss out).
- iii. Warn once, if behaviour persists, act:
 1. Remove the equipment from the child (i.e. confiscate toy...)
 2. Remove the child from the activity (i.e. sit out of activity for 5 minutes...)
 3. Remove the privilege of a future activity from the child (i.e. sit out of next game, miss out on craft...)
 4. Send to sit in another room under supervision of another leader (i.e. Gr. R boy supervised to next room to sit near Gr. R girls leader, remain near that leader for five minutes, back to group, apologise and re-join group).
 5. If behaviour persists, call either Session Leader or Children's Minister to deal with child.
 6. Give appropriate consequence for varying degrees of misbehaviour (i.e. appropriate action must be taken):
 1. *Minor behaviour* = minor consequence (Behaviour: whispering to child beside them. Action: leader stops and looks at child, when behaviour stops, continue with lesson).
 2. *Medium behaviour* = medium consequence (Behaviour: constantly calling out or disrupting activity. Action: told to sit to one side, if persists, told to sit at back of group, if persists, supervised to different group for five minutes, asked to apologise before coming back into group).

3. *Major behaviour* = major consequence (Behaviour: violently attack another child or adult. Action: removed from group immediately, Team Leader or Children's Worker sent for, parents called, child sent home or excluded from program for one session).

2.7 Recognising and responding to abuse or suspicion of abuse

a. Definitions of child abuse:

Defining child abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Often the abuser is known to, or in a trusted relationship with the child. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. Please see Appendix 2 for full definitions of each kind of abuse.

b. Recognising abuse

- i. Signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. Frequency of observation is a key indicator:
- ii. Physical signs of abuse
 1. Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
 2. Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
 3. Injuries which have not received medical attention.
 4. Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
 5. Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
 6. Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
 7. Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation.
 8. Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.

iii. Indicators of possible sexual abuse:

1. Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
2. Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play (in the S.A. context, we must have awareness of those who will have far greater sexual knowledge from needing to share bedroom space with adults).
3. Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
4. Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
5. Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
6. Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia.

iv. Emotional signs of abuse

1. Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
2. Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
3. Obsessions or phobias.
4. Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
5. Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
6. Attention-seeking behaviour.
7. Persistent tiredness.
8. Running away/stealing/lying.

Table 1: Age-appropriate behavioural signals of abuse

Ages	Behavioural Signs
Ages 3 and below	Crying Clinging Change in sleeping and eating habits Regressive behaviour
Ages 3 to 5 years	Separation fears Clinging Tantrums or irritability

Ages	Behavioural Signs
	Sleep disturbance Regressive behaviours Withdrawal Increased fear
Ages 6 to 11 years	Regressive behaviours Externalising behaviours Denial, avoidance, social isolation, withdrawal Difficulty concentrating, focusing Fear, depression, anxiety Physical complaints Self-blame, guilt School refusal
Adolescent (12 to 17 years)	Responses similar to adults Depressive features Sleep and appetite change Fear, withdrawal Physical complaints Moodiness, irritability Anger, resentment School refusal, decreasing performance Concentration difficulties Anxiety, dissociation PTSD Substance abuse

c. Responding to a child who wants to disclose abuse to you

i. *General Points*

1. Listen, listen, listen.
2. Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
3. Keep calm.
4. Look at the child directly.
5. Be honest.
6. Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality.

7. Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
8. Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
9. Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

ii. Helpful things you may say or show

1. I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says).
2. Thank you for telling me.
3. It's not your fault.
4. I will help you.

iii. Don't say

1. Why didn't you tell anyone before?
2. I can't believe it!
3. Are you sure this is true?
4. Why? How? When? Who? Where?
5. Never make false promises.
6. Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

iv. Concluding

1. Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
2. Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
3. Contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator for advice.
4. Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

d. Procedure for reporting a disclosure of abuse

- i. No church worker/ leader may carry out their own investigation into any allegation or suspicion of abuse.

- ii. Ideally within one hour of the disclosure, make notes. Write down exactly what the person said and when they said it, what they said in reply and what was happening just beforehand (e.g. A description of the activity). Dates and times of these events and when the notes were made must also be recorded. All handwritten notes must be retained, even if subsequently typed.
- iii. Report all concerns as soon as possible to the Child Safeguarding Officer and/or the appointed Ministry Leader. Do not discuss any aspect of the disclosure with anyone else.
- iv. The church leadership will support the Child Safeguarding Officer in their role, and accept the need for confidentiality, and that sharing of information will strictly be on a need-to-know basis.
- v. The accused must be suspended from all ministries with children for the duration of investigations.
- vi. If the allegation involves a crime as described by South African law, the Child Safeguarding Officer will report immediately in one of the following ways:
 - 1. Child abuse must be reported to a social worker, at a child welfare office or at a police station. To report child abuse to Metro Police, you can call their hotline on **(021) 444 2671**. Please be sure to contact your nearest South African Police Service station as well.
 - 2. You can also seek help at Childline South Africa: **Childline South Africa (24-hour toll-free helpline)**; Telephone: **0800 055 555**.
 - 3. You can also seek help at Childline Western Cape. **Childline Western Cape**; Telephone: **021 762 8198 / 021 461 1114**
- vii. If the abuse is physical and needs attention, the Child Safeguarding Officer will seek medical attention.
- viii. The church will respect the courts finding in the matter. Anyone found guilty will be permanently disallowed from serving within a ministry involving children. Anyone found innocent shall serve in an alternative ministry for six months, and then, after prayerful consideration, may approach leadership to return to children's ministry. In such a case, the church leadership maintains the final decision on the return/non-return of said individual to the children's ministry and will set the relevant guidelines as may be necessary.
- ix. If the allegation does not involve a crime, the Child Safeguarding Officer and appointed senior Ministry Team Member will separately interview the parties. They will decide whether the

Child Safeguarding Policy has been breached, whether the behaviour is unacceptable or whether the allegation is unfounded. They will decide, with church leadership on the appropriate course of discipline.

- x. The Child Safeguarding Officer must furnish details of the accused to the Child Protection Register of South Africa.
- xi. All communication regarding disclosures of abuse must be recorded and kept on file. It is paramount that the details are kept, even if the accusations are found to be false.
- xii. In the extreme case that one of the Child Protection Officers is personally involved in a child abuse accusation, the other Child Protection Officer will liaise with the Church Leadership in managing the reporting process.

e. Supporting those affected by abuse

- i. The Gracefields Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse.
- ii. Managing those who pose a risk:
 - 1. Due to the addictive and persistent nature of abusive behaviour, the Leadership recognises that those attending the church who are known to pose a risk, (having committed or been accused of sexual or other crimes against children, young people or vulnerable adults), will need robust measures put in place to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded.
 - 2. A Senior Minister and Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be responsible for establishing a Covenant of Care Group for any individual concerned. Such a group will consist of the individual, the minister for the congregation, two to three senior elders and will be run in conjunction with any authorities that the individual is known to.
 - 3. The work of the Group will include producing a written contract setting out boundaries for the movements and behaviour of the individual within the context of the church. The individual will be expected to sign and abide by this contract. Any such contract will be reviewed at least every six months.
 - 4. If the individual fails to abide by the boundaries set out within this contract, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will contact the Police for advice.

SECTION 3 CONCLUSION

- a. Gracefields, in the interest of the safety of our children and of Christ's name in our community, will always err on the side of caution. We seek your co-operation with this. All our actions are required to be beyond reproach in all matters, particularly in matters relating to the safety of our children.
- b. Our aim is to create a safe environment in every case for children in our care. Our aim is to combine good leadership with a safe environment and safe practices. The more our leaders are equipped in this area, the closer we will be to achieving a safe ministry.

SECTION 4: APPENDICES

4.1 Appendix 1: Children's Act 38 of 2005, Articles 123, 124, 126

123. Consequences of entry of name in Part B of Register.—(1) No person whose name appears in Part B of the Register may— (a) manage or operate, or participate or assist in managing or operating, an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre, a cluster foster care scheme, a school, club or association providing services to children; (b) work with or have access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre, a school, club or association providing services to children, or in implementing a cluster foster care scheme, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity; (c) be permitted to become the foster parent or adoptive parent of a child; (d) work in any unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection; (e) be employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where that person works with or has access to children; (f) be employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where that person works with or has access to children; or (g) work in any other form of employment or activity as may be prescribed. (2) No person managing or operating or who participates or assists in managing or operating an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or a school may allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work with or have access to children at the centre, facility, shelter or school, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity. (3) No designated child protection organisation may allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work with or have access to children on its behalf, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity. (4) The South African Police Service may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work in a unit of the Service tasked with child protection. (5) The head of a state department may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to be employed in a position where that person works with or has access to children. (6) The municipal council of a municipality may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to be employed in a position where that person works with or has access to children.

124. Disclosure of entry of name in Part B of Register.—(1) If the name of a person is entered in Part B of the Register and that person— (a) works with or has access to children at an institution providing welfare

services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or a school either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity, that person must disclose that fact to the person who manages or operates the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school; (b) works with or has access to children on behalf of a designated child protection organisation either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity, that person must disclose that fact to the organisation; (c) works in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection, that person must disclose that fact to the South African Police Service; (d) is employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, that person must disclose that fact to the head of the state department in which he or she is employed; or (e) is employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, that person must disclose that fact to the municipal council of the municipality concerned. (2) A person contemplated in subsection (1) who fails to disclose the fact that his or her name is entered in Part B of the Register is guilty of misconduct and his or her services may be terminated as a result thereof.

126. Establishment of information in Part B of Register.—(1) Before a person is allowed— (a) to work with or have access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or school, the person managing or operating the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (b) to work with or have access to children on behalf of a designated child protection organisation, the organisation must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (c) to work in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection, the Service must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (d) to be employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, the head of the state department in which he or she is to be employed must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; or (e) to be employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, the municipal council of that municipality must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register. (2) Within 12 months of the commencement of this chapter— (a) the person managing or operating an institution, centre, facility, shelter or school contemplated in subsection (1) (a) must establish whether the name of any person who works with or has access to children at the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school appears in Part B of the Register; (b) a designated child protection

organisation contemplated in subsection (1) (b) must establish whether the name of any person who works with or has access to children on behalf of the organisation appears in Part B of the Register; (c) the South African Police Service must establish whether the name of any person who works in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection appears in Part B of the Register; (d) the head of every state department must establish whether the name of any person employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children appears in Part B of the Register; and (e) the municipal council of every municipality must establish whether the name of any person employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children appears in Part B of the Register. (3) Anyone has the right, upon presentation of sufficient proof of his or her identity, to establish whether or not his or her name appears in Part B of the Register, and if so, the reasons why his or her name was entered in the Register. (4) Inquiries in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (3) must be directed in writing to the Director-General on a confidential basis. (5) In the event of an inquiry made to the Director-General in terms of— (a) subsection (1), the Director-General must respond in writing within 21 working days by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register or not; (b) subsection (2), the Director-General must respond in writing within six months by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register or not; and (c) subsection (3), the Director-General must respond in writing within 21 working days by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register, and if so, the reasons why his or her name was entered in the Register

Children's Amendment Act of 2007, Articles 110

Reporting of abused or neglected child and children in need of care and protection:

110. (1) Any correctional official, dentist, homeopath, immigration official, labour inspector, legal practitioner, medical practitioner, midwife, minister of religion, nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, religious leader, social service professional, social worker, speech therapist, teacher, traditional health practitioner, traditional leader or member of staff or volunteer worker at a partial care facility, drop-in centre or child and youth care centre who on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been abused in a manner causing physical injury, sexually abused or deliberately neglected, must report that conclusion in the prescribed form to a designated child protection organisation, the provincial department of social development or a police official.

(2) Any person who on reasonable grounds believes that a child is in need of care and protection may report that belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or a police official.

(3) A person referred to in subsection (1) or (2)—

must substantiate that conclusion or belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or police official; and who makes a report in good faith is not liable to civil action on the basis of the report.

(4) A police official to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1) or (2) or who becomes aware of a child in need of care and protection must—ensure the safety and well-being of the child concerned if the child’s safety or well-being is at risk; and within 24 hours notify the provincial department of social development or a designated child protection organisation of the report and any steps that have been taken with regard to

(5) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (4), must—ensure the safety and well-being of the child concerned, if the child’s safety or well-being is at risk; make an initial assessment of the report; unless the report is frivolous or obviously unfounded, investigate the truthfulness of the report or cause it to be investigated; if the report is substantiated by such investigation, without delay initiate proceedings in terms of this Act for the protection of the child; and (e) submit such particulars as may be prescribed to the Director-General for inclusion in Part A of the National Child Protection Register.

(6) (a) A designated child protection organisation to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (4) must report the matter to the 15 relevant provincial department of social development.

(b) The provincial head of social development must monitor the progress of all matters reported to it in terms of paragraph (a).

(7) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation which has conducted an investigation as contemplated in subsection (5) may— take measures to assist the child, including counselling, mediation, prevention and early intervention services, family reconstruction and rehabilitation, behaviour modification, problem solving and referral to another suitably qualified person or organisation; if he or she is satisfied that it is in the best interest of the child not to be removed from his or her home or place where he or she resides, but that the removal of the alleged offender from such home or place would secure the safety and well-being of the child, request a police official in the prescribed manner to take the steps referred to in section 30,153; or

deal with the child in the manner contemplated in sections 151, 152 or 155.

(8) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation which has conducted an investigation as contemplated in subsection (5) must report the possible commission of an offence to a police official.”;

(b) by the substitution for subsection (3) of section 134 of the following subsection:

“(3) A child who obtains condoms, contraceptives or contraceptive 40 advice in terms of this Act is entitled to confidentiality in this respect, subject to section [105] 110,”.

4.2 Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and neglect relating to young People (The London Child Protection Procedures 4th Edition 2014)

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

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, and 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 on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

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 looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. In addition; Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 (and has more than a 2-year gap) is classified as rape (Part 4 Sexual offenders Act, 2009).

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, maternal 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 the parents and carers which have significant impact on children:

- *Domestic violence.* 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.
- *Controlling behaviour in the adults in the family:* This 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.

Spiritual abuse

Abusing a leadership position to bully and manipulate using spiritual or religious beliefs for selfish gain.

4.3 Appendix 3: Code of Ethics



Code of Ethics

Gracefields Church, 107a Nelson Road, Fish Hoek, 7975

Tel: 021 785 6682

Strictly Confidential once completed

I desire to model Christ-likeness in all my behaviour, especially as I serve in ministry / work with children at the Church.

I aim to demonstrate love for the Lord Jesus Christ, my gratitude for His grace and forgiveness, and testify to the power of the Holy Spirit working in me by:

- Treating children of all races, religions and cultures with respect and consideration, without compromising my commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Reporting any form or knowledge of child abuse to the ministry head.
- Not abusing children in any way, including but not limited to:
 - physical abuse - e.g. strike, spank, shake, slap
 - verbal / mental abuse - e.g. humiliate, degrade, threaten
 - sexual abuse - e.g. inappropriate touch, exposure, sexual approach or innuendo
- Not indulging in the consumption of alcohol, tobacco or illegal substances in the course of any church related events including children or young people lest I tarnish the reputation of the Church and its founding precepts.

I understand that any violation of this Code may be grounds for termination of my paid or voluntary service and may result in discipline or other action by the Church.

Knowing that the Lord Jesus Christ changes people, it is nevertheless incumbent upon us to ask the following in the spirit of the utmost prudence and care and mindful of the fact that you have voluntarily entered into this ministry, whether professionally or as an unpaid helper, which has in its care the most vulnerable, namely children.

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to or have charges pending concerning any crime?

If yes, please explain.

Yes / No

Are you in possession either in physical or electronic form of any material that can be regarded as pornographic?

Yes / No

Do you undertake to abstain from looking at or disseminating pornographic material?

Yes / No

Have you ever been accused of abuse towards children of any kind?
(as detailed under point 3 above)

Yes / No

If yes, please give details and specify outcomes of any investigation that took place.

Do you have, or have had, any contagious disease, health problem, or emotional illness that would currently place children, other leaders or yourself at risk?

Yes / No

If yes please explain.

We may call for references from those who know you or refer to previous churches. Do you have any reason to believe that such a reference would disclose any negative information?

If yes please explain.

Yes / No

Is your name listed in Part B of the National Child Protection Register? Yes / No

I recognise that, as a condition to my paid or voluntary service, references may be contacted, a background check may be made and a criminal history check may be conducted, and I willingly consent to all such checks.

I further authorise my references to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with children.

I release the Church and all such references from any and all liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you, and I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

By signing below, I affirm that I have carefully read and understand, and that I accept this Code of Ethics and the Gracefields Child Protection Policy.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns about these documents, any Church policies, or any aspect of my service with the Church I will contact the Member Responsible for Child Protection for clarification and guidance.

I acknowledge that all the information I have provided is true and complete and that I have not withheld information regarding my past.

As a Christian, I confirm that any unbiblical lifestyle, including among other things, child abuse, and sexual immorality, could disqualify me from either paid or volunteer service and render me liable to prosecution.

Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Signature of Parent/ Guardian (for under 18s) _____

NB: We're aware that filling out this form might be a sensitive and painful thing to do for those who themselves have been victims of some form of abuse in the past. If you would like to seek support about any such past incident in which you have suffered abuse please speak to Murray Anderson in person. Please be assured that any such conversation will be treated in strictest confidence

4.4 Appendix 4: Teen Ministry Guidelines



Teens' Ministry Guidelines

You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous, and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting, and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

1 Thessalonians 2:10-12

a. Introduction

- i. We believe that all Christians have the responsibility of encouraging others to follow Jesus. In every setting, this is to be done in a way that is holy, righteous and blameless – worthy of the God we proclaim.
- ii. In addition to our formal ministries at church, this encouragement can take place online, or during one-on-one, or one-to-a-few, meetings. These meetings create the space for bible reading, personal sharing, prayer, and mentorship.
- iii. When it comes to Teens' Ministry, this dimension of discipleship is something we want to approach thoughtfully and carefully. By virtue of their age, and maturity, teenagers are especially vulnerable to abuse. Further, they are rightfully afforded extra protection by South African law as legal minors.
- iv. However, teenagers are also in a stage-of-life where they benefit enormously from the loving wisdom and attention of older Christian brothers or sisters. This guide, therefore, is not written

to discourage or create a fearful culture. Rather, it is written to safeguard against the danger of sin, which resides in leaders and teens alike, and which threatens the Gospel we proclaim.

- v. Our hope is that this can empower the right people to meet teens in a way that is safe and beyond reproach, so that those involved in teen ministry can get down to the work of sharing Jesus!

b. What are appropriate ways to communicate with teens online?

- i. Ultimate responsibility for teenager's access to online communication resides with their parents. Parents exercise their own wisdom in deciding when their children are given access to cell phones, and the degree of access they have to the online world.
- ii. Our responsibility is to communicate with teens in these spaces in a way that is blameless and wise. This will protect both the teenagers and us from ungodliness or accusation.

c. Online Messaging

- i. Online communication should be limited to the same gender. Leaders should not pursue online conversation with the opposite gender.
- ii. Communication should be limited to text-based, or voice-note, communication. These messages should be stored or archived so that they can be produced upon request.
- iii. No communication should take place using 'disappearing message' functions.
- iv. Since WhatsApp allows messages to be deleted by a sender, leaders should screenshot received messages/photos that need to be reported, and report this immediately to the youth worker or child protection officer.
- v. Leaders should not engage in excessive or intimate messaging with any individual, nor should they converse with teenagers late at night (after 9pm).
- vi. Leaders may never contact a teenager under an anonymous online identity.

d. Phone Calls

- i. Phone calls should be avoided since we can't produce a record of the conversation.

- ii. However, phone calls are permitted to communicate urgent logistical details (i.e. calling to confirm transport).
- iii. Additionally, phone calls are permitted in the case a serious/urgent pastoral situation. In such a case the adult should record the nature of the call and communicate it to the youth worker immediately afterwards.

e. Social Media

- i. Leaders may allow teenagers to add/follow them on social media. Similarly, they may add/follow teenagers on social media with the following understandings:
 - 1. The teenager has the permission of their parents to be on that account. If the leader is concerned that the parents are unaware of their teenager's conduct, they should communicate this to the parents or the youth worker.
 - 2. The youth worker is given equivalent social media access as the teenagers.
 - 3. The leaders conduct on social media corresponds with their Christian profession. If their online conduct is inconsistent, the youth worker will ask the leader to step down from their ministry roles and remove the teenagers' access.

f. Who may meet with teenagers?

- i. At Gracefields we restrict one-on-one meetings with teens to those who meet all the following:
 - 1. The person must adhere to the provisions around Child Protection Clearances, as per Section 1.6 of this Policy.
 - 2. The person must have been a part of the church for at least 6 months.
 - 3. The person must be approved by the youth worker.
 - 4. The person's one-on-one meetings must be made known to the youth worker.

g. What are the expectations for meeting with teenagers?

- i. Before meeting a teen, the leader must discuss it with the youth worker and be given the go-ahead to meet with the teen.

- ii. Further, the person must have the permission of the parent/guardian of that teen.
- iii. Leaders should never meet with any teen of the opposite gender.
- iv. Leaders who experience same-sex attraction should exercise additional caution. Ideally, this should be communicated confidentially with the youth worker, which will allow for extra accountability and safeguarding.
- v. In the unusual event that a leader needs to meet with a teenager of the opposite gender, this may only ever happen as the companion of another leader of the same gender.
- vi. Leaders should only ever meet with a teen in the following places:
 - 1. a public place (e.g. a coffee shop, beach, or park).
 - 2. a public space at the church buildings.
- vii. Leaders should never meet a teenager for a one-on-one in a home, or in a room with a closed door.
- viii. Leaders should be able to produce a record of when and where they met with a teenager (Leaders may consider keeping a diary or allowing their phones to track their location).

h. A note on serious pastoral issues

- i. Leaders should never promise to keep their conversations with a teenager confidential. Leaders may assure teenagers that they will hold their conversations in confidence and not gossip. However, our first obligation is to the wellbeing of the teenager and the state's laws.
- ii. The following disclosures need to be communicated to the youth worker and child protection officer (who will, if necessary, take it to the appropriate authorities):
 - 1. Abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, or spiritual)
 - 2. Crime
 - 3. Physical danger
 - 4. Self-harm
 - 5. Suicidal ideation

i. What are the expectations for transporting a teenager?

- i. Leaders may only transport teenagers with the permission of their parents.

- ii. Leaders should only ever transport the teen/s directly to, or from, the meeting venue with no detours or 'parking off'.
- iii. Sitting in a parked car does not constitute a public meeting place.
- iv. Teens must be transported according to the South African law: seatbelts must be worn, drivers must have legal licenses and keep to the speed limits.

j. Conclusion

- i. If you are worried that your conduct has contravened or could be construed to have contravened these guidelines, *always* err on the side of overcommunicating with your Youth Worker. Remember that we do this all for our merciful saviour: *'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.'* (1 John. 1:9).
 - ii. May this all be to His glory
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