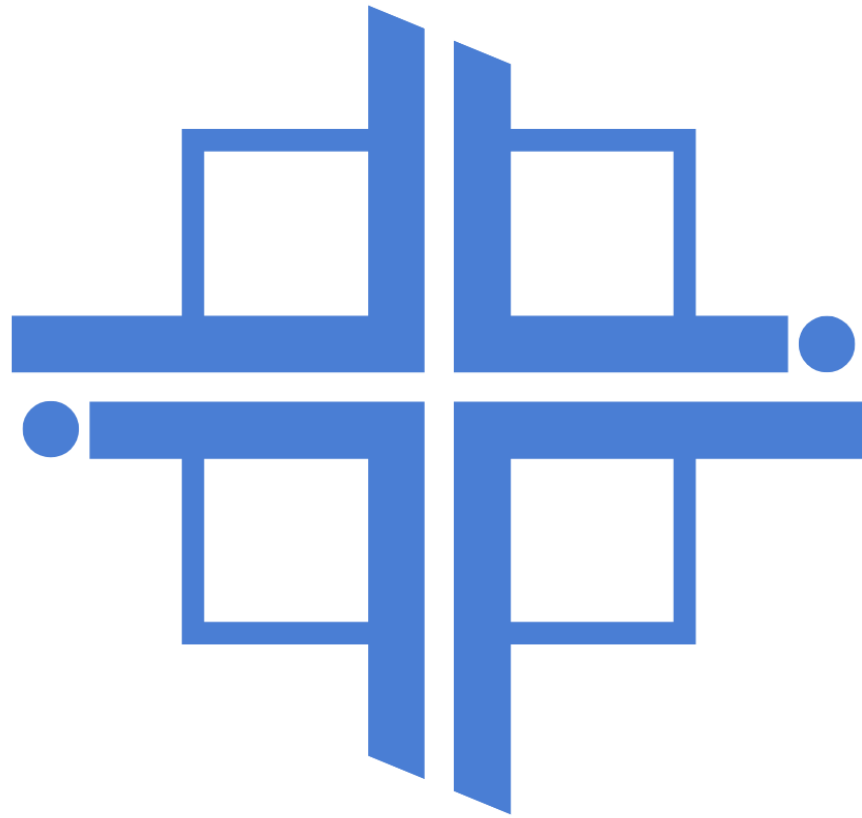




Ambassador International Church

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Policy (Version 9, Sep 2026)

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1. Introduction

Ambassador International Church ('the Church') is committed to safeguarding both children and adults from risk of harm and actual harm. We recognise the important role that the church has in caring for everyone 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 that is open and transparent, respectful and active listening
- Active managing risks, safely recruiting and supporting all those with any caring responsibility within the church, and ensuring clear accountability
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding appropriately to those who may pose a present risk to others.

The care and protection of children and adults involved in the life and activities of the 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.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all personnel of the Church, including but not limited to those in paid and volunteer positions, formal Church members and participants of any church events, to safeguard children and adults at risk.

3. Definitions and Meanings

- **A child:** any person aged 0-17 participating in any events organized by the Church, regardless of whether their parents or caregivers attend or are members of the Church.
 - **A Youth:** any person aged 11-17 is a youth and can attend events such as Youth Group.
- **A Church Member:** someone who has completed the process of becoming our Church Member, including interview and formal introduction to the Church on a Sunday, and is therefore a registered member of our Church.
- **Participants:** someone who participates in our Church events (e.g. Sunday service, retreats) but is not a registered member of the Church.
- **A Volunteer:** a Church Member aged 18 or above who volunteers to teach and/or assist in the Church's regular activities and programs (e.g. Children's Sunday Club, mid-week groups). All Volunteers at the Church must be Church Members.
- **A Ministry Leader:** a Volunteer who has additional responsibilities of leading and organizing the Church's regular activities and programs, including but not limited to recruiting more Volunteers, maintaining rotas, and determining curricula.
- **The Staff team:** paid staff of the Church who oversee and manage different functions of the Church.
- **Senior Pastor:** A Staff team member and Pastor providing leadership and oversight to the staff, other pastors and the broader church.
- **The Elders:** a group of Church members who are Volunteers and not part of the Staff team, but serve alongside the Senior Pastor to provide leadership and oversight. They also form the Board

of Directors who have the authority to employ and terminate any staff, including the Senior Pastor.

- **Other partners and vendors:** these include but are not limited to staff at the venue the Church rents for Sunday gatherings and retreats, as well as external teams that run the children's programme at our annual Church retreat.
- **Church events:**
 - Regular church events involving children include but are not limited to:
 - Sunday Club (for ages 0-10) and Youth Group (for ages 11-17), which run concurrent to church services on Sunday;
 - Summer Kids Club (for ages 3-7) that runs during July and August as one combined class;
 - Women's Group on Wednesday morning during term time, where childcare is provided;
 - Other church events involving children include but are not limited to:
 - Children's programme during our annual Church retreat;
 - Church meetings at the church office, where childcare is provided;
 - Occasional Church social event involving children such as Church picnic.
- **Social Media:** this refers to popular online platform including but not limited to Facebook and Instagram, as well as messaging apps such as WhatsApp and WeChat.
- **Personal Data:** any 'information which relates to a living individual and can be used to identify that individual. It must also exist in a form which access to or processing of is practicable'.¹ It also includes data of children.
- **Child abuse:** 'any act of commission or omission that endangers or impairs the physical/psychological health and development of an individual under the age of 18'.²
- **Safeguarding:** the responsibility to ensure that everyone the Church engages with are protected from the risk of or actual harm from the Church's representatives, projects and operations through appropriate protocols and practices.³

4. Recognizing abuse

4.1 Types of abuse in children

Physical abuse

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

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact and penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts. The child does not consent to or fully understand the sexual activity due to their age.⁴

¹ Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, The Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, https://www.pcpd.org.hk/english/data_privacy_law/ordinance_at_a_Glance/ordinance.html, accessed 21 July 2026

² Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation, Revised 2026, p.24

³ Adapted from the definition by Save the Children Hong Kong, https://savethechildren.org.hk/en/local-work/about-child-safeguarding/#child_safeguarding_diagram, accessed 21 July 2026.

⁴ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation, Revised 2026, p.27

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs that endangers or impairs the child's health or development in the long run.⁵

Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse is a repeated pattern of behaviour between carer and child, or an extreme incident that damages the child's physical and psychological health.⁶ This could be emotional detachment, disdain or terrorizing the child. Some level of psychological abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is a form of psychological abuse characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context.⁷ The abuser often uses religious texts or teaching, or their position in the religious institution to manipulate and exploit others.

Bullying

While bullying can include elements of physical, psychological and sexual abuse, it is marked by its repetition, malicious intent, and an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim. Apart from physical and verbal bullying, this can take the form of indirect bullying such as boycotting and cyberbullying.⁸

For further explanation on the above types of abuse, please refer to Appendix 1.

5. Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

5.1 The Safeguarding Officer

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

The Safeguarding Officer at Ambassador International Church is Zoe Brannagan.

The Volunteer Safeguarding Officer is Deryck Chan, who should be spoken to if Zoe Brannagan is unavailable.

If an allegation/concern involves one of the Safeguarding Officers, you should contact either the Senior Pastor or the Elders.

We are committed to fostering an environment of accountability and integrity where individuals feel safe reporting concerns. Church Members, participants and staff are strongly encouraged to report any suspected misconduct or abuse without fear of retaliation. If you have a concern regarding any of the Safeguarding Officers, please contact the Senior Pastor or the Elders. If you have a concern regarding the Senior Pastor or an Elder, please contact the Safeguarding Officers. The Church

⁵ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation, Revised 2026, p.28

⁶ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, Guide for Mandated Reporters, p.28

⁷ Oakley, L & Humphreys, J; 2018 Understanding Spiritual Abuse within Christian Communities – Summary findings published by CCPAS.

⁸ Education Bureau, Hong Kong SAR, Understanding Bullying, https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/student-guidance-discipline-services/gd-resources/anti_bullying1/index.html, accessed 7 July 2026.

prohibits adverse action, harassment, discrimination, or reprisal of any kind against anyone who reports a potential violation in good faith or participates in an investigation. All reported concerns will be treated as confidentially as possible, thoroughly reviewed, and investigated promptly.

For more details on the role of the Safeguarding Officer, please refer to Appendix 2.

5.2 Contact details

Responsible officers	Role	Contact Details*
Zoe Brannagan	Safeguarding Officer	safeguarding@ambassador.org.hk
Deryck Chan	Volunteer Safeguarding Officer	safeguarding@ambassador.org.hk
Will Zong	Senior Pastor	pastor@ambassador.org.hk
Any of the Elders (names on our website)		elders@ambassador.org.hk

***For emergencies, ring the Police on 999.**

5.3 Handling suspected abuse

Generally, there are three ways in which suspected abuse is exposed:

- Disclosure by the victim or perpetrator
- Witnessing of the abuse
- Noticing signs of abuse

If you encounter any of the above, do not carry out your own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. Report it to the Safeguarding Officers see (section 5.4).

Responding to disclosure

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.

Dos	Don'ts
• Remain calm • Encourage them to speak freely in their own words for as long as they need to • Mirror their exact wording to confirm understanding • Ask open-ended questions (e.g. 'Can you tell me about that?', 'Could you explain what you mean?', 'Can you describe that to me?')	• Ask them to come back at another time • Fill awkward silences • Show your shock • Ask leading questions (e.g. 'Was it your mother again?') or use props (e.g. 'Did it look like this object here?')

• Use 4W's and 1H's questioning (who, what, when, where, how) • Reassure them they have done the right thing by telling you • Explain you will pass it on to the Safeguarding Officer	• Ask the same questions repeatedly (as that may demonstrate your doubts towards their claim and cause further psychological harm) • Promise confidentiality or to keep it a secret
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5.4 Flowchart: Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If you have received a disclosure, witnessed a suspected abuse, or noticed signs of suspected abuse, report the Safeguarding Officers through the following steps:

STEP 1: SAFEGUARDING CONCERN ARISES

Raised by anyone in the Church through disclosure, witnessing an incident/ abuse, or noticing signs of abuse.

STEP 2: EMERGENCY

(Immediate Medical Need / Rescue / Police)

- Call 999 immediately for the Police.
- Report to Safeguarding Officer **within 1 hour**
 - By phone, followed by the Incident Report Log
 - Directly filling in the Incident Report Log

STEP 2: NON-EMERGENCY

- Inform Safeguarding Officer **within 24 hours** through the Incident Report Log.

STEP 3: INVESTIGATION BY SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

- Officers examine evidence presented
- May meet conditionally with the child, parents/carers, or concerned individuals based on the child's best interest.
- Officers reference the Social Welfare Department (SWD) guidelines to determine severity level.
- Precautionary suspension may be applied.

CONTEXT A: CHURCH EVENT / CONDUCT (e.g. Misconduct at Church Event)

Possible Outcomes of Investigation:

- Adjustments to workflows & policies
- Informal discussion & additional training (repeated misconduct leads to suspension)
- Formal discussion with written warning & training
- Suspension from serving, Elders handle church discipline & continued discipleship
- No further action

If Concern Meets Child Abuse Threshold:

- Social Welfare Department (SWD) contacted immediately
- Police contacted if it involves a criminal offence

CONTEXT B: OUTSIDE CHURCH EVENTS (e.g., Suspected Abuse by Family Member at Home)

Possible Outcomes of Investigation:

- Provision of pastoral care and support
- Active referral to external social services
- No further action

If Concern Meets Child Abuse Threshold:

- Social Welfare Department (SWD) contacted immediately
- Police contacted if it involves a criminal offence

6. Creating a Safe Environment

A. Vision and Mission of Children's and Youth Ministry

The immediate goal is to see children put their faith in Christ, to be born again into new life and into God's family. To help fulfil this goal, the children must always be safe and protected from harm. As such, we endeavour to ensure appropriate and accountable supervision.

B. Operation & Procedures

1. Recruitment & Volunteer Roles

- **Regular Volunteers:** Regular volunteers must complete the safer recruitment process. If possible, gender representation should reflect the group (e.g., at least one woman if girls are present, and vice versa).
- **Occasional Helpers (e.g. back-up helpers, Summer Kids Club helpers):** A simplified safer recruitment process and must remain under continuous supervision. They cannot assist with taking children to the bathroom.

2. Ratios, Registers & Supervision

- **Adult-to-Child Ratios:** Maintain these standard minimums wherever possible:
 - **Under 3 years:** 1:3 | **3-4 years:** 1:4 | **4-7 years:** 1:6 | **8-10 years:** 1:8 | **11-17 years:** 1:10
- **Registers:** Keep secure, up-to-date attendance logs of all children and Volunteers for every activity.
- **Constant Supervision:** Never leave children unattended. No one under 18 may be left in charge of any child.

3. Check-in, Check-out

The following procedures are included in the registration forms for children and youth:

Sunday Club (ages 0-10)

- **Arrival:** Parents must sign their children in and be given a pick-up tag
- **Going to Class:** Parents are responsible for taking and/or making sure their children arrive at their classrooms
- **Collection:** Children must be picked up directly by their registered adult(s) with a check-in tag and formally handed over by Volunteer
- **If parents late:** The children will be kept in the classroom while a teacher, helper or the floor manager fetches the parents.

Youth (ages 11-17)

- **Arrival:** Church staff or volunteers will walk with the youth from the Church's Sunday gathering location to the Church Office.
- **Dismissal for Youth:** Parents can pick up the youth or grant permission (via the annual youth registration form) for them to be an unaccompanied walker, who will leave the church premises independently. After they leave church premises, the youth is no longer under the supervision and responsibility of church staff and volunteers.

4. Toileting & Intimate Care

Under 3 years (Creche, Wednesday Women's Group)	• Leaders do not provide intimate care or nappy changes. • Parents must be fetched. • For potty training, parents should remain in the room until the child is independent.
Ages 3 to 4 (Scramblers)	• A female leader may escort a child to the bathroom at the Conrad. • The leader will keep the ladies' bathroom doors open. • The stall door should be closed but not locked. • Help may be given but the leader should avoid doing anything the child is able to do themselves. • Parents may be fetched in case of accidents.
Ages 5 and 6 (Climbers)	• Able to use the toilet independently. • The leader will escort the child to the ladies' bathroom. • The leader will wait in the corridor.
Ages 6+ (Adventurers and Explorers)	• May make their own way to the bathrooms. • Only one child at a time i.e. they should not take a friend. • The leader must monitor and confirm the child's safe and timely return.

5. Reporting

- **Concerns & Accidents:** Log and report any concerning child behaviour or comments, as well as accidents/ injuries via the Incident Report Log to the Safeguarding Officer and Children's Ministry Leaders.

C. Code of Conduct

General principle: Third-Person Perspective

Staff and Volunteers should be aware that it is not only about what actually happened, but what was perceived by others. They should conduct themselves in such a way that there is no doubt to any onlookers that everything is above board.

1. Two-Adult Rule Situations

Staff and Volunteers should strictly avoid being alone with children behind closed doors. Instead, ensure there are **two adults in the same room at all times**.

- **If one adult needs to step out:** find another adult to be in the room (preferred) or find a clear line of sight (e.g. opening the door)
- **Unexpected Lone Scenarios:** If left alone with a child/group, immediately notify a nearby adult and keep all doors wide open.
- **Childcare at the church office (for Wednesday Women's Group and occasional church meetings):** Childcare Volunteers are safely recruited. Childcare takes place in spaces where there are windows in the doors.

2. Physical Contact

- **Standard Practice:** Must be public, open to scrutiny, age-appropriate, kept to a minimum, and child-initiated for the child's comfort/benefit. *No touching or contact with any areas that would normally be covered by a swimsuit.*
- **Bodily Autonomy:** Children decide their comfort level with physical contact (except during urgent medical emergencies).
- **Assisting a child:** if physical contact is required to assist a child (e.g. putting on a jumper), explain the nature and reason for doing so, or in an emergency (e.g. pulling a child away from an unsafe place), immediately after.
- **Peer Accountability:** Team members must watch out for one another and gently flag any contact that could be misconstrued.

3. Classroom Behavioural Management

The children's and youth ministry teams must use a unified, predictable approach. View behavior as communication (e.g., anxiety, belonging). Always model forgiveness and offer a clear path to change.

Stages for Behaviour Management

Preventive Mode	Plan engaging lessons and smooth transitions, be clear with instructions and class rules, positivity and praise
Responsive Mode	Responding to distractions or discipline situations by reminders, getting the children's attention, redirecting with choices and making other changes
Directive Mode	A three-stage warning process. Parents will be fetched by the third warning.
Never	Discipline with physical or verbal punishment Humiliate or embarrass Punish entire class for the behaviour of one student Manipulate behaviour through threatening Use spiritual manipulation Show favouritism or exclude others Participate in, condone, or excuse other unsafe, illegal or abusive actions

Further details can be found in the *AIC Children's Ministry Volunteer Handbook* distributed to all Children's Ministry Volunteers and Parents.

4. Parental Partnership

- **Parental Alignment:** Maintain regular communication with parents regarding both encouragements and behavioural struggles. Inform parents of negative behaviour whenever the leadership team agrees it is beneficial.

D. Communication guidelines for children and youth volunteers

1. Core Rules for communication with a child or youth

These are rules that apply to communication with all ages under 18:

- **Consent:** prior parental consent required for spending time alone with a child outside Church events.
- **Relational Boundaries:** any physical, sexual, flirtatious, or exploitative relationships, language, or advice is prohibited.
- **Inappropriate Media:** Never expose children to pornographic, offensive, or adult materials.

2. Guidelines for communication with Youth

We recognize that youth enjoy greater independence and access to various communication tools. These are more detailed guidelines for communicating with them.

- **Consent:** Parental consent to attend regular youth activities must be renewed *annually*. Explicit consent must be obtained for any extra meetings.
- **Same-Gender Mandate:** Leaders will be assigned to small groups by gender.
- **Parental Visibility:** All event updates (termly schedule and ad hoc communication for additional events) must be communicated electronically to parents only. All communication must be open to scrutiny.

Meetings Outside Regular Youth Group

Meetings outside regular youth group events, such as for additional bible study or counselling, must abide by the following:

- **Parental consent:** Written consent must be obtained from the parents. All follow up communication (e.g. coordinating where and when) must be through the parents and not with the youth directly. Inform and log the meeting with the overall Youth Group Leader.
- **Meet only in public settings:** such as cafes and non-secluded parks.
- **Same-gender Mandate:** Only meet with youth of the same gender.

Additionally:

- **Youth under 16:** Leaders can only meet them in a group setting with more than one youth or adult present.
- **Youth aged 16 or above:** Leaders may meet with them one-on-one for discipleship.

In general, do not meet at the youth's or the leader's home unless the parents are accompanying (e.g. inviting the youth's whole family over for dinner). Group social events should take place in public venues.

Social Media & Messaging Guidelines

Social media platforms

Leaders must not add or accept requests as friends or followers from youth on any social media platform, such as Facebook and Instagram.

Messaging

Leaders must not message, WhatsApp or use other messaging apps with the youth directly. All communication should be done via the parents. In exceptional circumstances, a chat group with the youth and two leaders (at least one of the same gender as the youth) may be set up for direct communication.

Video conferencing

No video conferencing will be scheduled for any youth events.

E. Photography and Video-recording Policy

Volunteers working with children and youth **should not take any photos** of children and youth during regular meetings, including our Sunday Services, Sunday Club and Youth Group.

1. When photos are possible:

Event	Provision
Large-scale church-wide events (e.g. church retreat)	Parents can opt out of photos on registration
Youth Group Socials	Photos distributed only to participants of the social and never posted elsewhere Parents can opt out <i>annually</i> on the Youth Group registration form
Photo-taking for promotional materials	Email the parents directly beforehand to seek consent.

2. Other Guidelines

Do's	Don'ts
Inform Audiences in Advance: Clearly state exactly where the photographs will be published (e.g., church website, or social media platforms) before shooting. Modesty: Everyone must be appropriately dressed when being photographed Use Roving Event Notifications: If taking candid or moving pictures during a large event, include a written photo notification in all advance publicity, giving individuals a clear method to opt out beforehand. Enforce Approved Photographers Only: Only allow individuals explicitly approved by church staff or youth leaders to act as designated event photographers. Group and Anonymize Child Media: Photograph children in small or mixed-age groups rather than alone, and use general, generic headings instead of identifying names. Implement Secure Digital Storing: Store all image files in a dedicated, secure folder on the church server. If sharing folders online with parents, always password-protect the folder and set a limited expiration time.	Do Not Store Files on Personal Devices: Upload photos or videos of individuals under your care to the Church shared cloud as soon as possible. Never store them on your personal phone, hard drive, computer, or personal cloud storage accounts. Do Not Duplicate or Keep Church Media: Never duplicate, save, or archive photographs taken for church purposes for your own personal use or personal memory collections. Do Not Tag or Label Children with Names: Never attach names, ages, locations, or other personally identifiable markers to any published photographs of children. Do Not Broaden Audiences Unilaterally: Do not share photos with a wider audience or on other platforms than initially agreed. If media plans expand, you must return and request fresh permission first. Do Not Ignore Close-up Boundaries: Even if a general event or implied photographic consent is in place, do not photograph specific individuals up close without getting their clear personal green-light first.

F. Safe Recruitment

The Church is committed to rigorous safer recruitment processes for all paid and voluntary roles working with children or adults at risk of harm. The following steps must be completed before any service begins.

1. Recruitment

	Paid Staff & Trainees	Volunteers
Role Description, Advertisement	Formal job description and person specification, including responsibilities and skills/ experience	A volunteer responsibility description
Application	1. Full CV/resumé and formal shortlisting	1. Expression of interest 2. Approached by staff or ministry leader
Interview	By a minimum of two people, including at least one elder	Informal discussion with Ministry Leader Approved by the Senior Pastor
Prior to Appointment	Prospective Staff Declaration Form completed Reference check completed A Sexual Conviction Record Check (SCRC)	Volunteer Declaration Form completed* Reference check completed**

*Re-submission is required if there has been a break of service for 3 or more years.

**Occasional helpers are exempt from reference check

2. Appointment & Induction

- Upon mutual agreement, the appropriate employment contract or volunteer declaration is signed.
- All paid roles are subject to a **probationary period** to assess suitability.
- If the role requires frequent contact with children, safeguarding training must be completed before independent service begins.

3. Ongoing Accountability & Supervision

- **Membership:** All staff, leaders, and volunteers must be registered church members and are strongly encouraged to join a small group for their own encouragement and support.
- **Supervision Structure:**
 - *Staff:* Supervised by their line manager.
 - *Group Leaders:* Supervised by designated staff members.
 - *Team Volunteers:* Supervised and supported directly by their Group Leaders.
- **Meeting Standing Item:** Safeguarding must be a standing agenda item at all ministry team meetings. Any concerns must be raised immediately with a Safeguarding Officer.

- **Volunteer commitment:** volunteers renew their commitment to children's and youth ministries annually.

4. Training

- All Staff and Volunteers in pastoral care or youth/children's ministries must complete **regular safeguarding training**.
- For Volunteers for youth/ children's ministries, this includes:
 - a self-paced, online training provided by the Church is required once every 3 years
 - attending the annual Sunday Club volunteer meeting in August, which includes safeguarding training.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Further explanation on types of abuse

Children

Sexual abuse

Examples of penetrative sexual acts include rape or oral sex, while examples of non-penetrative acts include 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.

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.

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.⁹

Neglect

Neglect may take the following forms:

- Neglect for Supervision/ Care, such as leaving a child alone in circumstances beyond what is reasonable given the child's age, failing to pay adequate attention to the child's basic needs or safety, or entrusting childcare to an inappropriate individual (e.g. an older child)¹⁰
- Neglect for Living Conditions/ Environment, such as a hazardous environment that endangers the child's life or health, allowing children to be exposed to drug abuse¹¹
- Neglect for Personal Hygiene and/or Clothing, such as a state of extreme lack of personal hygiene for a prolonged period, or inadequate clothing for the weather conditions¹²
- Neglect for Diet, such as failure to provide an adequate and appropriate diet for the child¹³
- Neglect for necessary medical or mental health treatment¹⁴
- Neglect for providing education or educational needs¹⁵

⁹ *Part XII of the Crimes Ordinance* (Cap. 200). <https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap200>

¹⁰ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Guide for Mandated Reporters*, p.82

¹¹ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Guide for Mandated Reporters*, p.104

¹² Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Guide for Mandated Reporters*, p.123

¹³ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Guide for Mandated Reporters*, p.143

¹⁴ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation*, Revised 2026, p.28

¹⁵ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, *Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation*, Revised 2026, p.29

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse and subsequent refusal to avoid drug usage, 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 also be neglected.

Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse may involve:

- Neglecting the child's emotional need e.g. being detached and uninvolved, failing to express care and affection
- Verbal or nonverbal acts that convey disdain, degradation, rejection or dislike of a child, including consistent singling out one child for criticism, punishment or humiliation
- Terrorizing the child, such as threatening to hurt the child or their loved ones or objects in recognisably dangerous situations (e.g. out of the window of a tall building)
- Unreasonably limiting the child's opportunities to interact with others inside or outside home¹⁶
- Instilling incorrect values in them e.g. stealing is acceptable

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse may include: 'manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use 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.'¹⁷

Bullying

Bullying can take the following forms:

- Physical bullying: punching, kicking, slapping, hitting, pulling hair, extorting money or properties
- Verbal bullying: intimidating, cursing, defaming, mockery, making malicious fun of somebody by attacking their personal characteristics (e.g. appearance, ability, ethnicity)
- Indirect bullying: spreading rumours, being hostile, ignoring, boycotting
- Cyber-bullying: spreading rumours, making insulting remarks or other personal attacks through electronic means, such as emails, texting, social media¹⁸

¹⁶ Hong Kong Social Welfare Department, Guide for Mandated Reporters, p.38

¹⁷ Oakley, L & Humphreys, J; 2018 Understanding Spiritual Abuse within Christian Communities – Summary findings published by CCPAS.

¹⁸ Education Bureau, Hong Kong SAR, Understanding Bullying, https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/student-guidance-discipline-services/gd-resources/anti_bullying1/index.html, accessed 7 July 2026.

Appendix 2: Role of the Safeguarding Officer

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officer are as follows:

- Act as an advocate for children 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 government agencies, as appropriate, in order to safeguard and support children 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 Church Volunteers for relevant ministry areas to ensure that they are supported in leading their teams and implementing safeguarding best practice.

Appendix 3: References

Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong SAR, Protecting Children from Maltreatment Procedural Guide for Multi-disciplinary Co-operation, (Revised 2020)

Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong SAR, Guide for Mandated Reporters (Updated 2026)

The Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UN)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (UN)

The Children Act 1989 (UK) and 2005 (South Africa)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (UK)

The Care Act 2014 (UK)

The legislative framework that underpins this policy 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

Appendix 4: Additional Charities/ Sources of Help

Emergency assistance

Other sources for an ambulance

St. John's Ambulance: 1878 000

Fire Services Department: 2735 3355

Social Welfare Department

To contact a social worker for brief counselling, support and advice and follow up services for those in-need.

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

Harmony House

To provide emergency support, including risk assessment, emergency shelter service, legal consultation, counselling and referrals to other services, for those in immediate danger from domestic violence.

24-hour Woman Hotline: **2522 0434**

Man Hotline: **2295 1386**

Children Hotline: **2751 8822**

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/>