

FIEC Safeguarding Policy

October 2026

1. Context

1.1. FIEC is a network of independent churches with member churches across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our mission is to see those independent churches working together with a big vision: to reach Britain for Christ.

1.2. FIEC links affiliated independent evangelical churches, providing support, and facilitating partnerships that allow member churches to achieve more together than they could individually, without compromising their independence. So we are:

1.2.1. Independent Churches:

We are passionate about supporting healthy Independency as the best model for local churches. Our desire is to make the Biblical case for Independency and to encourage independent churches to be interdependent.

1.2.2. Working together

Healthy churches are led by healthy leaders. Our networks offer help and support to pastors, women in ministry, ministry wives and other gospel workers. We work to connect churches with one another and with FIEC to help serve their mission and ministry.

1.2.3. To reach Britain for Christ

A healthy church is a growing church. We help churches to be effective in their evangelism. We give guidance for training new gospel workers while equipping existing workers to be the best leaders they can be. We offer support with planting new churches and revitalising existing ones.

1.3. Each affiliated member church is an independent charity, with its own governance arrangements and legal responsibilities.

1.3.1. Each church is accountable to the relevant charity regulator

1.3.2. FIEC has no authority over its member churches, but does have opportunity to support churches and to promote best practice amongst its

member churches. The FIEC constitution permits the trust board to disaffiliate a member church in line with clause 20.10.3

1.4. As an independent charity in its own right, FIEC is accountable to the Charity Commission for its activities.

1.4.1. We recognise that our charitable aims, vision and purpose, and positioning amongst independent evangelical churches provides opportunity for us to model best practice to our member churches

1.5 FIEC does not usually work directly with children, young people, or adults at risk of abuse, however, we recognise that in the course of our work, we may come across vulnerable people from time to time

1.5.1 FIEC organises an annual conference for individuals and families called “Rising Lights”. This is distinctly different to the other activities in which the charity engages.

1.6 FIEC also recognises that wider issues of care and wellbeing that fall below the statutory thresholds and definitions are important in the work that we do with our member churches

2. Purpose

This policy with its appendices and related documents and policies outlines how we will:

- 2.1. Ensure that we provide a healthy, nurturing, and protective environment for our staff, volunteers, others who work on our behalf, beneficiaries and anyone else who engages with our charity and that they are protected from bullying, harassment, exploitation, and abuse.
- 2.2. Ensure that if we identify abuse in the course of our ministry, it is handled effectively, promptly, and proportionately.
- 2.3. Ensure that our trustees, staff and others who work on our behalf are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and duties and are supported to competently and confidently fulfil them.
- 2.4. Provide clarity about how we will respond to safeguarding issues and the limits of our authority and involvement

3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to everyone who works on our behalf whether trustees, staff, volunteers, or others.

4. Values and beliefs

- 4.1. Everyone who engages with our charity has the right to be protected from any form of bullying or harassment, exploitation or abuse and we will seek to ensure that we provide a caring and nurturing environment that is open and transparent and that promotes the raising of concerns
- 4.2. In light of that, this policy should be read alongside policies relating to the universal tier of Safeguarding including, but not limited to: Health & Safety, Staff Handbook, Health & Wellbeing.
- 4.3. Everyone who acts on our behalf, in any capacity, has a responsibility to act in accordance with the FIEC Values.
- 4.4. Our approach to safeguarding is shaped by our belief as Christians that:
 - 4.4.1. We are to honour the authorities that God has set over us and to live as responsible and good citizens in the time and place that God has set us, living as God would have us live, setting a good example to those around us.
 - 4.4.2. Every human life is valuable to God and each person bears his image
 - 4.4.3. We live in a fallen and sinful world, where there are many risks and dangers and we must seek to protect everyone, but particularly the vulnerable in our midst, from those dangers.
 - 4.4.4. God cares for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger; he calls us to protect and care for those who are vulnerable in our society and to oppose exploitation
 - 4.4.5. Jesus' example was one of valuing, accepting, and caring about everyone and we are to follow his example; loving those around us as God loves them and to seek to bring healing, restoration, and reconciliation to broken and damaged lives by the manifestation of the love of God through us.
 - 4.4.6. That we are to bear witness to the truth as revealed by God in the scriptures, speaking truth in love and with all gentleness, loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us, and treating those with whom we disagree with respect and courtesy; acknowledging, respecting and seeking to uphold the freedom of thought, practice and expression of belief for all.
 - 4.4.7. That the Christian gospel is advanced through example of life and by declaration of the message. It cannot be advanced by force or through violence, but by the spirit of God who convicts and convinces; empowering those who submit to his authority to obedient life and ongoing transformation and greater conformity to the likeness of Christ

- 4.4.8. We seek to encourage and challenge one another to grow in faith, knowledge and obedience to God and reflecting his character and heart for both justice and mercy

5. Our responsibilities and commitments

5.1. Our responsibilities

- 5.1.1. To develop and maintain a healthy organisational environment and culture that is protective, caring and nurturing of all who engage with the charity, whether staff, volunteers, or beneficiaries.
- 5.1.2. To ensure that all who engage with us, whether in person or online, and particularly those who disagree with our theological or other positions, are treated with respect and courtesy in line with the FIEC Values.
- 5.1.3. To ensure that our staff, volunteers, or others who act on our behalf operate in accordance with our policies, procedures and codes of conduct
- 5.1.4. To seek to ensure that our staff, volunteers or others who act on our behalf are protected from bullying, harassment, abuse or exploitation from others outside the organisation
- 5.1.5. To ensure that we operate in an open, transparent, and accountable manner, listening to and taking seriously any allegations or concerns about our staff or volunteers or our systems and processes
- 5.1.6. To ensure that we have clear, proportionate, and appropriate policies and procedures for dealing with concerns and that we respond proportionately and in a timely manner if safeguarding concerns that meet statutory thresholds are identified
- 5.1.7. To provide leadership by example and to encourage and challenge our member churches to strive for excellence in safeguarding
- 5.1.8. That we act in concord with the obligations place upon us as a charity, including upholding good practice as identified by the Charity Commission from time to time

5.2. How we will seek to fulfil these responsibilities

- 5.2.1. We will seek to visibly demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding throughout the organisation, and our trustees and senior leaders will support the development of best practice and provide accountability to everyone who works (whether paid or voluntarily) on our behalf; including providing accountability and challenge to each other
- 5.2.2. We will ensure that those who are responsible for safeguarding at the various levels of the organisation are appropriately trained and supported to competently and confidently fulfil their role

- 5.2.3. We will actively seek to create and maintain a culture that is consistent with our biblical principles, charitable purposes and best practice in safeguarding
- 5.2.4. We will ensure that we have robust and relevant policies, procedures and systems that support the culture of our organisation and the work of all those involved in safeguarding, and that these are reviewed for effectiveness at least annually
- 5.2.5. We will ensure that we appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead and at least one deputy who will take responsibility for leading safeguarding across the organisation
 - 5.2.5.1. Safeguarding will be promoted and overseen by our senior leaders
 - 5.2.5.2. Delegation of tasks and responsibilities will be clearly outlined in the relevant role descriptions and the organisation's safeguarding structures, complete with contact details, will be included in our procedures and made publicly available
- 5.2.6. Although the majority of FIEC ministry does not usually involve regulated activity, safeguarding and the suitability of applicants will be considered when appointing to staff and volunteer positions. See appendix 5 for details regarding Rising Lights.
- 5.2.7. We will provide effective leadership, management and support to our staff and volunteers who deliver services on our behalf including:
 - 5.2.7.1. Ongoing training and skills development
 - 5.2.7.2. Supervision and pastoral support
 - 5.2.7.3. Quality and performance management measures
- 5.2.8. We will ensure that we consider safety in all areas of our work and ministry;
 - 5.2.8.1. Developing a positive culture
 - 5.2.8.2. Managing health and safety through effective policies and procedures, risk assessment and management, and maintenance of proportionate systems
 - 5.2.8.3. Creating a positive and nurturing environment in all aspects of the community, including physical, social, emotional, psychological, spiritual etc environments
 - 5.2.8.4. Considering the online as well as the physical environments; including our use of social media and technology
- 5.2.9. We will ensure that we monitor the conduct of our staff and that we have policies, procedures and systems for managing allegations against staff or volunteers, supported by a culture of listening to allegations and responding with rigour, fairness, and transparency

- 5.2.10. We will ensure that our expectations in relation to the conduct of staff, volunteers and others who act on our behalf are clear through codes of conduct, policies and procedures including:
- 5.2.10.1. Anti-bullying and zero-tolerance approach to bullying; including cyber-bullying and the bullying of staff and leaders
 - 5.2.10.2. Clear accountability processes and sanctions for infringements of the codes of conduct
 - 5.2.10.3. Equality and diversity and a culture of zero-tolerance of discriminatory or abusive attitudes, language or behaviours
- 5.2.11. We will seek to be vigilant and to identify concerns about the safety or wellbeing of those who engage with the charity and to address these appropriately and proportionately:
- 5.2.11.1. To signpost or refer them to local or national services that can help them
 - 5.2.11.2. To provide information, guidance and support as we are able, to help them overcome their challenges
 - 5.2.11.3. To share information appropriately with statutory agencies where we have concerns about the safety of an individual and statutory thresholds and / or criteria are met
- 5.2.12. We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements.
- 5.2.13. We will ensure that our culture and our policies and procedures, facilitate and encourage the raising of concerns or complaints, dealing with those concerns in an efficient, open, honest and fair manner; including clear appeals processes
- 5.2.13.1. Where such concerns or complaints are safeguarding issues they will be responded to in line with this policy and with reference to the complaints policy
 - 5.2.13.2. All other concerns or complaints will be responded to in line with our complaints policy
- 5.2.14. We will develop a culture that expects our staff, volunteers and others who act on our behalf to identify and raise concerns and will support this with a clear whistleblowing policy
- 5.2.15. We will ensure that we provide our members churches with clear guidance concerning expectations in relation to safeguarding.

Safeguarding Procedures

6. Purpose

These procedures aim to provide staff and volunteers with clear and simple instructions as to how safeguarding is promoted and how concerns should be handled. They are not provided for training purposes and will not be used as a substitute for training.

7. Scope

These procedures will be applied to all staff, volunteers and others who act on behalf of FIEC.

8. Governance and oversight

The Trust Board, will provide effective oversight of safeguarding across the charity by:

- 8.1. Promoting the importance of safeguarding and leading the development of a culture that is biblically faithful, healthy, transparent, and accountable across the organisation
- 8.2. Ensuring that a proportionate and legally compliant safeguarding policy is in place and that it is reviewed by the Trust Board with input and support from the DSL at least annually, but more frequently as required
- 8.3. Ensuring that we provide leadership to our member churches by promoting best practice, ensuring clarity of expectations, and leading by example
- 8.4. Ensuring that a suitably knowledgeable and appropriately skilled Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is appointed and that they are adequately supported and resourced;
- 8.5. Ensuring that the DSL provides updates to the Trust Board in a timely manner on any safeguarding matters raised (this should not contain any information that would identify either an individual, or a member church)
- 8.6. Ensuring that a comprehensive risk register is maintained on an ongoing basis
 - 8.6.1. The risk register must cover all high-level strategic risks including data security and reputational risks
- 8.7. Ensuring that the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is reviewed annually in line with the review of the policy and procedures
- 8.8. That role clarity is achieved through a clear definition of the responsibilities of all those involved in safeguarding across the charity

9. Recruitment and ongoing support of staff and volunteers

The recruitment and support of staff and volunteers is important to FIEC's work and ministry. In order to fulfil our legal duties and to ensure we meet the still higher standards dictated by scripture, all staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate recruitment processes.

9.1 Management of recruitment processes

- 9.1.1 Since FIEC does not usually engage in any ministry to children, young people or adults at risk of abuse, roles do not qualify for DBS Checks. Rising Lights is an exception to this – see appendix 5
- 9.1.2 Care will be taken to ensure that staff and volunteers have an understanding of safeguarding as it relates to their role
- 9.1.3 A log of safeguarding training provided to staff and volunteers will be maintained
- 9.1.4 Staff and volunteers will be provided with written job / role descriptions and person specifications
- 9.1.5 Staff and volunteers will be asked to sign a Safeguarding self-declaration.

9.2 Training

- 9.2.1 Staff and volunteers will be required to attend proportionate and relevant safeguarding training and to ensure that they understand the relevant policies and procedures including the safeguarding policy. Trustees will receive initial induction / training. There is no requirement for formal update training, however, the trustees must ensure that they are competent in their role and that their knowledge of compliance with legislation and Charity Commission guidance up to date
 - 9.2.1.1 Staff and volunteers with formal volunteer agreements involved in working with member churches or in other public facing roles are required to update their training at least every three years
 - 9.2.1.2 All staff and volunteers will undergo some informal update activity annually

FIEC's theological positions have been clearly stated and are available on our website: fiec.org.uk. These form part of the governing documents and the Trustees are legally obliged to uphold these positions.

Given the nature of the work of FIEC it is unlikely that FIEC will have to deal with a high volume of safeguarding concerns. This poses particular challenges in relation to competence and vigilance. FIEC has identified the following areas that may be of particular relevance to our safeguarding and which will be included in our training:

- Domestic abuse
- Organisational power dynamics
- The abuse of power or authority, including the misuse of Scripture
- Manipulative coercive and / or controlling behaviours
- Bullying, intimidation, and harassment
- Responding to disclosures of historic abuse
- Understanding and responding well to victims of trauma

10. Responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns and disclosures

Given the nature of FIEC's work, there are two contexts in which it is anticipated that staff or others representing FIEC may become aware of safeguarding concerns:

- Concerns identified or disclosed during, or in relation to, FIEC ministry or events
- Concerns identified or disclosed while a representative of FIEC is engaged in ministry in or to a member or potential member church.

In both contexts, the first step is to ensure the immediate safety of those involved

Allegations or disclosures made via social media will not be entertained by FIEC; those making allegations or disclosures in this way will be redirected to the safeguarding policy of the relevant organisation or FIEC's own policy

Managing immediate risk

10.1 Upon identification of a concern or receipt of a disclosure, an assessment as to whether any immediate action is necessary to protect individuals involved such as requesting urgent medical attention or police presence

10.2 The seeking of advice should not unnecessarily delay or prevent the protective action or place the individual at risk of further or increased harm, but advice may be sought from the DSL (in the case of FIEC ministry/events) or the member church's Designated Safeguarding Lead in the case of a concern identified or disclosed in that context.

10.3 In such urgent situations and if the appropriate person cannot be immediately contacted, the worker should contact either the police on 999 or the appropriate local social services to obtain support. Under such circumstances, the appropriate person should be notified at the earliest possible opportunity

Concerns identified or disclosed during, or in relation to, FIEC ministry or events:

Reporting concerns to the DSL

10.4 Once it has been established that an individual is not, or is no longer in imminent danger, the concern will be reported to FIEC's DSL or their deputy.

10.5 Advice will be sought from a professional safeguarding organisation (this may be done anonymously) to determine the appropriate course of action

Concerns identified or disclosed while a representative of FIEC is engaged in ministry in or to a member or potential member church (E.g. a concern identified or disclosed while preaching or speaking at a church on behalf of FIEC).

10.6 The FIEC representative will consider immediate safety (see 10.1-10.3 above) but will pass the matter to the church leadership / DSL (or in the case of an allegation against the DSL to the deputy DSL) as soon as it is safe to do so

10.7 The FIEC representative will report the matter to the FIEC DSL using the usual process

10.8 The FIEC DSL will make contact with the church DSL to ensure that any necessary information has been provided and that there is a common understanding that the church are dealing with the matter

11 Allegations against or concerns about FIEC staff and volunteers

FIEC takes allegations against our staff and volunteers very seriously and will ensure that they are investigated thoroughly, via a transparent process that expedites the matter in a timely manner. We will seek to manage the process effectively and while the investigation takes place, we will seek to support the person accused in line with our legal responsibilities while also managing real, potential or perceived risks to others. Where the outcome of an investigation reveals misconduct by a staff member, FIEC will follow our disciplinary policy and procedures as outlined in the staff handbook, ensuring compliance with the ACAS code of practice.

Allegations of a safeguarding nature that meet a threshold for statutory reporting

11.1 The Executive Director will, at the earliest opportunity, consult with / refer to relevant statutory agencies

11.2 The Executive Director will work with, and under, the guidance of the statutory agencies to ensure that the allegation is thoroughly investigated, and all issues raised are addressed. Support can be requested from Christian Safeguarding Services at any time

11.3 Where appropriate, a serious incident report will be made to the Charity Commission or to such statutory authorities as the Trust Board feel is appropriate so as to fulfil their obligations.

Allegations that do not meet the thresholds for statutory reporting or of a non-safeguarding nature

11.4 The Executive Director will, in consultation with the National Director and / or the Chair of Trustees, respond to the concerns or allegations made in line with the complaints policy.

Basis of policy and legal framework This policy is consistent with: • Current legislation • National guidance • Local arrangements Our charitable objectives, governing documents and doctrinal statements		
Related policies and procedures This policy should be read in conjunction with: • Our statement of Faith • Our governing documents • Our complaints policy • Our staff handbook		
Policy due for review: October 2027	Policy last reviewed: October 2026	Last review conducted / approved by: The FIEC Trust Board

Appendix 1 Safeguarding role allocation

Contact for safeguarding

FIEC's safeguarding team can be contacted via safeguarding@fiec.org.uk or 01858 43 45 40

Governance / strategic level

Legal compliance and final responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Trust Board.

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that safeguarding is considered during strategic decision making
- Overseeing the DSLs work and ensuring they are adequately resourced for their roles
- Reviewing the policy on an annual basis

Operational level

Name: Phil Topham

Role: Designated Safeguarding Lead

E-mail: phil.topham@fiec.org.uk

Phone: 01858 411553

Name: Hannah Hutchinson

Role: Designated Safeguarding Lead

E-mail: hannah.hutchinson@fiec.org.uk

Phone: 01858 411552

The Designated Safeguarding Leads, are responsible for:

- Supporting the Trust Board in developing and reviewing appropriate policies and procedures
- Implementing the safeguarding policy
- Ensuring appropriate training is delivered and records are kept
- Responding to safeguarding concerns or allegations raised

Details of external specialist support:

31:8

Phone: **0303 003 1111**

Email (non-urgent): advice@thirtyoneeight.org

Christian Safeguarding Services advice line

Phone: 0116 218 4420

E-mail: info@thecss.co.uk

Appendix 2

Allegations against or concerns about Trust Board members

- If the allegation or concern relates specifically to their role as Trust Board member, it will be handled according to the procedure for staff and volunteers, however the relevant aspects of this procedure will also apply.
 - o The Trust board member will be required to notify their church (and/ or any other relevant organisations) of the allegation and to provide contact details for the person handling the allegation at FIEC.
 - o Information will be shared as appropriate to allow those organisations to assess and manage any associated risks (including reputational risks).
- If an allegation is made against a Trust Board member that relates to a role outside FIEC (e.g., in their local church), the following procedure will apply:
 - o The trustee must inform the Chair of Trustees, unless a conflict of interest is identified in which case they must inform the Vice Chair of the Trustees, of the allegation as soon as possible (ideally within 10 working days) and provide contact details for the person handling of the allegation within the responsible organisation, hereafter referred to as the Responsible Organisation Contact Person (ROCP).
 - o The Chair of Trustees will make contact with the ROCP to confirm the action being taken, to establish whether there are any risks (including reputational risks) that FIEC need to manage, and to request that the outcome is communicated to FIEC.
 - o The Chair of Trustees in conjunction with the Vice Chair will assess the situation and decide whether the Trust board member should be suspended from their role while the matter is investigated. The relevant information needs to be communicated to the Trust Board or other relevant bodies.

- o *N.B. suspension is a neutral act that does not prejudice the outcome of the considerations by the responsible organisation.*

- o Once the matter has been concluded by the responsible organisation, the outcome will be considered by the Chair of Trustees with the Vice Chair to ascertain whether any follow up action is required (e.g., ending suspension from the board, considering removal of the Trustee, responding to media/external enquiries etc).

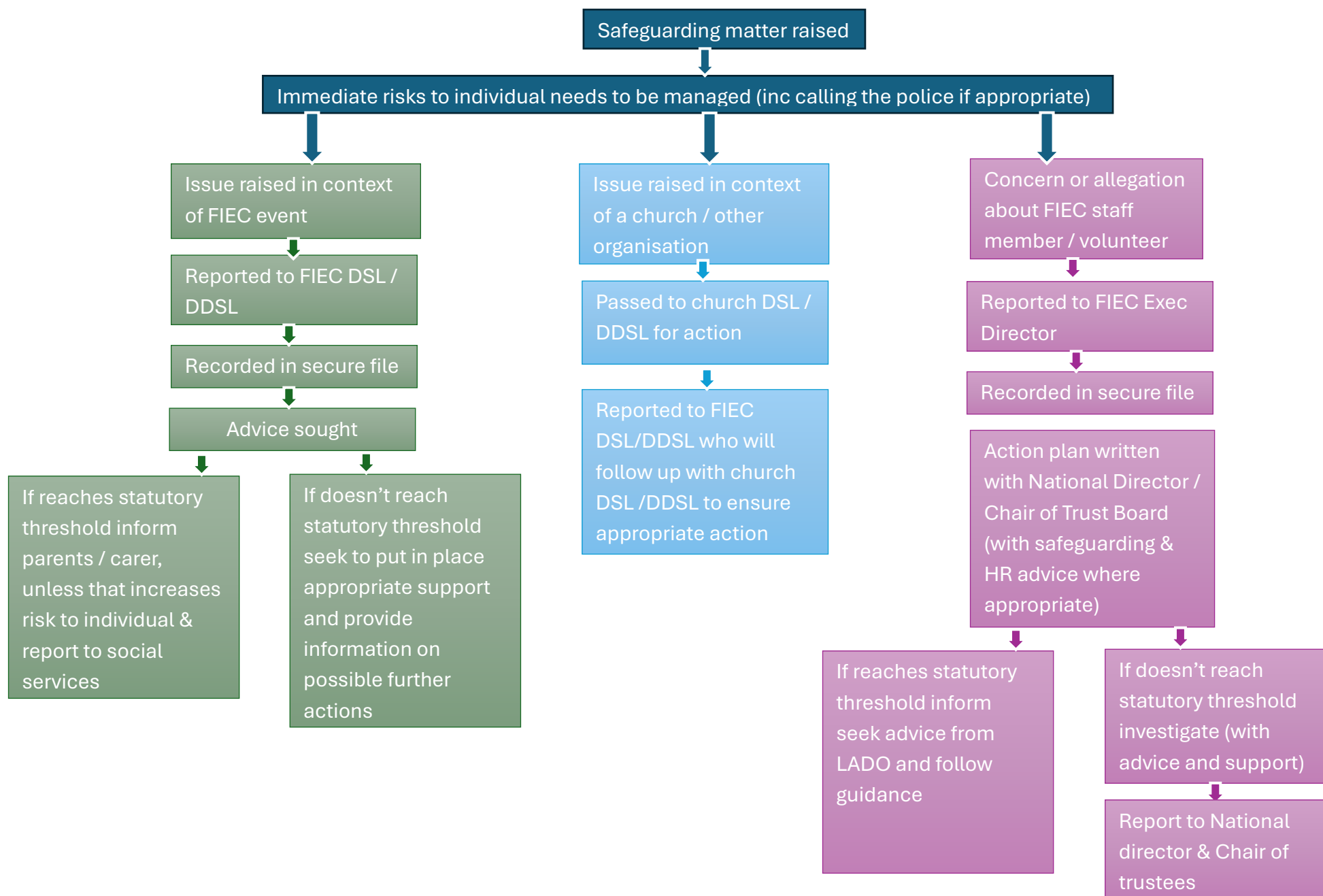
- In the event that the Chair of Trustees is not satisfied with the process or has concerns about the reliability of the findings in relation to the allegations or concerns, they will discuss their concerns with the ROCP.
 - o *N.B. the church / organisation is not required or expected to have adopted processes that align with FIEC procedures, however, they are expected to have effective processes to ensure that the allegations are considered impartially and proportionately.*

 - o If the Chair of Trustees remains concerned about the process or findings:
 - Consideration will be given to whether the findings should be accepted;
 - Consideration will be given to the Trustee's continuing role on the Trust Board;
 - Consideration will be given to whether any further action (including, but not limited to raising the concerns with statutory, regulatory or governing bodies) is required.

 - *N.B. continuing dissatisfaction with the process or outcome will not automatically require removal of the Trustee. Cases will be considered on a case by case basis.*

 - *N.B. continuing dissatisfaction with the process or outcome may trigger other processes at FIEC (e.g. the disaffiliation process).*

Appendix 3 Flowchart for responding to safeguarding disclosures, concerns and allegations



About this form and the person completing it			
Your name	Your phone number	Your mobile number	Your e-mail address
Are you reporting: <i>Please tick the appropriate box(es)</i>	An incident	A disclosure	A concern
Date completed			
About the person or people we are concerned about or involved in the incident			
Their name(s)	Their Address and contact details	Their Date of birth	Name & contact details for parent / (where appropriate)
<i>Please insert more lines as required</i>			
Details of the incident / disclosure / concern			
What happened / was said / have you noticed etc?			

Context of the incident / disclosure / concern	
<i>Where / when / who else was present etc.</i>	
Date of incident / disclosure	Time of incident / disclosure
Action taken to ensure immediate safety	
Other action taken or advice sought	
Signature	
For office use only: Form reference –	

Appendix 5 Safeguarding Policy for Rising Lights

1. Context

Rising Lights is a ministry of FIEC. This event will differ significantly from all other activities of the charity as it will include groups for children and young people and will reach a wider populace than most FIEC events and may include more adults at risk of abuse. The event is non-residential.

Parents, carers, or the responsible adult attending with a child remain responsible for that child outside formal children's and youth sessions. During sessions, responsibility passes to the authorised team in accordance with this policy and the event safeguarding structure.

It is anticipated that adults with care and support needs who are at risk of abuse are likely to attend with family or other adults providing care.

This appendix to the main policy outlines the safeguarding arrangements that relate specifically to the "Rising Lights" event.

2. Responsibilities

As a ministry of FIEC, responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements for the event ultimately lies with the FIEC Trust Board. The FIEC trustees will ensure that all who use services provided by Rising Lights are kept safe approving and reviewing appropriate policies.

FIEC staff are responsible for:

- implementing procedures
- monitoring activity to ensure policies and procedures are followed
- allocating sufficient resources to safeguarding activity
- maintaining a culture at the annual event which promotes excellence in safeguarding

FIEC will be supported by other organisations in the delivery of some aspects of the event. In particular:

- **Growing Young Disciples** will organise and lead the children and young people's ministry, supported by volunteers recruited by FIEC.
 - Growing Young Disciples will recommend to the FIEC event lead for Rising Lights individual to serve as the Event Designated Safeguarding Lead; this appointment will be ratified by the FIEC event lead, including taking references and seeking confirmation of appropriate and up to date training

- A Deputy Event Designated Safeguarding Lead will also be appointed; this may be a second individual recommended by Growing Young Disciples and appointed in the same manner as the event DSL or it may be a suitably trained and equipped member of FIEC staff
- where appropriate, the event DSL will seek advice from an external specialist safeguarding provider. Any matters arising during the week will be handed over to FIEC's DSL at the conclusion of the event; all records will remain the property of FIEC and will be stored by FIEC's Safeguarding Lead after the event

3. Recruitment of volunteers

All volunteers at Rising Lights may come into contact with those who are more vulnerable to abuse so it is appropriate to ensure that all recruitment is done with appropriate regard for safer recruitment principles.

a. All volunteers will be required to:

- i. Complete a volunteer application form, demonstrating their experience relevant to the role for which they have applied
- ii. Provide 2 references, at least one of whom should be a church leader from their current church
- iii. Confirm their agreement to the Doctrinal Basis and Values
- iv. Confirm that they have read, understood, and will work to the code of conduct
- v. Make a safeguarding self-declaration
- vi. Attend proportionate safeguarding training provided by FIEC

b. Volunteers working with children or young people will, in addition, prior to appointment be required to

- i. Confirm that they have read, understood, and will work to the standard for children and youth workers
- ii. provide a valid Enhanced DBS check with barred list either:
 - 1. By submitting a check via FIEC or
 - 2. By providing details of a valid and current Update service registration, and providing the original certificate that relates to the update service registration or the relevant details confirming the required information, including confirmation that the check is at the appropriate level.

4. Registration of children attending the conference children or youth provision

- a. Children and young people attending the conference and accessing the children's or youth ministry must be pre-registered

- i. Children and young people who have not been pre-registered will not be permitted to attend the children's groups and will remain the responsibility of their parents (or other responsible adult with whom they are attending) throughout the conference
- b. Parents or other responsible adults registering children or young people for the children's or youth sessions will be directed to the safeguarding policy and group session information

5. Planning for the children's and youth sessions

- a. Oversight of session planning is the responsibility of the Age Group Leader
 - i. Session plans and any specific roles or responsibilities required for the session will be communicated to all workers involved in the session in advance
- b. All groups, sessions and activities will follow the operational procedures provided by Growing Young Disciples
- c. All groups, sessions and activities must be risk assessed by a competent person
 - i. Copies of risk assessment will be filed with the FIEC Event Lead prior to the event
 - ii. Risk assessment mitigation measures for each group, session and activity will be communicated to workers in advance of the session
 - iii. Copies of all risk assessments will be retained in a file at guest services
- d. The Age Group Leader will be responsible for nominating a safeguarding co-ordinator for their age group
 - i. The safeguarding coordinator is *not* a Safeguarding Lead
 - 1. The role of the safeguarding coordinator is to simply to act as a central point of contact for that Age Group
 - 2. The Safeguarding coordinator will ensure that any safeguarding concern or disclosures (including "low-level concerns") are recorded accurately and passed to the Event Safeguarding Leads in a timely manner
 - a. Accuracy: the safeguarding concerns form should be completed, and all relevant information must be included
 - b. Timeliness: Non-urgent safeguarding concerns must be recorded and sent to the safeguarding lead immediately after the session

- c. Timeliness: If advice is required or an urgent safeguarding issue is identified or disclosed, the Safeguarding Coordinator should contact the Event Safeguarding Leads immediately
- e. Child: adult ratios must be maintained
 - i. As a minimum, planning to maintain the NSPCC recommended ratios is required, however, where risk assessment indicates that more adults are required, the risk assessed ratio must be maintained

Example: *consideration needs to be given to how children would be safely evacuated in the event of an emergency if, for example, a ratio of 1:3 was applied to a creche in which most children were non-walking. A contingency plan to ensure children could be safely evacuated would be needed.*

NSPCC recommended ratios:

- under 2 years - one adult to three children
- 2 - 3 years - one adult to four children
- 4 - 8 years - one adult to six children
- 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children
- 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children

6. Prior to the session

- a. In the event that a worker is unable to attend a session that they are scheduled to attend, they should notify the Age Group Leader at the earliest opportunity so that alternative arrangements can be made to ensure ratios are maintained and any delegated tasks covered
- b. The Age Group Leader will discuss with the Children and Youth Co-ordinator any absences that take the group below the risk assessment ratio and create a plan of action.

7. Signing children and young people into and out of sessions

- a. Children attending the creche, pre-school or primary groups (6 months – school year 6 [11 years])
 - i. must be signed in by a parent or their nominated responsible adult
 - ii. remain the responsibility of the adult until they are fully signed in and care is handed over to the children's team.
 - iii. remain the responsibility of the children's team until signed out and returned to the responsibility the adult

- iv. will only be released to the nominated responsible adult, and only once the identity confirmation security check is complete
- b. Young people attending the youth events (school year 7-13, 11-18 years of age)
 - i. can sign in, and sign out themselves if consent for them to do so has been provided during the registration process

8. The role and responsibilities of the event DSL

- a. Responsibility for safeguarding at the event is delegated to the event DSLs who will deal with any concerns that arise, ensuring that records are maintained and any required actions, including external referrals or liaison, are completed in a timely manner. They will operate independently of the FIEC DSL for the duration of the event.
- b. At the end of the event, all records will be passed to the FIEC DSL by the event DSLs. A full briefing of actions will be given along with highlighting further action needed after the event. The event DSL's will not retain any records personally, since they are acting on behalf of FIEC, not in their own right.

9. Allegations against staff or volunteers

- a. Any allegations or concerns about the suitability or conduct of a volunteer or member of staff at the event should in the first instance be reported to the event DSLs, who will liaise with the FIEC DSL.
- b. If urgent action (such as removing a volunteer from a group) is required, the event DSLs will take any required action, and will discuss with the FIEC DSL as soon as possible.
- c. The event DSLs and the FIEC DSL will decide together how to proceed

Appendix 6 Standards for those working with children and young people

Every leader serving in children's and youth ministry must comply with the following standards:

- understand and implement the policy, procedures, systems, guidance, and risk assessments provided for the event
- attend safeguarding training as required
- work transparently and accountably under group leadership
- maintain vigilance and report any safeguarding concern, including concerns about adults or other leaders
- treat children and young people with dignity, respect, fairness, and age-appropriate care
- maintain clear professional boundaries at all times
- ensure any physical contact is appropriate, necessary, proportionate, visible where possible, and child-led where appropriate
- use physical intervention only as a last resort to prevent immediate harm, and report it promptly
- never use physical chastisement, humiliating language, discriminatory behaviour, sexualised language, or flirtatious behaviour
- never show favouritism, create exclusive relationships, or make promises of secrecy
- never exchange personal contact details with a child or young person
- never give lifts alone, arrange private meetings, invite a child or young person to private accommodation, or continue contact after the event unless the relationship already exists as part of the same church family and the contact is entirely outside the event ministry role
- never connect with children or young people through personal social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, or direct electronic communication during or after the event
- avoid being alone with a child or young person in toilets, corridors, side rooms, or behind closed doors except where immediate safety requires intervention
- report any attempt by a child, young person, or adult to make contact after the event through social media or direct messaging