

## Safeguarding Policy

Charity Number: 1178450

Policy approved by trustees: 17/5/2026

Date of next review: 17/5/2027

Safeguarding Officer: Melanie Lacy

Deputy Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Trustee: Tim Thornborough

Chair of Trustees: Tim Thornborough

### 1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

Growing Young Disciples is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who come into contact with our work.

This includes children, young people, adults at risk, staff, trustees, volunteers, trainees, delegates, church leaders, parents, carers, partner churches and partner organisations.

Growing Young Disciples exists to train, resource and equip those who teach the Bible to children and young people. We do not usually provide regular, direct children's or youth work. However, safeguarding remains a serious responsibility because our work supports those who do, and because safeguarding concerns may arise through training, consultancy, Academy teaching, conferences, online courses, church visits, mentoring, events, emails, conversations or disclosures.

We are committed to:

1. protecting people from harm
2. responding promptly and properly to safeguarding concerns
3. reporting concerns to the appropriate statutory agencies where required
4. supporting those who raise concerns or disclose abuse
5. recruiting staff, trustees and volunteers safely
6. maintaining clear safeguarding roles and responsibilities
7. keeping accurate and secure safeguarding records
8. reviewing our safeguarding practice regularly

The trustees have overall responsibility for safeguarding within Growing Young Disciples.

This policy is informed by relevant safeguarding legislation, Charity Commission guidance, and statutory guidance including *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*.

### 2. The Safeguarding Context of Growing Young Disciples

Growing Young Disciples works primarily with adults. Our normal work includes:

1. training children's, youth and family ministry leaders
2. delivering conferences, training days and online courses
3. running the Growing Young Disciples Academy
4. providing mentoring, consultancy and advice

5. producing resources for churches and ministry leaders
6. working with churches and Christian organisations across the UK and Ireland

Although our ordinary work is with adults, we may still encounter safeguarding concerns. For example:

1. a trainee may disclose a concern about a child in their church
2. a church leader may ask for advice about a safeguarding situation
3. a concern may arise during a conference or training event
4. a child or young person may be present at an event
5. an adult at risk may attend or engage with our training
6. a safeguarding concern may arise through online communication
7. an allegation may be made against someone connected with GYD
8. a concern may arise about the conduct of a staff member, trustee, volunteer, tutor, speaker or contractor

This policy exists to ensure that concerns are recognised, reported, recorded and responded to properly.

### **3. Who This Policy Applies To**

This policy applies to:

1. trustees
2. staff
3. volunteers
4. tutors
5. speakers
6. contractors
7. consultants
8. anyone acting on behalf of Growing Young Disciples

Everyone covered by this policy must know how to report a safeguarding concern.

No one should investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

### **4. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Trustees**

The trustees are responsible for ensuring that Growing Young Disciples has appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

The trustees will:

1. approve and review this policy annually
2. ensure safeguarding responsibilities are clear

3. appoint a Safeguarding Officer
4. appoint a Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Trustee
5. ensure staff and relevant volunteers receive suitable safeguarding training
6. oversee serious safeguarding concerns
7. consider whether a Serious Incident Report must be made to the Charity Commission
8. ensure safer recruitment procedures are followed
9. ensure safeguarding records are kept securely
10. review safeguarding practice following any serious incident or near miss

#### **4.2 Safeguarding Officer**

The Safeguarding Officer is:

Name: Melanie Lacy

Phone: 07813988172

Email: mel@growingyoungdisciples.co.uk

The Safeguarding Officer will:

1. act as the main contact for safeguarding concerns
2. receive and record concerns
3. advise staff, trustees and volunteers on the next steps
4. contact statutory agencies where appropriate
5. seek safeguarding advice where necessary
6. ensure records are stored securely
7. support safeguarding training
8. advise trustees on serious safeguarding matters
9. consider whether a DBS referral may be required
10. consider whether the Charity Commission should be notified

#### **4.3 Deputy Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Trustee**

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Trustee is:

Name: Tim Thornborough

Phone: 07808003349

Email: tim@growingyoungdisciples.co.uk

They will act where:

1. the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable
2. the concern relates to the Safeguarding Officer
3. there is a conflict of interest
4. another safeguarding perspective is needed

5. trustees need independent oversight of a safeguarding matter

#### **4.4 Concerns About the Safeguarding Officer or Chair of Trustees**

If a concern relates to the Safeguarding Officer, it should be reported to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Safeguarding Trustee or Chair of Trustees.

If a concern relates to the Chair of Trustees, it should be reported to another trustee.

Where appropriate, advice should be sought directly from Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the police, the LADO or equivalent body, the Charity Commission or an independent safeguarding adviser.

#### **5. How to Report a Safeguarding Concern**

Any safeguarding concern must be reported as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Officer.

If someone is in immediate danger, or a crime is being committed, call 999.

A safeguarding concern may include:

1. a disclosure of abuse
2. a concern about a child, young person or adult at risk
3. a concern raised by a church, parent, carer, trainee or delegate
4. an allegation against a staff member, trustee, volunteer, tutor, speaker or contractor
5. inappropriate behaviour
6. a breach of boundaries
7. a concern arising online
8. a concern arising during training, mentoring, consultancy or an event
9. a failure to follow safeguarding procedures

The person receiving the concern should:

1. listen carefully
2. stay calm
3. take the concern seriously
4. avoid asking leading questions
5. avoid promising confidentiality
6. explain that the concern must be passed on
7. write down what was said as soon as possible
8. report the concern to the Safeguarding Officer

They must not:

1. investigate the concern
2. contact the alleged abuser

3. speak widely about the concern
4. delay reporting it
5. promise to keep the concern secret

## **6. Responding to a Disclosure**

If a child, young person or adult at risk discloses abuse or harm, the person receiving the disclosure should say as little as possible while listening carefully.

They should use simple responses such as:

“I’m glad you told me.”

“You have done the right thing by speaking.”

“I need to pass this on to someone who can help.”

“I cannot keep this secret, because we need to help keep people safe.”

A written record should be made as soon as possible. It should include:

1. the date and time
2. where the conversation took place
3. who was present
4. what was said, using the person’s own words where possible
5. any questions asked
6. any action taken
7. who was informed

## **7. Concerns About Children and Young People**

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Growing Young Disciples does not usually provide regular direct work with children or young people. However, concerns about children and young people may arise through our work.

This may happen where:

1. a trainee raises a concern about a child in their church
2. a church asks for safeguarding advice
3. a concern emerges during training or consultancy
4. a child or young person is present at an event
5. a young person contacts GYD directly
6. a concern arises online
7. an allegation is made against someone connected with GYD

Where there is concern that a child or young person may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm, the Safeguarding Officer will consider the appropriate action. This may include seeking advice from or making a referral to:

1. Children's Social Care
2. the police
3. the Local Authority Designated Officer, or equivalent
4. the NSPCC Helpline
5. the relevant church or organisation safeguarding lead, where appropriate and safe

Parents or carers should not be contacted where doing so may place the child at greater risk or interfere with a statutory investigation.

Where a concern relates to a church or organisation, GYD will consider its own safeguarding responsibility and will not assume that the matter has been properly handled by another body.

## **8. Concerns About Adults at Risk**

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

1. has needs for care and support
2. is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
3. is unable to protect themselves because of those care and support needs

Concerns about adults at risk may include:

1. physical abuse
2. sexual abuse
3. emotional or psychological abuse
4. domestic abuse
5. financial abuse
6. discriminatory abuse
7. organisational abuse
8. neglect
9. self-neglect
10. modern slavery
11. coercive or controlling behaviour
12. spiritual abuse

Where there is concern that an adult at risk may be experiencing abuse, neglect or harm, the Safeguarding Officer will consider whether advice or referral is needed from Adult Social Care, the police, or another appropriate agency.

Where possible, the adult should be involved in decisions about safeguarding action. However, action may still be required where there is immediate danger, a crime may have been committed, others may be at risk, or the adult lacks capacity to make a relevant decision.

## **9. Allegations Against Staff, Trustees, Volunteers or Representatives**

Any allegation against a staff member, trustee, volunteer, tutor, speaker, contractor, consultant or anyone acting on behalf of Growing Young Disciples must be taken seriously.

This includes concerns that a person may have:

1. harmed a child, young person or adult at risk
2. behaved in a way that may have harmed a child, young person or adult at risk
3. committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or adult at risk
4. behaved in a way that suggests they may pose a risk of harm
5. abused a position of trust
6. breached appropriate boundaries
7. failed to follow safeguarding procedures

The Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from the appropriate statutory agency where necessary. This may include the LADO or equivalent body, Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care or the police.

Growing Young Disciples will not conduct an internal investigation where statutory agencies may need to be involved until appropriate safeguarding advice has been sought.

## **10. Online Safeguarding**

Growing Young Disciples carries out a significant amount of work online.

This may include Academy teaching, mentoring, consultancy, online courses, meetings, emails, messaging, webinars and digital resources.

Staff, trustees, tutors, volunteers and representatives must maintain appropriate boundaries online.

They should:

1. use agreed platforms and communication channels
2. keep communication professional and purposeful
3. avoid unnecessary one-to-one private contact with under-18s
4. avoid informal private messaging with under-18s
5. avoid sharing personal contact details with children or young people
6. report any safeguarding concern arising online
7. record any concerning communication
8. use appropriate privacy and security settings
9. avoid recording sessions unless there is a clear reason and participants have been informed
10. be alert to safeguarding concerns raised through teaching, mentoring, discussion, assignments or pastoral conversation

Where online contact with under-18s is necessary, it should normally happen with the knowledge of parents, carers, church leaders or organisational leaders.

## **11. Safer Recruitment**

Growing Young Disciples is committed to safer recruitment. Recruitment checks will be proportionate to the role and may include an application process, interview, identity and right to work checks, references, relevant employment or ministry history, safeguarding training, probationary arrangements, and appropriate supervision.

Where legally eligible and appropriate, GYD may also request a DBS check. Each role will be assessed according to its level of contact with children, young people or adults at risk, access to safeguarding information, training or advisory responsibilities, and senior leadership duties.

Where a person has lived overseas, GYD may request appropriate overseas checks where these are available and relevant.

## **12. DBS Referrals**

Growing Young Disciples will comply with its legal duties in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Where Growing Young Disciples is the regulated activity provider and removes a person from regulated activity, or would have removed them had they not resigned, retired or otherwise left, because they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or adult at risk, the trustees will ensure that a referral is made to the DBS where the legal duty applies. DBS guidance confirms that regulated activity providers and personnel suppliers have a legal duty to refer where the relevant conditions are met.

Growing Young Disciples will not knowingly allow a barred person to work in regulated activity.

Advice will be sought where there is uncertainty about whether a DBS referral is required.

## **13. Record-Keeping**

Safeguarding records must be accurate, factual and secure.

Records should include:

1. the date and time of the concern
2. the name of the person raising the concern
3. the name of the person about whom there is concern
4. what was said or observed
5. the exact words used where possible
6. who was present
7. any action taken
8. who was informed
9. any advice received
10. any referral made

Records should clearly distinguish between:

1. what was seen
2. what was heard

3. what was alleged
4. what is opinion
5. what action was taken

Safeguarding records will be stored securely. Access will be restricted to those who need to know.

Information will be shared where necessary to protect children, young people, adults at risk, staff, volunteers, trustees, the charity or others.

Confidentiality must never prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

#### **14. Serious Incident Reporting**

The trustees will consider whether a safeguarding concern, allegation, incident or failure in procedure should be reported to the Charity Commission as a Serious Incident. The Charity Commission's guidance says a report should be made where harm, reputational damage or risk to public trust is particularly high, including serious safeguarding failures or misconduct by someone in a senior position.

This may include:

1. harm or risk of harm to a child, young person or adult at risk
2. allegations involving a trustee, senior leader, staff member or representative
3. serious failure to follow safeguarding procedures
4. serious reputational risk
5. police involvement
6. regulatory concern
7. serious safeguarding concerns involving partner organisations where GYD has a relevant responsibility
8. any incident suggesting a serious weakness in safeguarding governance or practice

Where a Serious Incident Report is required, the trustees will ensure that it is submitted promptly.

#### **15. Working With Churches and Partner Organisations**

Growing Young Disciples often works with churches and Christian organisations.

Where GYD delivers training, consultancy or events in partnership with another organisation, safeguarding responsibilities should be clear.

Where appropriate, GYD will confirm:

1. who has safeguarding responsibility for the event or activity
2. who the local safeguarding lead is
3. how concerns should be reported
4. whether children, young people or adults at risk will be present
5. whether any additional risk assessment is needed

6. whether GYD staff or speakers are expected to have direct contact with children or young people

If a safeguarding concern arises in a partner setting, GYD will take appropriate action. This may include reporting the concern internally, contacting the partner organisation's safeguarding lead, seeking statutory advice, or making a direct referral where necessary.

GYD will not assume that another organisation has acted unless this has been clearly confirmed.

## **16. Recognising Possible Abuse or Harm**

Staff, trustees and volunteers are not expected to investigate or diagnose abuse.

They should be alert to possible signs of harm and report any concern.

Abuse or harm may include:

1. physical abuse
2. sexual abuse
3. emotional or psychological abuse
4. neglect
5. domestic abuse
6. spiritual abuse
7. financial abuse
8. discriminatory abuse
9. exploitation
10. online abuse
11. bullying or harassment
12. coercive or controlling behaviour
13. modern slavery
14. self-neglect
15. organisational abuse

Possible signs may include:

1. a direct disclosure
2. unexplained injuries
3. sudden changes in behaviour
4. fearfulness or withdrawal
5. sexualised behaviour or language
6. signs of neglect
7. controlling relationships

8. emotional distress
9. concerning online behaviour
10. inappropriate conduct by an adult in a position of trust
11. repeated boundary breaches
12. information shared during training, mentoring or consultancy that raises concern

Any concern should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

## **17. Training**

Growing Young Disciples will ensure that safeguarding training is appropriate to each role.

At minimum:

1. trustees will understand their safeguarding governance responsibilities
2. staff will know how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns
3. tutors, speakers and trainers will understand appropriate boundaries
4. those involved in online work will understand online safeguarding expectations
5. the Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Lead / Safeguarding Trustee will receive appropriate safeguarding training

Training will be reviewed regularly.

## **18. Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the trustees.

It will also be reviewed sooner where:

1. legislation or guidance changes
2. there is a serious safeguarding incident
3. there is a significant change in GYD's work
4. trustees identify a weakness in safeguarding practice
5. external advice recommends revision

## **19. Key Contacts**

### **Emergency Services**

999

### **NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

### **Local Authority**

Find the relevant local authority:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

### **Independent Safeguarding Advice**

Name / organisation: Thirtyone:eight  
Phone: 0303 003 1111

## 20. Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the trustees of Growing Young Disciples.

Date approved: 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Date for review: [insert date] 15<sup>th</sup> May 2027

Signed on behalf of the trustees:

Name: [insert name]

Role: [insert role]

Signature: Melanie Day

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026