Elim Pentecostal Church Wimbledon Safeguarding Policy 2025-26

Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance is a registered charity 251549 (England and Wales) and SC037754 (Scotland)

Published: September 2025

Due to be reviewed Sep 2026

Contents

Details of your Church: 3
1. Safeguarding Policy Statement 4
1.1 Introduction: 4
1.2 National Leadership Team Statement on Safeguarding 5
1.3 Church Statement: Our Commitment to Safeguarding 6
1.4 Key Contacts 10
2. Safeguarding procedures: 11
2.1 Safer recruitment....11
2.2 Responding to allegations, disclosures and concerns 12

Details of your Church:

Elim Pentecostal Church Wimbledon

Address:

Elim Pentecostal Church, 78 Kingston Road, LONDON, Greater London SW19 1LA, United Kingdom

Tel No:

Email address: info@elimwimbledon.co.uk

Website: https://www.elimwimbledon.co.uk

Charity Number: 251549

Insurance Company: Aviva (EFGA)

1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

1.1 Introduction:

Our churches facilitate and engage in a wide range of activities, including Sunday services, small groups, educational programs, medical aid, poverty alleviation, and ministries for the elderly, children, and adults at risk. We also operate departments that prepare and equip people for ministry in local churches, workplaces, and overseas missions. We recognise our responsibility to apply comprehensive safeguarding standards across all these contexts, including digital platforms such as livestreams, social media, and online pastoral care.

This safeguarding policy outlines the overarching principles, standards, and procedures which guide our approach to safeguarding. It includes guidance for safer recruitment and procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns, allegations and disclosures.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of an EFGA church, including senior staff, trustees, ministers, ministers in training, church leaders, paid staff and volunteers.

This Policy should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Safeguarding Practical Guidance
- Social Media Policy
- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer and deputy.
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Health and safety policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Safer recruitment policy

1.2 National Leadership Team Statement on Safeguarding

Elim seeks to build healthy churches across the UK and globally, welcoming people of all nationalities, ages, and backgrounds. The National Leadership Team of Elim is committed to supporting our churches in creating healthy, safe spaces for all.

We recognise the ways in which children and adults can be at risk of harm or abuse, and we are determined to foster a culture that minimises opportunities for abuse to occur. We affirm that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All Elim churches must provide safe, stable, and nurturing environments where individuals can flourish. We recognise that vulnerability may be temporary or long-term, and that relationships of trust must be stewarded with openness, transparency, and accountability.

We recognise the courage it takes to disclose abuse, and we are committed to listening to and supporting survivors. We acknowledge the impact of trauma and strive to ensure our churches are sensitive to the needs of those with lived experience of abuse. Where abuse has taken/takes place within the context of the church or by someone professing a Christian faith, we recognise the impact this abuse can also have on an individual's spiritual wellbeing and development.

Safeguarding is rooted in our theological commitment to justice, dignity, and care for all. It is embedded into our leadership culture through regular safeguarding reviews, training, and accountability mechanisms.

It is imperative that the National Safeguarding Team are made aware of safeguarding issues faced by a local church. They are available for advice and support and should be contacted where concerns have implications for the healthy spiritual culture and good standing of Elim. This ensures that responses are open, transparent, and involve statutory safeguarding authorities, with quality assurance provided by Elim International Centre.

Mark Pugh - General Superintendent

On Behalf of the National Leadership Team

1.3 Church Statement: Our Commitment to Safeguarding

We are committed to providing a safe, caring environment for everyone. We believe every person should feel valued, safe, and treated with dignity and respect. Safeguarding is the responsibility of our entire church community, and our leadership works to ensure everyone in our care is protected and their rights are maintained.

Everyone in our community has a responsibility to help prevent the abuse and neglect of children and adults, respond promptly to concerns for well-being and report any disclosed or suspected abuse in accordance with procedures outlined below.

We endorse and adopt this safeguarding policy in accordance with national legislation, statutory guidance, and local safeguarding procedures, along with practical guidance issued by Elim nationally through the National Safeguarding Team. This policy and accompanying practical guidance are informed by relevant legislation such as the Equality Act (2010), Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2023), The Care Act (2014), The Children Act (2004), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006).

We recognise that:

- All individuals, without distinction of any kind, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some individuals may require additional safeguards due to previous experiences, dependency, communication needs, or other factors that increase vulnerability. We commit to providing personalised approaches, where possible, to keep everyone safe.

In our commitment to promoting a healthy and safe church culture, every Elim church will.

- Adhere to Elim's expectations for the safe recruitment of those working with children and adults at risk (whether paid or voluntary).
- Provide appropriate training, support and supervision to all those who undertake work with children or adults, and those in positions of trust (paid and voluntary).
- Adopt a code of conduct for all adults working with vulnerable groups.
- Adopt the annually revised Elim Safeguarding Policy within three months of publication (usually late September).
- Value, respect and listen to the voice of children and adults at risk.
- Promote inclusive, respectful, and trauma-informed practice, including healthy, non-coercive discipleship that respects personal boundaries and fosters accountability.

- Maintain clear boundaries and adopt safer working practices to promote the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk.
- Ensure that children and adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter of concern.
- Take all safeguarding concerns seriously and respond promptly in accordance with our procedures outlined below.
- Maintain accurate records of all safeguarding concerns and actions.
- Promote transparency and accountability: Whilst recognising that the very nature of safeguarding means that we must respond to allegations sensitively, discreetly and confidentially; this does not mean secretively. We will liaise with and seek advice from social services, the police, and other agencies as necessary.
- Ensure that appropriate and personalised boundaries are implemented for individuals who may pose a risk to others, to promote the safety of all in our community.
- Apply safeguarding procedures across all online and in-person ministries of the church, including discipleship, prayer and deliverance, as well as for all outreach activities such as Missions, Evangelism, Community programs etc.
- Discuss safeguarding as a standing item on the agenda as part of minuted church leadership meetings.

Working in partnership

Working in partnership with children, adults at risk, parents/carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting an individual's welfare. Therefore, all Elim Churches will partner with the following stakeholders.

• **National** - We will work closely with Elim's National Safeguarding Team, who oversee the implementation of safeguarding policy and procedures across every Elim church.

• **External** - We will cooperate fully with all statutory safeguarding agencies to protect those at risk of harm or abuse, including statutory investigations linked with the church. We will share relevant information, where appropriate, to promote the safety of individuals.

• **Organisational** - Where possible, and where there is not a conflict of interest, the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will liaise with the senior minister when issues arise, to ensure appropriate pastoral considerations are addressed and to promote accountability and communication. However, this should not delay any necessary reporting.

• **Local** - All individuals working with children and/or adults at risk will be given a copy of this safeguarding policy and accompanying practical guidance. It is the expectation that all those working with children and adults have read and agreed to fully adhere to the policy, procedure, and practical guidelines as a condition of continuing in their role.

Appointment of Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers (DDSO)

The Leadership have appointed a DSO/DDSO who will take lead responsibility for safeguarding within the church. The role of the DSO must not be held by the senior minister of the church, nor their spouse. The Leadership fully supports them in their role of implementing Elim's expectations for safeguarding and acting in the best interest of vulnerable groups in responding to allegations, disclosures or suspicions of abuse.

Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Tiajh Walton

07552 167 091

tiajh10@hotmail.co.uk

Designated Safeguarding Officer (children & adults)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Lucretia Braaf

07830 758 705

lucretia_braaf@blueyonder.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Officer (children)

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been lodged with the National Safeguarding Team at Elim International Centre, will be displayed within our church building and is available on our church website. The safeguarding policy will also be available on request to parents, carers, and any member of or visitor to the church, or any other individual.

This policy and accompanying practical guidance will be reviewed and updated annually by Elim's National Safeguarding Team, and any necessary revisions adopted into the policy will be implemented through our procedures.

Signed by or on behalf of the Leadership

Signature:

Name: Sheryl Arthur

Date of signing: 28/04/2026

1.4 Key Contacts

Regional Leader:

David Campbell

david.campbell@elim.org.uk

07887 991 138

National Safeguarding Team: safeguarding@elim.org.uk

Regional Safeguarding Lead:

Tom Skelton

tom.skelton@elim.org.uk

07360 531 398

Children's Social Services

Merton SCP Services

020 8545 4226
candfhub@merton.gov.uk

Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 020 8770 5000

Adult Social Services:

Merton Safeguarding Adults board

020 8545 4388
safeguarding.adults@merton.gov.uk

Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 02087705000

Local Authority Designated Officer

John Shelley lado@merton.co.uk 020 8545 3179

2. Safeguarding procedures:

2.1 Safer recruitment

(Preventing harm through screening to ensure only suitable people work with children and adults)

As a Leadership, we recognise that we are responsible for ensuring all workers (both paid and voluntary) are appointed, trained, supported, and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description/person specification for the post.
- When advertising a role which involves working with children or adults at risk, it is clearly communicated that any appointment may be subject to a relevant DBS check at the appropriate level.
- Those applying have completed an application form.
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed (and safeguarding has been discussed at interview).
- At least two satisfactory written references have been obtained (and followed up where appropriate). This should not include a relative, and at least one referee should be external to the church.
- Where relevant, qualifications and/or an individual's right to work in the UK have been verified.
- A self-declaration form and appropriate DBS check have been obtained in accordance with the position that the person has applied for, where necessary. This must also be reviewed every 3 years while those involved are in the post, unless they are signed up for the update service. (The church Leadership has nominated Recruiters, who are responsible for administering the application of appropriate DBS checks across the church.)
- Overseas checks have been completed where someone is applying to work with vulnerable groups and has lived overseas.

As a church, we will comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice for employers (April 2022) concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information.

All successful applicants will be expected to sign a contract of employment or volunteer agreement and will be provided with access to (and are expected to read) the church safeguarding policy.

Following recruitment, we will provide suitable training (including safeguarding training) for successful applicants, as well as ongoing support and supervision. All workers, church leaders/elders and ministers are expected to undertake

safeguarding training relevant to their role every 2 years and complete an annual suitability declaration, to ensure their ongoing suitability.

2.2 Responding to allegations, disclosures and concerns

Anyone who is concerned about the well-being of an individual connected to the church should speak to the DSO/DDSO as soon as possible and should not investigate the matter themselves.

Any allegations, disclosures or concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours. Reports should be made in writing where possible; however, we acknowledge that writing may be a barrier for some individuals. In such instances, the DSO/DDSO will write an account of the verbal report, which can be signed by the individual to indicate their acceptance of its accuracy.

All disclosures, allegations and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to with compassion and care.

In the absence of the DSO/DDSO, individuals should seek advice from the Pastor or a member of the Leadership Team, who will then contact the National Safeguarding Team for advice and support. However, where there is conflict of interest, individuals should contact the National Safeguarding Team directly.

Where someone has passed information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer and believes this has not been responded to appropriately, then they should make a direct referral to the relevant statutory authorities outlined below, if necessary, or contact the National Safeguarding Team.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO/DDSO) will:

- Consider the information provided and decide on the most appropriate action to take in response. This may include informing and/or seeking guidance from the National Safeguarding Team, via the Regional Safeguarding Lead.
- Make any necessary contact with relevant statutory safeguarding authorities, if required, within 24 hours of receiving the concern.
    - Where the concern is about a child, the DSO/DDSO will contact Children's Social Services.
    - Where the concern is about an adult at risk, or where there is concern about an adult's mental capacity, the DSO/DDSO will contact Adult Social Services.

    - Where it is believed that a crime has been committed, the DSO/DDSO should contact Police via 101 for non-emergencies, or via 999 where it is believed that an individual is at immediate risk of serious harm.
- Inform the minister in charge about any safeguarding concerns, unless there is a conflict of interest, and collaborate to coordinate any necessary pastoral support.
- Ensure all information relating to the concerns/allegations/disclosures, and all action taken in response, is collated and recorded using the central Elim iKnow safeguarding database.

The DSO/DDSO must contact the National Safeguarding Team about any safeguarding matter that requires contact with the church insurers or may require reporting to the Charity Commission. This would include any allegations or concerns raised against office holders, church leaders and workers (paid or voluntary), injury to a person while under the care of the church or in church premises, or any action or inaction that could cause reputational damage to the church or charity.

Safeguarding information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. No information about any safeguarding concerns, allegations or disclosures will be shared with members of the church other than those responsible for overseeing safeguarding processes.

When engaged in the activities of Elim International Missions, concerns should be reported to the International Missions Director, who will liaise with the National Safeguarding Team in addressing any safeguarding concerns following the Elim Missions safeguarding procedures.

Partnership with National Safeguarding Team

Where the DSO/DDSO are unsure of what action to take, it is the expectation of the church Leadership that advice will be sought from the National Safeguarding Team at Elim International Centre, and that the DSO/DDSO will follow the mechanisms or actions recommended by Elim.

The DSO/DDSO must report any allegation of a safeguarding nature, or concern raised about a worker (paid or voluntary), minister, or member of church leadership – whether they are engaged in regulated activity or not – to the National Safeguarding Team within 1 working day of the allegation being made or concern raised.

Allegations against workers/suspicion of harm

Where the subject of an allegation/concern is working in a position of trust with children, the DSO/DDSO should report the concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or equivalent.

Where the subject of an allegation/concern is working in a position of trust with adults at risk, the DSO/DDSO should make a Person in a Position of Trust (PiPOT) referral to Adult Social Care, or equivalent.

If any statutory authority chooses to investigate, the DSO/DDSO will follow their advice with regard to action to be taken by the church. This may include suspension from the role, for example.

Where a worker with children or adults at risk is removed from regulated activity because of risk of harm, resigns or retires prior to dismissal, or is dismissed, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service should be made for barring consideration. This also includes where a worker/volunteer has left their position because of actions outside of their role, which indicate they may not be suitable to work with vulnerable groups. Where the DSO/DDSO is unsure of action to take in this regard, advice should be sought from the National Safeguarding Team via the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

A position of trust is a legal term recognised in England and Wales referring to roles where an adult has regular and direct contact with children. Since 2022, this has included faith leaders and volunteers in religious settings, and thus, we acknowledge that those working with vulnerable groups within our churches are legally recognised as functioning in positions of trust. As such, criminal charges could be brought against an adult working with children if they engage in any sexual activity with a child in their care between the ages of 16-17, regardless of their ability to consent. Any individual concerns about a relationship forming between an adult worker and a young person should inform the DSO/Deputy.

Where the DSO is the subject of an allegation or concern, individuals should inform the Pastor, who will notify the National Safeguarding Team, without informing the DSO of the concerns raised.

Individuals who may present a risk

The DSO/DDSO must inform the National Safeguarding Team when working with or supporting an individual who may present as a current risk to children or adults, for example, due to criminal convictions or cautions, or inappropriate conduct towards children or adults.

In such instances, a safeguarding risk assessment must be completed, with support from the National Safeguarding Team. It may also be necessary for additional behaviour agreements to be implemented.

This process will be led by DSO/DDSO, who will liaise and work in partnership with relevant professionals such as Police Public Protection Teams, Sex Offender Management Teams, Probation and other statutory agencies in assessing risk to inform safeguarding risk assessment and any necessary behaviour agreement.

More detailed information regarding this process can be found in our practical guidance.

Pastoral Support

We recognise that many safeguarding matters can be deeply distressing for those involved.

The DSO/DDSO will liaise with the Pastor to ensure individuals involved in any safeguarding matters have access to appropriate pastoral care. This would include those who have experienced harm, those who have (or are alleged to have) caused harm, and any family/friends affected.

Those providing pastoral support should take care to implement appropriate boundaries and should be aware of best practice guidelines in support of individuals impacted by abuse and trauma.

Where a statutory investigation is in process, details of the investigation should not be discussed during pastoral meetings, and any information shared must be passed on.

Where an individual who has caused harm accepts some responsibility, the church should encourage and support them in seeking specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending.

As a church, we recognise the need to ensure those designated to respond to safeguarding concerns also receive regular pastoral support, as we recognise the highly challenging nature of the work they undertake.

Escalation of concerns

In our commitment to openness, should anyone have a concern that our church or the DSO/DDSO have not dealt appropriately with a safeguarding concern, we would encourage that person to make contact with Elim's National Safeguarding Team via the Regional Safeguarding Lead or to make a direct referral to the relevant statutory agencies.

Alternatively, you may wish to seek advice from relevant helplines such as:

- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000 / help@NSPCC.org.uk
- Thirtyone:eight – 0303 003 1111 / helpline@thirtyoneeight.org