

## HTB Group – Safeguarding Policy.

### Section 1 – Purpose

In addition to our obligations as an organisation, in light of our ethos and belief in the dignity and worth of every individual, HTB Group is organisationally dedicated to ensuring a safe and caring environment, and is committed to protecting, and promoting the wellbeing of, all our employees and associated personnel.

HTB Church annually adopts the Safeguarding policy of the Diocese of London. This policy is intended to supplement the Diocese of London Safeguarding policy and recognises that HTB Church is a Church within the Diocese of London as well as an entity within HTB Group.

The purpose of this policy, and associated policies, is to protect any person from any exploitation, harm, and abuse that may be caused due to their contact with any of the entities of HTB Group. As outlined in *Section 3 – Scope*, this includes harm arising from:

- the conduct of staff and associated personnel of HTB Group; and/or
- the design and implementation of programmes and activities arranged by HTB Group.

This policy seeks to ensure that HTB Group undertakes its responsibilities appropriately with regard to the protection of people, and its response to any legitimate concerns. This policy lays out the commitments made by HTB Group and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

### Section 2 – Definition

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of all who are vulnerable (children and adults) and to protect them from exploitation, harm, and abuse.

HTB Group recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that it has an obligation to put in place reasonable measures to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of those who are vulnerable.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary in Section 9.

### Section 3 – Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff of HTB Group, and
- 'Associated personnel' whilst engaged with work related to HTB Group including but not limited to the following: Casual workers, Zero hours, Volunteers engaged by any of the entities of HTB Group, Contractors, Congregants, all persons involved in or attending any courses or other activities.

All staff and associated personnel have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures. The scope applies both during and outside of normal work hours.

For the avoidance of doubt, HTB Group undertakes to follow all applicable national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures.

This policy should be reviewed annually in order to update it for consistency with applicable legislation or best practice changes.

## Section 4 – Policy statement

HTB Group believes that everyone with whom it has contact has the right to be protected from all forms of exploitation, harm, and abuse. The HTB Group will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

HTB Group recognises the importance of organisational culture and accountability in creating a safe and supportive organisation for our staff, our associated personnel, and those with whom we work. We are committed to promoting a safe environment and culture through all our activities, by safely recruiting, and training all those with responsibility, and responding promptly to any safeguarding concerns.

HTB Group commits to addressing safeguarding in the course of its work, through prevention, reporting, and response.

## Section 5 – Safeguarding governance

An overview of the safeguarding governance structure of HTB Group is presented below:

<b>Group Op Co.</b>	Leads organisational culture of safeguarding and ensures that the policy is accessible and adhered to by staff and associated personnel, including the allocation of sufficient resources to ensure implementation of the policy.
<b>Safeguarding Advisor</b>	Continuously improves safeguarding policy, processes, and guidelines in line with regulations, drives training initiatives, and supports the effective and appropriate management of safeguarding incidents.
<b>Heads of department.</b>	Ensure staff and associated personnel in their ministry units comply with the safeguarding policy, processes, and guidelines.
<b>Staff (and Associated Personnel)</b>	Comply with the safeguarding policy, processes, and guidelines.

## Section 6 – HTB Group’s Safeguarding Commitments

In relation to each of the sub-headings below, HTB Group will:

### Culture, Leadership and Responsibility

- create, promote, and maintain a safe and caring environment for all, through an organisational culture that promotes appropriate values that are aligned with such an environment.

- develop and maintain HTB Group’s safeguarding policy, procedures, and guidelines as guidance for staff and associated personnel in understanding and fulfilling their obligations with respect to safeguarding.
- review the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures, and guidelines at least annually.
- ensure accountability is enforced through the appointed safeguarding governance structures.
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to legal and statutory obligations, as well as in accordance with the requirements of this policy, as outlined in *Section 7 – Reporting*.

### Embedding Safeguarding in HTB Group.

- implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing, and deploying staff and associated personnel.
- ensure all staff and associated personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy, through onboarding processes and training.
- ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level that is commensurate with their role. This includes safely recruiting, training, and supporting all those with any responsibility for young people (including children), and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- require that staff must adhere to HTB Group Code of Conduct and other associated policies.
- ensure that safe, appropriate, and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with, as outlined in *Section 7 – Reporting*; and
- design and undertake, programmes and activities in a way that protects people appropriately from undue risk of harm that may arise from their contact with HTB Group.

### Section 7 – Reporting

HTB Group will ensure that safe, appropriate, and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and those with whom it works.

Staff members or associated personnel who have, or do become, aware of a safeguarding complaint or concern should not attempt to investigate the concern personally but should document a detailed written account of the complaint or concern as soon as they become aware of the safeguarding matter.

Where a safeguarding complaint or concern is deemed to be an emergency that requires immediate response, then the appropriate emergency service should be notified without delay. The person responsible should then report it quickly to their line manager and the Safeguarding Advisor unless there is a conflict of interest. If a line manager or the Safeguarding Advisor is considered implicated in a complaint or concern, an alternative manager may be selected.

All complaints or concerns will be managed with due regard to confidentiality and data protection regulations. Staff members should not commit to confidentiality to the potential victims, to ensure that timely and appropriate reporting of the concern or complaint takes place.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by HTB Group’s ‘Whistleblowing’ Policy.

HTB Group is committed to working with statutory authorities as well as with the Diocesan Safeguarding team to ensure the protection of any person from exploitation, harm, or abuse.

## Section 8 – Safeguarding Guidelines and Procedures and Associated policies

HTB Group’s safeguarding procedures and guidelines include, but are not limited to:

- Safeguarding Reporting Process
- Safeguarding Incident Report form
- Guidelines for safeguarding in staff recruitment

All staff and associated personnel should be familiar with these guidelines and all periodic updates made to these guidelines.

The following HTB policies are considered associated policies:

- HTB Group staff Code of Conduct.
- Whistleblowing (Public Interest Disclosure) policy.
- Respect at work policy.
- Equality Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- Data Privacy policy

## Section 9 – Glossary

A safeguarding concern is consternation or a worry that a child (a person below the age of 18), or adult may be at risk of harm, or may have been harmed, by the organisation’s staff or associated personnel.

Generally speaking, safeguarding concerns may arise in respect of the following (but not exclusively):

- *Child abuse or maltreatment* constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse (N.B.: all sexual activity with a child is considered child abuse), neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.
- *Child exploitation* refers to the use of children for someone else’s advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel, and harmful treatment of the child. Such activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social-emotional development. This includes situations of manipulation, misuse, abuse, victimisation, oppression, or ill-treatment.
- *At-risk adult* sometimes also referred to as ‘vulnerable adult’. A person who is, or may be, in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- *Forms of Harm* may include psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual’s rights.

- *Financial abuse* covers a wide variety of activities, from mishandling finances to fraud, but may broadly be described as a violation of an individual's rights relating to their financial affairs or assets.

## Change control

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date change approved</b>	<b>Approving body</b>	<b>Change summary</b>
1.0			

**Andy Goodwin.**

**Safeguarding Adviser – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023**