# Discussion guide for individuals and groups – Questions and scenarios.

**Group discussion**: What does the word ‘safeguarding’ mean to you?

**Personal reflection:** How relevant is safeguarding to my life?

**Discussion questions:**

Q1. In what ways does the image of the body help us understand what it means to be part of a church together?

Q2. In verses 22–23 Paul talks about how we treat the parts of the body that are ‘weaker’ and ‘less honourable’. What might this mean in the context of my church community?

Q3. In verse 25 we read about the need to have equal ‘concern’ or ‘care’ for one another. How might we relate this to safeguarding and the church?

**Scenarios:**

**Scenario 1.**

There is a family in the church with two boys (aged 8 and 6 years old). The last couple of weeks, you have noticed that during services, the boys are often running around unsupervised d, and you haven’t seen their grown-ups around keeping an eye on them. After the service one day, you see them play fighting forcefully with each other resulting in the younger boy crying.

**Scenario 2.**

There is a woman in her 70s in your congregation. Her partner passed away a couple of years ago and since then her attendance at church is less regular. She has been coming more recently with her son, but she has mentioned that he works weekends and so finds it difficult to always bring her. She has a daughter, but she lives far away and only visits every couple of months. There has been occasion where when speaking to you she has become muddled, and this has made you a little worried.

**Scenario 3.**

There is a girl who attends your church’s children’s Sunday club who has autism and lacks awareness of physical space. She regularly goes to sit on laps and cuddle adults in the church who are not part of her family. You’ve noticed that one of the Sunday Club volunteer helpers seems to give more attention to this child than to other children, often giving her gifts, and appears to have a closer relationship with the girl’s family than others in the church. You’ve heard that the helper regularly babysits and helps out when the family needs it.

**Scenario discussion questions:**

Q1. What are your initial thoughts on the scenario?

Q2. Does this raise any concerns for you at all?

Q3. Do you think this could potentially be a safeguarding issue?

Q4. What do you think would be the most appropriate action for you take, if any?

Q5. What is the difference between ‘gossip’ and legitimately sharing concerns? How might these look different in the context of church?

**Testimony discussion questions:**

Q1. What are your initial thoughts on hearing this testimony?

Q2. Would it change how you felt if you knew this had happened in your church?

Q3. What do you think the people of the church could have done differently in this situation?

Q4. What actions does my church take, or need to be taking, to ensure a similar situation couldn’t happen today?

Q5. What do you think this tells us about how we should respond to those who have experienced abuse within the context of church?

**Personal reflection**: How has your understanding of safeguarding changed from the start of the session?

Is there anything your church should be doing differently?