

# Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

November 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

## A. Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. As a church, voluntary organisation or group, do we need to have a Safeguarding Policy?**

- a. Are children, unsupervised by a parent or guardian, present more than on three occasions in thirty days? This can include transporting children.
- b. Is there any contact with children via social networking – virtual church sessions and Sunday schools, email contact and the internet?
- c. Are vulnerable adults present at meetings?

If yes, then a policy is required to ensure their safety.

### **2. What would you do if a church member or volunteer reports to you that they suspect, or have been made aware of, a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected?**

### **3. What would you do if a child or parent of a child tells you of abuse?**

This might be outside any church activities, for example in their home or school environment.

### **4. What would you do if a volunteer or church member is accused of child abuse?**

### **5. Where would you go to get help?**

In each of these situations a policy is necessary to clarify what to do and to ensure confidentiality to protect both the accused and the accuser.

### **6. Does scripture teaching affect a Safeguarding Policy?**

Concerns have been expressed about how our Lord's teaching in Matthew 18: 15-17 should affect how we respond to concerns. Here is a link to [Bible Teaching and Important Considerations concerning Compliance](#)

### **7. Why is there such emphasis on confidentiality?**

This needs to be considered from both the point of view of the one who claims to be abused and the one accused of abusing.

If the one claiming abuse thinks their personal and very private circumstances are likely to be discussed by members of the Ecclesia, they may well be reluctant to make contact.

When an individual is accused of abuse, there is a serious risk of damage to their status, employment and relationship in the Ecclesia.

It is important that a trained person takes full responsibility to manage the accusation, knowing where to seek guidance and to decide an appropriate course of action. This minimises a possible "cover-up" and keeps the reputations of both individuals safe when after investigation, an accusation is found to be false.

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## B. Steps to be taken in Developing a safeguarding Policy

1. **Assess the risks:** clarify contact with children and young people and vulnerable adults, identifying their needs.
2. **Identify leaders:** decide who is going to be your nominated child safeguarding lead (DSL) and be clear about their role.
3. **Getting support** Ensure everyone understands why it's important to develop child and vulnerable adult protection and safeguarding measures and that you have support from the highest level in your organisation.
4. **Writing a safeguarding and child protection Policy Statement**  
Ensure you have a written policy statement for Child Protection and Safeguarding including Vulnerable Adults, and that it includes everything it needs to.
5. **Writing Procedures**  
Create your basic safeguarding procedures to help everyone in your organisation respond appropriately to concerns.
6. **Setting a code of behaviour**  
Write a code of behaviour for your group so that everyone knows what is expected of them.
7. **Selecting the right staff and volunteers**  
Make sure you have the best people working or volunteering for you and that they are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults
8. **Getting informed and staying up to date**  
Ensure that everyone in your organisation has the latest knowledge about how to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe.
9. **Making sure your safeguarding arrangements are effective**  
Put checks and reviews in place so that you can assess how well your group's safeguarding and child protection arrangements are working.

*Acknowledgement and thanks to NSPCC (2019) Introductory guide to safeguarding and child protection for the voluntary and community sector. London: NSPCC.*

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/introductory-guide-safeguarding-child-protection>

Initially this will appear challenging in terms of understanding clarifying and developing a Safeguarding Policy. It is important to read through and think about these steps.

The CSN seeks to help with this by the provision of templates easily modified to suit your ecclesia organisation.

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## C. What should a Child Safeguarding Policy include?

These are the expectations of the structure of a Policy:

1. A **Safeguarding Policy Statement** including acknowledgement and acceptance of Charity Commission and Government guidance and clarification of the purpose of the Policy
2. **Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures** including:
  - Responsibilities of the Trustees/Arranging Committee
  - Responsibilities of the appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
  - Definitions of abuse
  - Recognition and responding to abuse
  - Recruitment
  - Managing Concerns
  - Risk assessment
  - Storage of records
  - Regular Training of DSLs
  - Regular Review of adequacy of Policy