



***Promoting* Safeguarding**

***Preventing* Abuse**

***Protecting* The Vulnerable**

Safeguarding Policy ***Children & Vulnerable Adults***

Southernhay Church

South Western Synod

January 2018

Introduction

Southernhay Church agrees that children, young people and adults have a right to live in a way that does not cause them harm or impede their human rights. We therefore acknowledge their right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. We consider that, in accordance with legislation, the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by all at Southernhay Church and all concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the Police and Social Care if necessary, either Adult or Children's.

We will co-operate with the Police, Children's and Adult's Services in any investigation and follow multi agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers and will ensure that these procedures are followed, which include

- Asking applicants to complete an application form
- Providing workers with role/job descriptions and person specifications,
- Obtaining Disclosure and barring checks where legally entitled to do so,
- Taking up two references (not family) and
- Interviewing candidates

Training in safeguarding will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers work within a code of conduct and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or termination of working/volunteering with us.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed. They can be contacted as detailed below

Name

Contact phone number

E Mail address

Aim and purpose of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to provide a procedure for implementing appropriate action following the raising of safeguarding concerns involving children, young people and vulnerable adults within our Church, or those who attend our activities and events.

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to those who attend our Church/place of worship, our trustees, staff (both paid and volunteer) and those who hire our building. It is approved and endorsed by the Elders.

Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy, and our procedures.

Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to beneficiaries of the charity, either vulnerable adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk.

What are we protecting from?

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. A copy of the definitions relating to children is attached to this policy at Appendix 1. The definitions of abuse in relation to vulnerable adults is attached as Appendix 2

How to recognise abuse

It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. A list of such possible signs and symptoms in relation to children is attached at Appendix 3 and in relation to Vulnerable Adults at Appendix 4. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories.

It is essential to note that these are only **indicators** of **possible** abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for any of these signs and/or behaviour. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for a child or vulnerable adult's behaviour.

What to do if there is an allegation

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.
- Inform your Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.
- Report concerns to the relevant authorities, either Social Care (Adults or Children) or the Police.

Procedure in the event of concern

If there is an immediate threat of harm we will contact the Police.

Where it is judged that there is no immediate threat of harm the following will occur:-

- The concern will be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory agencies.
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix 5. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory agencies if a referral is made.
- The person about whom the allegation is may not be informed by anyone in the Church if it is judged that to do so would place a child or vulnerable adult at increased risk.

Who to contact in the case of a Child

MASH 0345 1551071 out of hours Social Services Team on 0345 600 0388

Who to contact in the case of a Vulnerable Adult

MASH 0345 1551071 out of hours Social Services Team on 0345 600 0388

If the allegation is regarding a member of staff or volunteer

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted. A decision will be taken about when to inform the member of staff or volunteer. The timing and method will be discussed and agreed with the LADO.

MASH 0345 1551071 out of hours Social Services Team on 0345 600 0388

Complaints

Should anyone have any concerns or complaints please contact.....

Name

Contact phone number

E Mail address

If would be helpful to have complaints in writing as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing complaints will be acted upon.

Any written complaint will be responded to within 10 days.

Review

The Elders will review this policy annually