



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS:

## POLICY AND GOOD PRACTICE

# 2020

“The Scottish Episcopal Church recognises the special status of children and young people. Because of their vulnerability, children and young people will be awarded special protection. They are to be respected as persons in their own right, created and loved by God. We, therefore commit ourselves to take all steps within our power to keep children and young people from physical, sexual and emotional harm.”

“The Scottish Episcopal Church recognises the special status of all vulnerable people, particularly those who, because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness, infirmity or ageing, are unable to protect themselves from abuse, or more vulnerable to being abused than persons who are not so affected. Because of their vulnerability, such people will be awarded special protection. They are to be respected as persons in their own right, created and loved by God. We, therefore commit ourselves to take all steps within our power to keep vulnerable people safe from harm and from an abuse of trust.”

Policy Statements from the Scottish Episcopal Church

November 2014

(Scottish Charity Number SC005025)

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# ETHOS AND DEFINITIONS

## Ethos:

In all our ministry areas we aim to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, safety and co-operation whilst learning and having fun at the same time. These guidelines are to ensure that, as we serve God, we do it in a way that is honouring to Him and that develops high quality work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. These guidelines have been developed for use by the members of all teams who have responsibility for children, young people or vulnerable adults.

## Definitions:

Child - a person aged 0 – 12 years old

Young person - a person aged 12 – 18 years old

Vulnerable adult - Adults who are unable to safeguard themselves, their property, rights or interests and are at risk of harm and are more vulnerable than others because they are affected by a disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity.

# ABUSE

The overriding consideration of all staff and volunteers must be to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All disclosures or allegations must be taken seriously and there is a moral & legal duty to report a disclosure or an allegation of abuse to the relevant statutory agencies.

A disclosure or an allegation may relate to abuse from a family member or someone outside the family e.g. a teacher, youth leader, pastor etc. No groups of people are exempt from being abusers.

Third party allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way as direct allegation, but the recipient should bear in mind the possibility of manipulation and should take extra care to record facts not opinions.

Abuse can fall into a number of categories:

**PHYSICAL INJURY:** Actual or likely injury by a family member, or other person.

**NEGLECT:** A failure to meet basic needs for food warmth, protection and care.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** Persistent and severe emotional ill treatment, or rejection that severely affects emotional and behavioural development.

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** Being used to meet another person's sexual needs.

**SPIRITUAL ABUSE:** Manipulation through distortions in religious teaching or prayer activities to exert power and control.

Recognising abuse:

Anyone who suffers abuse may behave in a variety of ways. The following may be signs of abuse:

**PHYSICAL INJURY:** Injuries that do not fit within normal injuries for a person of that age. Unexplained injuries or those that have received no medical attention e.g. bruising or cuts.

**NEGLECT:** Malnourished, unkempt, dirty and generally uncared for and lacking in energy.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** May be isolated, lacking confidence and self-esteem. Demanding and attention seeking. Poor communication skills. Withdrawn and anxious. Uncontrolled/outbursts of temper.

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** Sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age. Withdrawn, sullen significant change in normal behaviour. Sexualised behaviour, play or drawings.

**SPIRITUAL ABUSE:** Disabling fear of God, or of the perpetrator, unreasonable guilt or shame.

# DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION

## ACTIONS TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION:

1. Listen carefully.
2. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
3. Never promise not to tell anyone or keep it a secret, while being confidential.
4. One question that is very useful to ask is “Does anyone else know?”
5. Let the person know what the next step will be and that any information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
6. Pass on information immediately to the Ministry Area Leader and the Safeguarding Officer.
7. Write up what has been said as soon as possible using the person’s own words to describe the abuse. Remember to sign and date this record.

All teams working with children, young people and vulnerable adults should be vigilant and aware of anything of concern by:

- Recognising – have eyes to see and ears to hear.
- Responding – to any concerns they have or any raised by the child young person or vulnerable adult.
- Recording – what has been seen/heard or said.
- Referring - to the appropriate person (The Safeguarding Officer).

## GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC supports families by making sure children & young people can receive the right help at the right time from the right people. We can be part of sharing information with professionals who can ensure they receive the appropriate care.

## Follow up action:

- After telling of the abuse the person often feels relieved but also vulnerable and anxious about what will happen next. They should be reassured and, if at all possible, not left alone.
- It is important to remember that what has been shared is in confidence and should only be shared on a need- to-know basis.
- In any of the above situations the Safeguarding Officer in consultation with the church leadership, if appropriate, will make a decision on what action to take.
- A referral may be made to the police or social services and the first person told may have to make a statement to the police. The notes made at the time may form part of this and that is why it is so important to use the actual words used to describe the abuse.

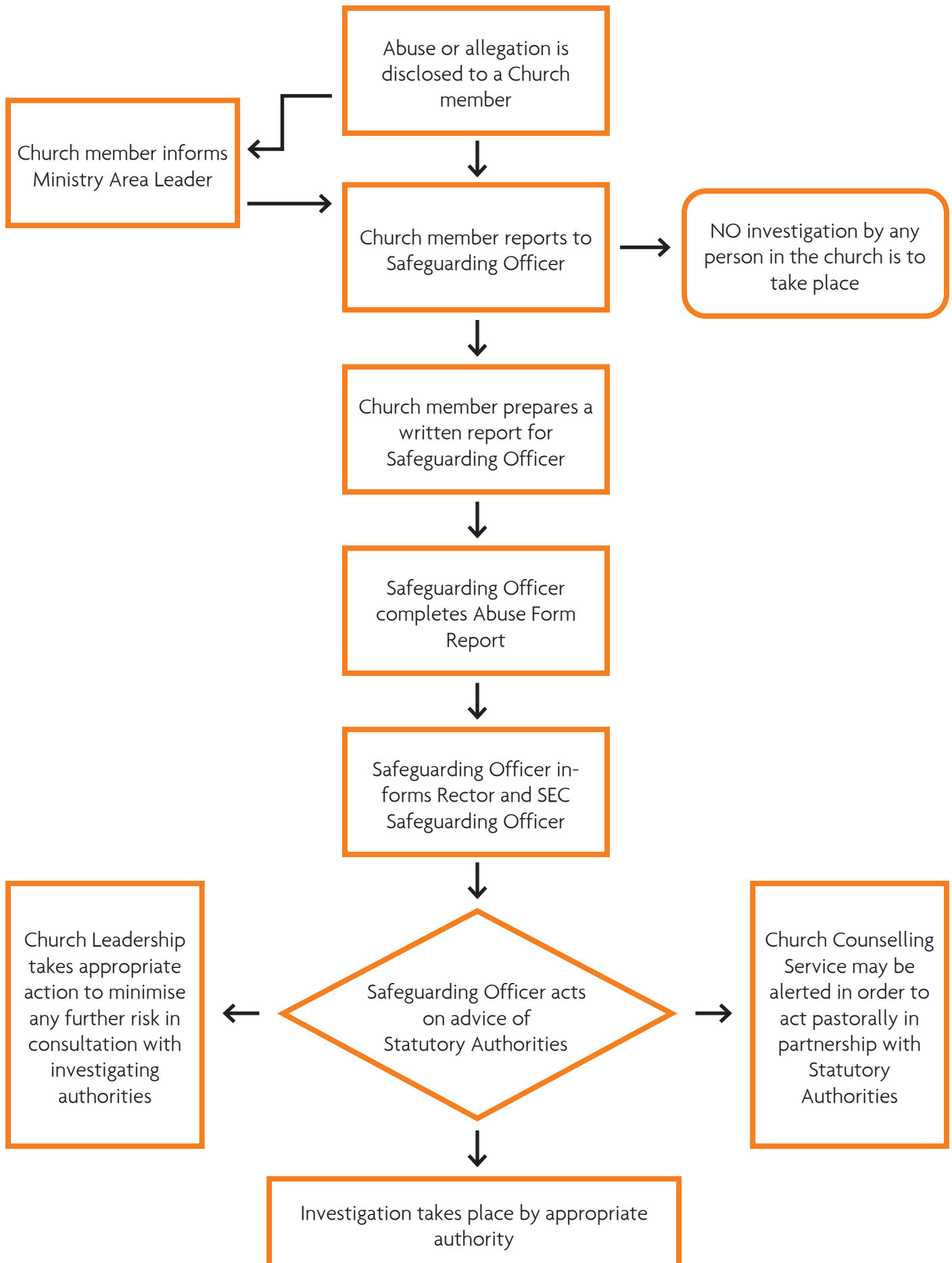
## Contact details:

Safeguarding Officer:  
Andrew Gillies – 07403869370

Back-up Safeguarding Officer:  
Rachel Cooney – 07740883847

Provincial Safeguarding Officer:  
Donald Urquhart – 07702 793 553

# THE REFERRAL PROCESS



# MINIMISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABUSE OR HARM

## AT ALL TIMES:

- Respect others privacy and dignity.
- Be aware that actions can be open to misinterpretation and therefore care should be taken to avoid situations where misunderstanding could occur.

## AT OUR EVENTS:

- Every venue should be as safe as possible by assessing & minimising any risk in the building or room.
- There should never be an unarranged occasion when a one-to-one situation arises. If it does inform someone on your team immediately.
- Team will know the fire exits and will know the evacuation procedure.
- Our groups will be properly supervised.
- First aid kits will be available for use in all our activities and where possible some team members will be trained in basic First Aid.
- Each team will be given specific details about relevant training for their ministry area, and what Safeguarding paperwork procedure they need.

## PAPERWORK PROCEDURE:

- Before appointment, all team members will meet a member of our leadership team and must complete a St Paul's and St George's Application Form and where appropriate a PVG disclosure will be sought. Disclosure of any offences will be sought in the application form but may not necessarily affect the outcome of the application.
- Generally, all leaders will be expected to be active members of the church.
- All team members will be given guidelines and training in Safeguarding.
- All team members will have a three month probationary period.
- All leaders will be expected to attend regular meetings/ training opportunities and Safeguarding Training is compulsory.

## BEHAVIOUR

We aim to ensure that we create a safe, effective and fun learning environment for everyone in our groups.

### BEHAVIOURAL GUIDELINES:

- Everyone is encouraged to listen when others are speaking.
- Questions can be asked and comments made in a way agreed by the group.
- Physical or verbal attacks are prohibited.
- The use of sarcasm is inappropriate and humour should be monitored to ensure that it is only funny and not discriminatory.
- Misbehaviour will be discussed and challenged straight away. An explanation of why the behaviour is inappropriate will be given together with an outline of the consequences if the behaviour persists. Different groups will have agreed discipline procedures.
- If a problem persists to such an extent that the group cannot function, then the leader of the team may need to talk to a parent/guardian/carer about appropriate further action.
- Anyone, whose behaviour is deemed to be detrimental to the group, may be asked to leave the group and the group leader will offer opportunities for discussion with the individual concerned.
- Anyone who is under the influence or in possession of alcohol/drugs or carrying a weapon will be excluded from our activities with an explanation of why.
- Any significant behavioural incident should be written up in an incident form and forwarded to the Safeguarding Officer.

### CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR:

- Where a noticeable change in behaviour occurs this should be reported to the team leader who will speak to a member of the leadership team. Leaders will pass on any information to the next team where there is a rota in operation.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers as appropriate will be informed where the behaviour persists.

## SUPERVISION

### ADULT: CHILD/YOUNG PERSON AND VULNERABLE ADULT RATIO:

These are the current guidelines to follow of ratios for all events and activities.

0 – 1 years	1 leader to every 2 children
1 – 2 years	1 leader to every 3 children
2 – 3 years	1 leader to every 4 children
3 – 17 years	1 leader to every 8 children
Vulnerable adult	1 leader to every 6 vulnerable adults

### TEAM GUIDELINES:

- It is preferable to have at least 1 female and 1 male leader in each team.
- A team member is not permitted to bring along a friend to help them. Children of team members should not accompany their parents, we would rather they go to their appropriate group.
- If a leader is unavoidably going to be absent due to illness or a situation that arises at the last minute, the team leader is to be notified who will arrange cover.
- If insufficient staffing is available then a staff member will be notified.
- In the unlikely event of there not being any cover for a group then the group will be cancelled. The leadership would need to be notified if this situation arises.



## TRAVEL

It is a St Paul's & St George's church policy not to provide regular travel to and from our weekly events. The responsibility of Ps & Gs for any children, young people and vulnerable adult groups only starts when the event begins. On the occasions where the leader goes past someone's house on the way home, they may give a lift, but they need to bear in mind the following guidelines:

### GUIDELINES:

- Drivers must be over 21 to carry children under the age of 18 as passengers.
- All cars/minibuses must have seatbelts.
- Children under the age of 12 or a height of 135cm must use the correct restraint.
- Where a team member is giving lifts, this should be in agreement with the parents.

### PRIVATE TRANSPORT FOR CHURCH ACTIVITIES:

- A leader must never carry only 1 passenger for an extended journey and where possible carrying 1 passenger should be avoided particularly if the person is of the opposite sex and preferably not 1:1, only in case of emergency and as a last resort.
- If the last person to be dropped off is a child/young person, please ensure they are seated in the back of the car and preferably not 1:1.
- If someone needs to go somewhere unexpectedly at an event e.g. hospital then the leader should take another child/young person or leader with him or her or use a taxi.

## FIRE PROCEDURE

### EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

- All groups should have a written register and a copy of the evacuation procedure.
- All team members should be familiar with the evacuation routes.
- The alarm must be sounded on discovering a fire.
- On hearing the alarm the group must follow the evacuation procedure.

## TOILET PROCEDURES

### TOILET SUPERVISION - UNDER 3'S:

- Help will be needed if they are learning how to use the toilet.
- Use the toilet that is most visible to other people.
- Help in appropriate way and if in doubt ask the Team Leader.
- When changing nappies please use the disposable gloves provided.

### TOILET SUPERVISION - UNDER 5'S/VULNERABLE ADULTS:

- Some help may be needed at this age, it is important not to be intrusive and to respect their privacy but also to be available to help.
- A good guide is to ask the child if they need help, please also check the toilet after they have finished.

## PERMISSIONS

### PHOTOGRAPHS:

- Written permission will be sought for any photographs that are taken.
- It is preferable that children, young people and vulnerable adults are not identifiable when photographs are shared publicly.
- No photography will be stored by team members.

### FILMS:

- Written permission will be sought for any filming that is taken.
- No filming will be stored on by team members personally.

## CARE & SUPPORT

It is good for the church to provide a place where people can talk and share problems and issues. This is a big responsibility and the following guidelines should be followed when dealing with pastoral matters:

### ONE-TO-ONE:

- One-to ones should take place in a public space or in the church office, a member of the church staff should be notified that the meeting is taking place and where possible the door should remain open.

### MENTORING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS:

- A contract between mentor and mentee; and responsible adult will be signed.
- Information about each meeting will be given to mentor leadership.
- It is good practice that all meetings should take place in an open area (café, museum, after church).

### COUNSELLING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS:

- A contract between counsellor and client and responsible adult will be signed.
- Counselling will not take place in an empty building or private homes.

## ON-LINE AND MOBILE COMMUNICATION

Our most preferred form of communication is during programmes and activities we organise. We believe these give the best forum for healthy and nurturing relationships.

We are committed to providing a safe environment for everyone who is part of any activity we organise. This includes the way we communicate. Any electronic communication will be short in content, will be for a specific purpose and will not be frequent.

All team members are role models off- and online, because of this we encourage a buddy system to keep everyone accountable for their social media interactions. Checking in with another staff member 1:1 regularly to share.

### CONTACT DETAILS:

- Only give your phone/mobile number and email address if you are happy to do so.

### SOCIAL NETWORKING:

- Only allow people to access your social networking site if you are happy for them to see your page. Remember if you have given access it is your responsibility to monitor the content on your pages.
- Always be aware of the privacy setting on your social networking.
- Only social media with traceable content are to be used.

# RISK ASSESSMENTS AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

## SAFETY IN ROOMS:

- Chairs in rooms are to be stacked on the floor, not on tables and in safe piles.
- Any objects that are dangerous/ fragile are to be put out of reach/left alone. Leaders of teams are to make a risk assessment on what is deemed to be dangerous/ fragile for a particular age group.
- Young children should not be able to access windows so care should be taken that they cannot climb up to them.
- The floor should be checked for any sharp/potentially harmful objects or litter and appropriate action taken.
- Wires/cables should be kept out of the way of children/young people and, where necessary, taped down.
- It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that the room is as safe as possible and is kept safe throughout the event. If there is a repeated problem with the safety of the room this should be passed onto the team leader.
- Any incidents should be written in the accident book.

## OTHER VENUES:

- Safety considerations should be paramount in using any venue. The venue needs to be safe for the particular age group that is using it.
- Ideally a visit should be made to the venue before the event takes place to familiarise yourself with the facilities and to carry out a risk assessment which should then be approved and lodged with the church office.
- Concerns about supervision levels and safety of the environment, should be raised in advance of the event with church leadership.

## RISK ASSESSMENTS:

- For our activities, both weekly and occasional, risk assessments must be carried out. A copy of this should be given to the office and the original kept in the group's file.

## FOOD SAFETY:

- When preparing food always be aware of personal hygiene.
- Basic health and hygiene regulations should be adhered to when preparing any food on our premises.
- If you are preparing food at the church you should have a Food Hygiene Certificate.

# FIRST AID AND MEDICAL ISSUES

## FIRST AID AND HEALTH IN THE GROUPS:

- There is a first aid kit in each building. Group leaders should know its location.
- Only use what is in the first aid kit. Do not add anything to the kit. The first aid kit will have list of contents and will be checked and replenished each term, this is the responsibility of the team leader.
- No paracetamol / aspirin or any medicines are to be administered.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is feeling unwell the leader will contact parent / guardian/carer.
- In the case of a more serious injury than can be dealt with by first aid then the leader should call an ambulance.
- A record of the event and the treatment given should be noted on the Accident Form and handed in to the church office.
- All groups should be aware who the designated first aider is.

At the first possible moment the parents / guardian should be contacted to inform them of the situation.

## DAYS AWAY/ RESIDENTIAL EVENTS:

- Parental permission - On days away and residential events, Parents / Guardians must complete and sign a form to give permission for the person to attend the event and also give the leader authority to authorise any necessary medical treatment.
- Health form - For all residential events, each child, young person and vulnerable adult is required to have completed a Ps & Gs health form.
- Activities and venues should be checked by the team leader and a Risk Assessment form completed before undertaking an event.
- Concerns about supervision levels and safety of the environment, should be raised in advance of the event with a staff member.
- Emergency contact phones should be available at these events, for both parents and leaders to make contact if required.
- Within your team there should be a first aider.
- Room allocation should be single sex and where possible leaders should not share rooms with children/ young people or vulnerable adults.