

Union of Welsh Independents, Baptist Union of Wales
& the Presbyterian Church of Wales

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook



*A practical guide to the churches' policy and practice
when working with children and young people,
and vulnerable adults*

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Foreword

As a panel we have every reason to offer our sincere thanks to the churches of the three denominations throughout Wales for their support and dedication to safeguarding work. Even throughout the lockdown period, we were able to hold training sessions with different church members and leaders, and several referrals were made to our Safeguarding Officer. We greatly appreciate the fact that so many churches consider safeguarding a matter to be taken seriously, and the continued use of our website and its various resources is a source of pride to us. It is with gratitude that these words of introduction are written, and we very much trust that the partnership will continue to flourish in the future.

The year 2021 was a turning point in the history of protecting vulnerable groups within our religious institutions. That is when the report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in Religious Institutions was published, and the findings were shocking to say the least. The Inquiry, chaired by Professor Alexis Jay, concluded that far too many religious organisations are reluctant to act in cases where children are sexually abused. In some examples, the reason for not taking the matter further was to protect the good name of the organisation, and that arises from a culture of blaming the victim or refusing to accept that church leaders can offend.

The report estimates that around 250,000 children in England and Wales regularly receive additional religious education within the faith communities. Yet, many of these communities do not have any kind of protection policy, and there are no details available about the number of children who attend the classes or who is responsible for them.

We always like to think that religious organisations give priority to teaching moral values and protecting the innocent and the vulnerable. That is what their mission is all about. But this is what Professor Alexis Jay says: “Religious organisations are defined by their moral purpose of teaching right from wrong and protection of the innocent and the vulnerable. However, when we heard about shocking failures to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse across almost all major religions, it became clear many are operating in direct conflict with this mission.”

Her words are shocking, and the message should be a clear warning to all denominations and all religions that we have no reason to feel complacent. We are grateful for the efforts of the officers of the three denominations who have championed the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel over the years to ensure we have effective policies in place, and that the training work progresses from strength to strength. The panel’s staff will offer firm guidance when the need arises and respond effectively and quickly to any changes and developments in the field.

The world has changed since the panel was established in the first place, and with the publication of the report on the sexual abuse of children in religious institutions, there is no excuse for failing to reinforce our policies and procedures and for not giving high priority to safeguarding issues in every church. With that in mind, we have updated the handbook and extended the training programme. We would like to see all churches promoting Safeguarding Sunday during the autumn, and there is devotional material available for that purpose, as well as a new video to raise the profile. Our hope is that all churches within the Union of Welsh Independents, the Baptist Union of Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales will commit anew to giving safeguarding a prominent place.

We believe that safeguarding means much more than completing DBS checks and following procedures. It is about what is central to the gospel, as we strive to create the appropriate conditions where everyone can enjoy life in all its fullness in the light of the unconditional love revealed in the life of Jesus Christ.

It is encouraging to know these words will fall on fertile ground, as the goodwill from the churches towards the work of the panel is always a source of joy. We thank you for your co-operation and your willingness to make safeguarding such a central part of your churches’ work. We also thank Julie Edwards and Sian Jones for their diligent and tireless work in managing and administering the work of the panel on a day-to-day basis, and we appreciate Julie’s sterling efforts in updating the handbook.

Emlyn Davies,
Chair, Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel
August 2022

1. Introduction

Section 1:

Introduction and Statement of Intent

1.1 What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is everybody's business- we all have a role to play.

We are by now more familiar with the term 'safeguarding'. We acknowledge that churches have a safeguarding responsibility and need to have a safeguarding policy that underpins all their work with vulnerable groups. We do this to conform to Charities Commission and insurance companies' requirements, but as Christian churches, we have an additional motivation to get safeguarding right. We seek to reflect the character and commands of Jesus, to protect the weak (James 1:27) and speak up for those whose voices are not heard (Proverbs 31:8). We want to do this to the best of our ability and operate in an exemplary manner with the children and vulnerable people that God has entrusted to our care.

So, what does safeguarding mean ?

Safeguarding means PROTECTING vulnerable people from abuse, neglect and harm. It means RECOGNISING the signs and symptoms of abuse and RESPONDING appropriately. It is PREVENTATIVE as well as PROTECTIVE - there is no requirement for abuse or neglect to have already occurred before deciding to act. This means that it is important to consider who may be AT RISK and take action to keep them from harm¹. Safeguarding also involves PROVIDING SAFE ACTIVITIES along with appropriate care.

In practical terms, a church that is following good safeguarding practice would usually have evidence of:

- Safer recruitment practices for workers and volunteers
- Good working practices in all aspects of its work and have
- Workers who are trained and supported and able to recognise the signs of abuse and know how to respond to concerns.

This handbook, the panel website and the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel officers are here to help you to do this.

It is encouraging to be able to say that, since the publication of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook in 2014, thousands of people from our churches throughout Wales and beyond have received and read the handbook and attended safeguarding training. Many of you have taken significant action to make your churches safer places for the vulnerable and for everyone and have responded to concerns and sought advice. But there is always more that we can do...

1.2 About this handbook (2022)

The guidance and advice in this handbook forms the adopted safeguarding policy of the Union of Welsh Independents, Baptist Union of Wales and Presbyterian Church of Wales when working with vulnerable groups. It aims to give clear practical guidance to those working, volunteering and those who are responsible for activities with vulnerable groups in the local setting.

¹ Considering who may be at risk and taking action to protect them is emphasised in a key piece of Welsh legislation – Section 7 of The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 which came into force in 2016.

Much of this handbook remains the same, as the basic principles that prompted the new handbook in 2014 have not changed. However, we are pleased to bring you some updates and new additions which we detail below, section by section. We hope that they will help you to make the safeguarding policy a reality as you work with children and vulnerable people in your local setting.

Future updates will appear on the panel website <https://panel.cymru> as this is a more efficient and effective way to ensure that we are sharing information and updates with you promptly. We suggest that you regularly visit the website to make sure you are accessing the latest information and forms etc.

As you add these updates to your existing file, we invite you to reread the entire document and use it as an opportunity to assess your local safeguarding process and practice. Consider working through the new safeguarding self-assessment checklist at appendix 10 to see how you're doing.

Section 1 has been updated, so please replace the original Section 1 with this new version. It includes a new and important [individual church safeguarding policy statement](#). Previously the safeguarding policy statement was to be found at the beginning of Sections 3 and 4 but we have now prepared a separate document for you to use and display. The policy statement aims to help you to clearly state your church's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable groups. It is highly recommended that each church appoints a safeguarding coordinator to help facilitate the effective operation of the safeguarding policy locally. You will find more information about this and other safeguarding roles in the notes section of the new policy statement document. You can also access the document at the Policies section of the panel website.

The statement of intent is unchanged, but we have created a new code of conduct based on this statement. It outlines the main responsibilities and practices for those working and volunteering with vulnerable groups and should enhance communication and accountability. You can find the code of conduct at Appendix 2a.

Section 2 has been rewritten. You will find step by step guidance on the recommended recruitment process that responsible organisations working with vulnerable groups should take when selecting and appointing workers and volunteers. This process aims to make sure that every reasonable measure has been taken to ensure that our vulnerable groups are cared for by safe and suitable individuals. There are forms and checklists in **Section 7** to guide you through the recruitment process.

This section now includes flow charts to help you to understand who needs to do a Disclosure and Barring Service Check. We would never claim that the DBS process is easy to understand but we hope that the charts will help bring some additional clarity. Our current policy of repeating a check every 4 years remains unchanged and we now ask that churches keep a record of their volunteers and their DBS status, to ensure that this is done in a timely manner.

Section 3 is unchanged. You will find some good practice guidance about working with children and young people and **Section 7** contains the consent forms needed to help you to operate this guidance. This section also contains information regarding child protection and how to respond if you suspect or are told about abuse, neglect or harm.

Section 4 is unchanged and contains good practice guidance and information when working with vulnerable adults and how to respond if you suspect or are told about abuse, neglect or harm.

Section 5 is unchanged and looks at how we can support those affected by abuse and contains useful contacts and information. These contact details are updated on our website.

Section 6 - Appendices, has some important new additions. Please add the new appendices to the existing section retaining **appendix 2, 5 and 6**

Appendix 1: the section containing **contacts and further information** has been updated. A further and more comprehensive list of contacts is on the Advice and Support page of our website.

Appendix 2a: a new code of conduct based on our statement of intent . It outlines some good practice and responsibilities for those working and volunteering with vulnerable groups.

Appendix 3: is an updated **relevant legislation list**.

Appendix 4: an updated guide to conducting a **risk assessment**.

Appendix 7: a new addition outlining the safeguarding responsibilities of **charity trustees**.

Appendix 8: a new addition based on an NSPCC resource with guidance on **using and sharing images of children** and a model policy.

Appendix 9: contains **additional definitions**. The main categories of abuse are described in sections 3 and 4 but some new and specific definitions are now also being commonly used.

Appendix 10: a checklist and assessment tool to help you assess your church's safeguarding situation.

Section 7 contains all the forms referred to in this handbook. We have prepared an additional sheet explaining how UK GDPR relates to the forms in this section which should be added at the front of **Section 7**. The forms themselves have not been changed in the paper copy of the handbook but they are all available electronically on our website as word documents that you can adapt to suit your specific requirements and activities.

1.3 Role of the panel and the three denominations

The panel was established in 2001 to serve and advise the Presbyterian Church of Wales, Baptist Union of Wales and Union of Welsh Independents on safeguarding matters in relation to their work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The panel became a company limited by guarantee in 2009 and its directors include the general secretaries from the “the three denominations” with the position of chair rotating between the three denominations. In 2022 our name changed from Interdenominational Protection Panel to Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel and we adopted a new simpler domain name: panel.cymru

The panel is a small organisation working exclusively for the three denominations. It employs a safeguarding and training officer and an administrative officer. The panel safeguarding officer is the lead safeguarding officer for the three denominations.

The panel provides safeguarding training for the denominations' ministers, staff and volunteers as well as safeguarding and policy information and guidelines.

As a registered body with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) the panel processes DBS checks for ministers, employees and volunteers within the three denominations. In 2008 it became an ‘umbrella body’ enabling it to provide disclosure checks for external organisations and agencies.

The panel's officers and directors meet regularly to manage and oversee the work of the panel and a wider panel, made up of representatives from the 3 denominations, meets at least annually. The panel also facilitates, when necessary, confidential small panel meetings to make decisions and advise on cases and blemished disclosures. These meetings usually involve panel representatives or independent individuals nominated because of their expertise, interest or professional background. The panel members adhere to a strict confidentiality code.

1.4 Statement of Intent

1. Members of the church² community have an obligation to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults in every activity.
2. The church undertakes to operate its policy and procedures in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
3. The church undertakes to comply with statutory requirements in relation to selecting and appointing individuals to undertake paid or voluntary work.
4. The church undertakes to provide a system whereby those who care for children, young people and vulnerable adults are trained and supported.
5. The church undertakes to recognise situations where children and young people and vulnerable adults could potentially suffer harm during the course of church activities.
6. The church undertakes to challenge any misuse of authority by an individual.
7. The church undertakes to listen to children and vulnerable adults and to respond sensitively and in line with its policy and guidelines.
8. The church undertakes to respond immediately when a suspicion of abuse is drawn to its attention, and to co-operate with the local authority or the police if an investigation is launched. It also undertakes to share information responsibly to facilitate an effective investigation.
9. The church undertakes to provide pastoral care to those who suffer abuse or direct them to pastoral care.
10. The church undertakes to provide pastoral care for offenders or suspected offenders, or to refer them to pastoral care.
11. The church undertakes to work with the panel's safeguarding and training officer, and/or the general secretaries of the three denominations, who will provide advice and guidance to local churches in relation to safeguarding. The church will cooperate with those tasked with responding to and collating information in relation to cases giving cause for concern within the three denominations.
12. The church undertakes to support and encourage parents and carers as they care for their children.

1.5 Individual Church Safeguarding Policy statement

Please display the following policy statement in your church.
You can also download an electronic copy of the document from our website.

² The term 'church' includes both central denominational structures and local churches

Our Safeguarding Policy Statement



As leaders and trustees of _____ church we are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of our members and those entrusted to our care. This safeguarding policy statement along with the guidelines and procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook, forms our safeguarding policy and procedures.

We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of abuse and neglect and we recognise our obligation to ensure their safety in the activities carried out in the name of this church. We aim to provide a caring environment and to respond sensitively and immediately to any concerns. Members of the church, paid staff and volunteers will show respect to others, promote the ethos of listening to children and vulnerable people and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the principles of the Christian church.

The church will care for children, young people and vulnerable adults and safeguard them by following good practices in relation to the following:

- **Responding appropriately to concerns and allegations** (Handbook Sections 3.2 and 4.2) In line with our policy and guidelines we undertake to respond immediately when a suspicion of abuse or any other concerns or allegations are drawn to our attention. We undertake to co-operate with the Local Authority or the Police if an investigation is launched.
- **Safer Recruitment for workers and volunteers** (Handbook Section 2) including DBS checks every 4 years for eligible workers, leaders and trustees.
- **Training and supporting our workers and volunteers** in their role and in the protection of children and vulnerable people.
- **Promoting good working practices** (Handbook Sections 3.1 and 4.1) and creating a safe environment.

Our responsibility

We acknowledge that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and we should report any concerns directly to the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, to our local safeguarding coordinator or to statutory authorities in an emergency. Trustees/deacons/elders of this local church have a responsibility to ensure that the safeguarding policy and best practice is carried out. They will work with the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel on safeguarding matters.

OUR SAFEGUARDING CONTACT POINTS

We have nominated the following as our local safeguarding contacts :- (Name)

SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR: _____

Contact details _____ (Name)

SAFEGUARDING DEACON / ELDER / TRUSTEE: _____

Contact details _____

Dated _____

Denominational safeguarding officer: : (Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel) JULIE EDWARDS

Contact details: post@panel.cymru

01745 817584

NOTES ON THIS CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this individual church policy statement is to clearly state your church's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable groups. This is in line with best practice and a requirement of many insurance companies.

This safeguarding policy statement along with the guidelines and procedures outlined in the **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook** (see endnote 1), and any subsequent updates, forms your safeguarding policy and procedures.

They have been adopted by all Presbyterian Church of Wales churches and all churches that are members of the Union of Welsh Independents and the Baptist Union of Wales (the 3 denominations) unless they have formally informed their relevant denomination that they have adopted other procedures due to a local ecumenical partnership agreement or other interdenominational arrangement.

Putting your policy into practice

- A copy of this safeguarding policy statement (page 1) should be displayed prominently and permanently in the church building and replaced annually / when contact details change.
- The policy statement (page 1) should be read annually at a church meeting / AGM.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, but local church leaders (trustees/deacons/ elders and ministers) have additional responsibility to ensure that the policy is put into practice. The appointment of a local safeguarding coordinator is advised. See roles and responsibilities below.
- All those who work or volunteer with children and/or adults should have access to a full copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures and sign to confirm that they will follow them. (See also our safeguarding code of conduct appendix 2a). They should attend training to ensure that they are familiar with the policy and understand what to do if they are concerned about a situation or individual.
- The policy and procedures and additional information can be found in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook which is available in each church and is also on the panel website. panel.cymru

Roles and responsibilities

To facilitate the effective operation of the safeguarding policy it is highly recommended that each church appoints a safeguarding coordinator. (A church can also appoint a safeguarding trustee.) See endnote 2 on the following page for details of these roles and responsibilities.

Each church is expected to notify the panel office of the name and contact details of the safeguarding co-ordinator but if the panel office has not received a notification of a named safeguarding coordinator it will be assumed that the church secretary is the church safeguarding contact and all DBS correspondence and any queries will be directed to them.

The local safeguarding contact(s) will work closely with the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel officers to ensure that DBS checks are carried out in a timely manner and be the first point of contact if there are any safeguarding queries or concerns.

PLEASE NOTE:

**It is not the role of the local safeguarding person to make final decisions regarding safeguarding incidents or disclosures.
The church should contact the panel safeguarding officer.**

End Notes

1. **THE SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS HANDBOOK:** details safeguarding practice and guidelines. All churches should have received a copy of this document. It is also available online <https://panel.cymru/en/safeguarding-vulnerable>
More information on the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel and additional safeguarding advice and information and resources is available on the panel website <https://panel.cymru> or by contacting the panel office (see 2 below)

2. **SAFEGUARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Please email post@panel.cymru or call 01745 817584 with the name, role and contact details of the **SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR** for your church. Without this notification the panel will continue to contact the church secretary or minister on safeguarding / DBS matters.

The term **SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS** includes both role A and B.

A. SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR

1. Make sure that all relevant and eligible persons working with children and vulnerable adults /adults at risk have an up to date (4 yearly) DBS check and have attended training. Maintain a confidential record of all volunteers noting dates of DBS checks and ensure renewals are completed. Liaise with the panel office on DBS matters and receive notifications of completed DBS from the panel.
2. Ensure that all safeguarding concerns or allegations are reported to the panel safeguarding officer promptly. Liaise with the panel safeguarding officer when there are safeguarding concerns or matters in the church.
3. In an emergency, report allegations and concerns promptly to the police or social services.
4. Liaise with external agencies where necessary.
5. Ensure any agreements or risk assessments to manage persons who may pose a risk are managed and monitored locally. Liaise with the panel safeguarding officer.
6. Report to the church meeting on safeguarding issues in a general and awareness raising manner without compromising confidentiality.

B. SAFEGUARDING TRUSTEE / ELDER/ DEACON

(If a church does not appoint someone to this post, points 1+2 below may be part of the work of the safeguarding coordinator and points 3 +4 may be part of the Local Church Trustees / Deacons / Elders role)

1. Make sure that all necessary safeguarding measures are in place (including policy, procedures, training, safe recruiting, etc.).
2. Take the lead on safeguarding matters on behalf of the trustees/deacons/elders.
3. Maintain regular communication with the safeguarding coordinator and ensure safeguarding is on the agenda at church meetings.
4. Keep the safeguarding policy relevant and up to date. Annually review and update as necessary.

C. ALL TRUSTEES/DEACONS/ ELDERS OF LOCAL CHURCH

1. A duty of care and responsibility for ensuring the safe and effective running of the church including safeguarding vulnerable groups.
2. Promote and facilitate a culture of safeguarding best practice throughout church life.
3. Support and assist the safeguarding contacts.

D. MINISTER

1. DBS Verifier (this role can also be carried out by other church officers with panel agreement)
2. Support and assist the safeguarding contacts, deputising if they are implicated in any allegation.
3. Promoting and facilitating a culture of best practice throughout the church life.

E. PANEL SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

1. The safeguarding lead for the denomination.
2. Provide safeguarding guidance and support to local churches.
3. Work closely with local churches to deal with concerns and allegations including contact with statutory authorities.
4. Work closely with the panel and the local church to assess and manage those who may pose a risk including drafting contracts of agreed behaviour.

2. Recruitment

Section 2:

Safer recruitment and selection

Introduction

As churches, providing a wide variety of activities for children and vulnerable adults, we have a responsibility to make sure that we do this in a safe and accountable way. We need to be able to say to parents, carers and statutory authorities that we have done all we can to ensure that those who look after children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and able to do their job.

The safer recruitment process in this section (see 2.1) is in line with current legislation and good practice guidance and has been the longstanding policy of the church and was also included in our previous guidance, “For the Sake of Our Children”. By putting these policy and guidelines into practice we are taking important steps to safeguard children and vulnerable people in our midst. We may assume that we know everyone within our church community or that we don’t want to turn away any willing volunteers, but we have a legal and moral responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that children and vulnerable people are safe. It can feel awkward to ask those we know to go through a recruitment process however, the steps noted in this section are acknowledged good practice to make sure that workers and volunteers have the appropriate skills, access to support and training and that the appropriate background checks have been carried out. If we apply the process to all, it is fair and transparent and quickly becomes the norm.

All leaders, workers and volunteers and those in positions of trust with access to or responsibility for vulnerable groups should undergo a thorough recruitment process before they begin their role. For employees, this should include an application form followed by an interview and references should always be taken up. Any inconsistencies or gaps in the employment history should be queried. For each volunteer, an information form should be completed, an informal discussion about the role should take place and references sought. All those working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults should complete a self-declaration form (which will be stored confidentially) and a criminal records check (DBS) should be carried out for all eligible posts. The process should always be applied to new volunteers and employees but all elements may not be relevant to existing volunteers.

The majority of posts involving contact with children and many posts working with vulnerable adults and adults at risk are eligible to do a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, but this can vary depending on the actual work, level of responsibility and frequency of the work. This section of the handbook contains information to help you understand the process including flow charts and examples of eligible posts. All eligible workers /volunteers should complete a DBS check before they commence their role and then every four years.

As well as the information outlined in the following pages there are also forms and checklists available in Section 7 of this handbook and on the panel website.

Safer recruitment is a set of practices to help make sure your staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. It’s a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm.

NSPCC 2022

2.1 The safer recruitment process

See also INDIVIDUAL APPLICANT CHECKLIST (Form 3)

1. APPLICATION / INFORMATION FORM (FORM 1)

This asks for information such as: previous experience of working with children/adults and names of two independent referees who can testify to the applicant's employment history or his/ her volunteering work with children and or vulnerable adults.

2. SELF-DECLARATION FORM (FORM 2)

For those who will be working with vulnerable groups this form asks for details of any convictions or on-going criminal allegations, including convictions which are 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 in accordance with current legislation. The form will be kept securely by a named person within the church for three years.

3. INTERVIEW / INFORMAL MEETING

Applicants for an employed post should be interviewed formally and an informal meeting should take place with each potential volunteer to ensure that they understand their role and responsibilities.

4. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECK (DBS)

See the eligibility information and flow charts at 2.4
All workers / volunteers doing regulated activity must do an enhanced DBS check with a check of the relevant barred list. See 2.3
Most other volunteers working with children will be eligible for a DBS check without a barred list check and those working with adults may be eligible if the work meets the frequency requirement.

5. OBTAIN REFERENCES (FORM 4)

References should be sought from two independent people. (See note iv)

6. ARRANGE APPROPRIATE TRAINING.

Safeguarding training is essential for all leaders, workers and volunteers. It should include clear guidelines on how to respond to any concerns and information on best practice when working with children or vulnerable adults. Information about training opportunities is available from the panel office

Also note the following:

- i. All forms noted above are available Section 7 of the handbook and on the panel website.
- ii. Ensure that a potential volunteer has at least six months' previous involvement with the church community.
- iii. Draw up appropriate guidelines in relation to tasks and duties, including details of accountability and support (see also appendix 2a: code of conduct and appendix 2: guidelines and safe working practices).
- iv. Obtain at least one reference from someone who has experience of the applicant's paid or volunteer work. Where the applicant has no experience of such work, references should cover their character and relationships with others. Telephone references should be avoided. Written references should be followed up with a telephone conversation for clarification if needed.
- v. Never ignore doubts about an applicant's suitability; any erring should always be on the side of caution.
- vi. The appointment of employed staff and volunteers should be subject to the successful completion of a probation period.
- vii. Volunteers aged under 18 should always be supported and supervised. Consent of parents/ guardians is needed. 16 is the minimum age for a DBS check.

2.2 What is a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS¹)?

The Disclosure and Barring Service helps organisations make safer recruitment decisions by enabling them to check information about individuals that is held on national and local police records and confidential barring lists held by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

A DBS application should be the **final stage** of the recruitment procedure. This means that an organisation will have already gone through a safer recruitment procedure and decided to appoint the applicant or volunteer, providing the disclosure certificate does not contain any information of concern.

There are three types of DBS disclosure: BASIC, STANDARD AND ENHANCED. Standard and enhanced checks can only be done by a registered body whereas an individual can apply for their own basic check using the DBS website² (A basic check is not recommended for work with vulnerable groups and the panel does not do these checks). Enhanced DBS checks are free for volunteers and a fee is charged for an employed post.

The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel is a DBS registered body and mainly carries out enhanced checks for those working with vulnerable groups in the three denominations following the DBS code of practice. It is not possible to do a DBS check “just in case” someone may work with vulnerable groups in the future. The nature of a role and actual contact with vulnerable people must be looked at in each case to ensure that the role is eligible³. Eligibility criteria and information about roles within the church is on the following pages in this handbook and more information is also available on the panel website or DBS website.

The panel counter-signatory must be able to confirm that each position is eligible under current legal provisions before submitting a form to the DBS. It is illegal for any organisation to seek information via a disclosure certificate which it is not entitled to know. To establish eligibility for a DBS check, it is essential to look at each role including the level of responsibility, frequency of the work and the level of contact with vulnerable groups. This information should be included on the panel’s verifier form which needs to be completed alongside the DBS application form. This information also helps to ascertain if a role involves ‘Regulated Activity’ (see 2.3). Anyone undertaking regulated activities must have completed an Enhanced DBS check with a check of confidential lists of those barred from work with children and/or vulnerable adults before they begin working with vulnerable groups. As it is an offence to allow a barred person to carry out regulated activity, an employer must take relevant steps to ensure that they are not allowing a barred person⁴ to take part in regulated activity.

Where someone is working closely with vulnerable groups but does not fit the regulated activity criteria, it is possible to do an enhanced check without barring details if the activity or position was eligible for a check before the Sept 2012 changes. See Flow charts and information at 2.4 for more details.

The panel recommends that DBS checks should be repeated every 4 years. DBS certificates are usually not transferable from one organisation to another. However, subscribing to the **DBS update service**⁵ can allow a certificate to be reused (if additional roles require the same level of check as the original) and will also speed up the 4 year renewal process⁶. An applicant can only join this service within 30 days of receiving a new certificate. There is an annual charge for employees, but the service is free for volunteers.

¹ DBS checks were previously called CRB checks. The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel is responsible for conducting checks through the ‘DBS’ and will help you to decide what level of check is appropriate.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

³ Eligibility must be confirmed before a check can be processed.

For more information see 2.4 of this document or DBS eligibility guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁴ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

⁵ www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

⁶ https://panel.cymru/images/Information_sheet_update_service.docx.pdf

2.3 What is Regulated and Non-Regulated Activity?

Regulated activity is work that a barred person must not do. It is illegal for a barred person to carry out regulated activity. An enhanced DBS check with a check of the relevant barred list **MUST** be completed before any regulated activity takes place to ensure compliance with this.

This excludes activities conducted in the course of personal or family relationships.

A. With CHILDREN

Regulated activity will involve:

1. Unsupervised Activities: such as teaching, supervising, training or providing personal care or advice/guidance on well-being.
2. Specified Establishments: including educational establishments, childcare premises and residential children's care homes.
3. Personal Care*: Washing and dressing, eating, prompting, drinking and toileting.
4. Health care* provided by any health care professional, or under their direction or supervision
5. Registered Childminding* and Foster-Carers*
6. Day to day management on a regular basis of a person providing a regulated activity.

With the exception of those marked * there is also a frequency condition to decide if an activity is regulated. The applicant needs to be involved in the activity:

- once a week or more
- 4 or more days in a 30-day period or
- overnight between 2am - 6am with the opportunity for face-to-face contact
- *assisting with personal care only once would be classed as regulated activity.

B. With ADULTS

The definition of 'Regulated Activity' concentrates on specific activities whereby an adult is considered vulnerable at that particular time. This means that for DBS purposes adults are not labelled as 'vulnerable' because of their personal characteristics, circumstances or the location in which the activity is received. (This is different to a social services definition).

There are six categories within the definition of regulated activity:

1. Health care: provided by a health care professional or under the supervision of one.
2. Providing Personal care: washing and dressing, eating, drinking and toileting for those who can't carry this out themselves because of age, illness or disability. Also prompting or training.
3. Social work.
4. Assistance with Household Affairs: Anyone who provides day to day assistance to an adult because of their age, illness or disability, where it includes managing the person's cash, paying the person's bills, or shopping on their behalf.
5. Assistance with the Conduct of Affairs: Power of attorney/Deputies appointed under the Mental Capacity Act.
6. Transporting an adult for health, personal or social care due to age, illness or disability.

There is no specified establishment or frequency requirement for adults as there is with children.

C. NON-REGULATED ACTIVITY

Where a worker or volunteer is in a role that involves substantial access to vulnerable groups but does not meet the 2012 definition of 'Regulated Activity' as noted above, there remains provision to request an enhanced disclosure excluding barring list status in many cases.

See flowcharts at 2.4 for details of eligibility and examples of roles at 2.5

2.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) eligibility

USE THESE 3 FLOWCHARTS AND INFORMATION TO HELP YOU TO DECIDE WHO IN YOUR CHURCH IS ELIGIBLE TO DO A DBS CHECK. If you are unsure contact the panel office.

Where a role is eligible, it is our policy as well as the expectation of the Charities Commission and many insurance companies that you apply for a DBS check. Our policy states that a check should be repeated every 4 years.

CHART 1:

ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS / TRUSTEES ELIGIBLE TO DO A DBS CHECK?

Does this church have organised activities with children and / or vulnerable adults?
(See note 1 below)

YES

Those working directly with **CHILDREN** are likely to be eligible to do DBS checks.
(See the list of examples & **Chart 2**).

Those involved in activities with **VULNERABLE ADULTS** are eligible if the activity meets the criteria and is carried out frequently enough
(See examples, notes & **Chart 3**).

CHURCH TRUSTEES will be eligible if the activity with children or adults reaches the threshold for the church to be classed as a vulnerable groups charity

NO

There is **NO** eligibility to do DBS checks.

Even though vulnerable people and / or children may **attend** services and there may be occasional family services there is no eligibility to do a DBS unless the church has **specific children or vulnerable group activities**.

PLEASE REMEMBER

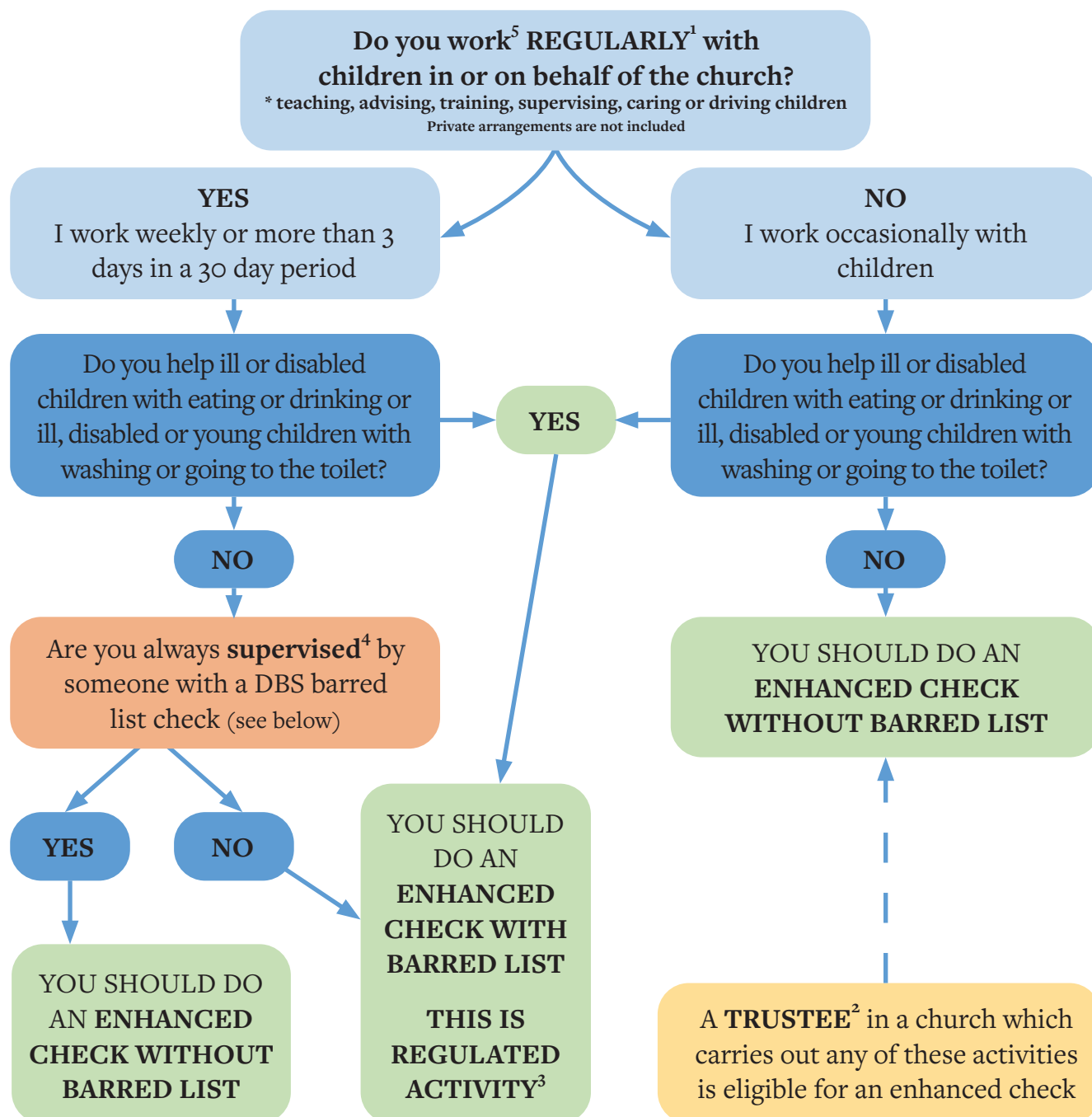
Even if no one in your church is eligible for a DBS check, the church still has safeguarding responsibilities.

THE SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS HANDBOOK forms your Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

You should still attend **TRAINING** to ensure you know how to respond if you have concerns about a situation or individual.

- 1. ORGANISED ACTIVITIES** with children could include Sunday School or Youth club and for vulnerable adults this could be regular organised pastoral visiting of vulnerable adults in their homes or a transport rota or luncheon club for elderly or disabled people. See charts 2 & 3 for more details. These activities will usually be held regularly and consistently. Usual Church worship services do not count as organised activity for vulnerable groups even if there are children and / or vulnerable adults present.

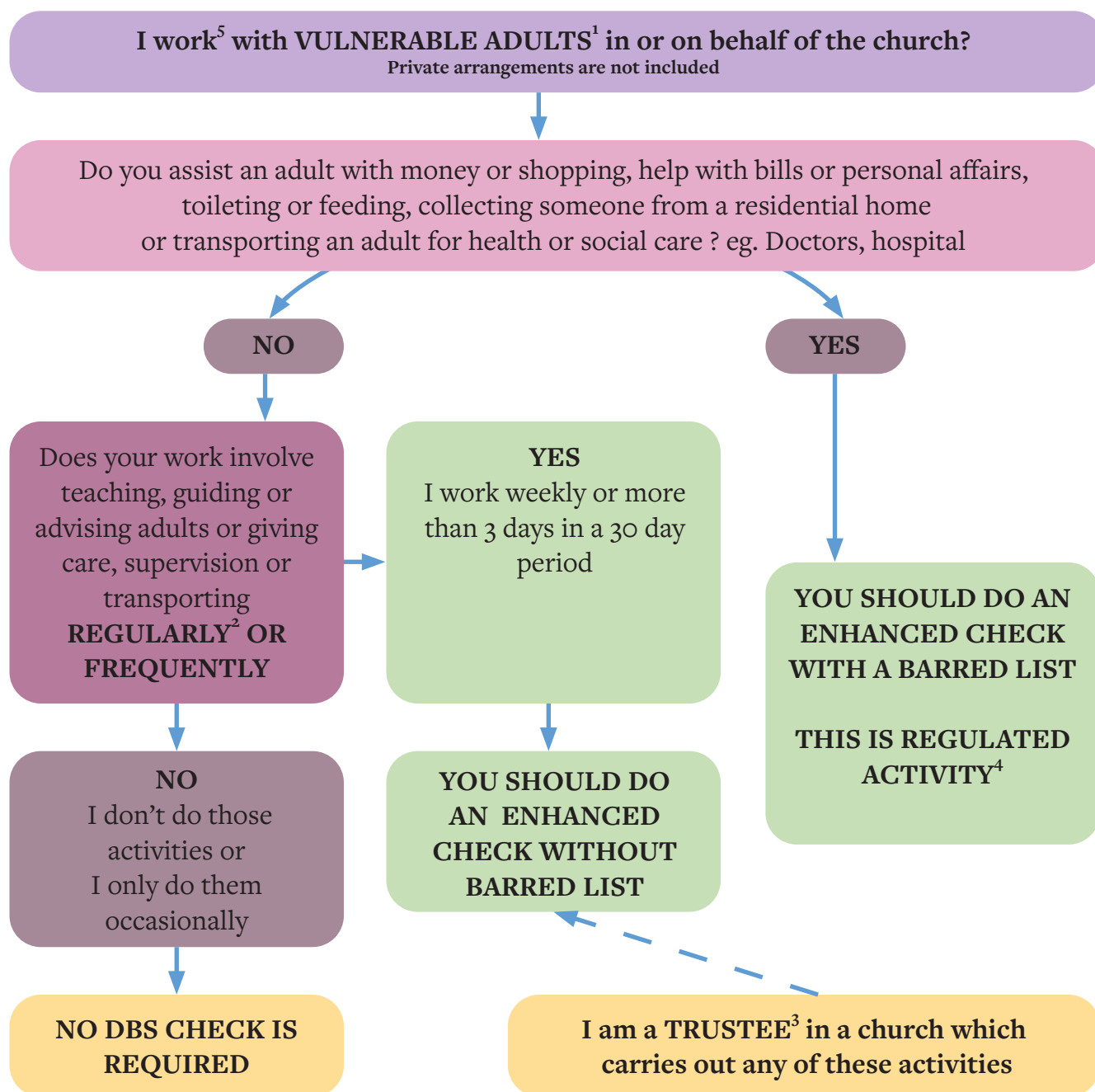
CHART 2: WORK with CHILDREN



NOTES and definitions for work with children

- 1) **REGULAR(LY) / FREQUENTLY** means: at least weekly, or anytime on more than 3 days in a 30 day period, or overnight (anytime 2am -6am). There are exceptions.
- 2) **CHURCH TRUSTEES** not engaged in direct work with children or vulnerable adults are only eligible to apply for a DBS check if there are activities with vulnerable groups within that church which enable the church to be classed as a **VULNERABLE GROUPS CHARITY** (children and/ or vulnerable adults). Such trustees can do a DBS check without a check of the barred lists. This is in line with Charity Commission guidance. If the trustee is engaging in direct work with a vulnerable group they will be entitled to a check based on that work not on the title trustee but should also note the role “trustee” on the panel verifier’s form.
- 3) **REGULATED ACTIVITY** – See 2.3 in this Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook.
- 4) **SUPERVISION** means that an individual responsible for the activity is present throughout the activity; please note it does not simply mean that there is more than one adult present in the same room. The supervisor must have a DBS enhanced check with a barred list check. If there is no supervisor present the work is **UNSUPERVISED**
- 5) **WORK or VOLUNTEERING** is treated the same for the purpose of DBS eligibility

CHART 3: WORK with VULNERABLE ADULTS



NOTES and definitions for work with adults

- 1) A **'VULNERABLE ADULT OR ADULT AT RISK'** for DBS purposes is someone 18 and over who is receiving a health and social care service e.g., Residential accommodation or sheltered housing or health care or any care because of their age, health or disability (para 9 & 10 Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Amendment) Regulations 2013).
- 2) **REGULAR(LY)/ FREQUENTLY** means at least weekly, or anytime on more than 3 days in a 30 day period, or overnight (any time 2am -6am). There are exceptions.
- 3) **CHURCH TRUSTEES** not engaged in direct work with children or vulnerable adults are only eligible to apply for a DBS check if there are activities with Vulnerable Groups within that Church which enable the church to be classed as a **VULNERABLE GROUPS CHARITY** (children and/ or vulnerable adults). Such Trustees can do a DBS check without a check of the barred lists. This is in line with Charity Commission guidance. If the trustee is engaging in direct work with a vulnerable group they will be entitled to a check based on that work not on the title trustee but should also note the role "trustee" on the panel verifier's form.
- 4) **REGULATED ACTIVITY** – See 2.3 in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook.
- 5) **WORK** or **VOLUNTEERING** is treated the same for the purpose of DBS eligibility.

2.5 Examples of roles and their eligibility for DBS checks

It is not possible to produce a definitive list based on job title alone as eligibility is based on the actual work undertaken and its frequency, but the following examples are for general guidance. The terms “worker” and “working” also includes volunteers.

Roles working with CHILDREN: (see also CHART 2)

- 1) A **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER/YOUTH WORKER** working **regularly*** and unsupervised is engaged in **regulated activity*** and must do an enhanced check (with a barred list check). The same role working regularly but **supervised*** is eligible to do an enhanced check (but without a barred list check)
- 2) A **SUNDAY SCHOOL** teacher/youth worker working occasionally (whether or not supervised) should do an enhanced check (without a barring list check).
- 3) Any worker who helps ill or disabled children with eating or drinking or ill, disabled or young children with washing or going to the toilet, even if only once or occasionally must do an enhanced DBS (barred list check).
- 4) A **CHURCH TRUSTEE** in a church that holds Sunday school and/or children/youth activities is eligible for an enhanced check without a check of the barred list even if they personally do not take part. If a church holds services where children may attend or with occasional children’s services but no other organised children’s activities/work the trustees are NOT eligible for a DBS check.
- 5) The **OPEN THE BOOK** safeguarding policy requires volunteers to do a DBS check through their local church.
- 6) In a **CRÈCHE** or **TODDLER GROUP** OR **‘MESSY CHURCH’** where children may be unaccompanied or a worker may be responsible for the children, the workers would be eligible for an enhanced check (with/without a barred list check depending on other factors.) If the parents/carers are always present and constantly in charge of their own children, helpers are not eligible for a DBS check. (See 3 above for toilet / nappy changing).

Roles working with VULNERABLE ADULTS (see definition note 1, CHART 3)

The frequency of activity is key to DBS eligibility for those working with adults (see note 2 on previous page).

- 7) A **PASTORAL VISITOR** who visits vulnerable elderly or disabled adults regularly (approx. weekly – see note 3) and provides care, advice, teaching or support is **eligible** for an enhanced check. Those visiting less frequently are not eligible.
- 8) A **PASTORAL VISITOR** who helps a vulnerable adult with finances/bills/cash/shopping (regardless of frequency) must complete an enhanced check with a barred list check
- 9) A **LUNCH CLUB** or **FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER** who only distributes food and chats to the visitors is not eligible. However, if that role involves **teaching, advising or guiding adults at risk**⁶ regularly or frequently it is eligible. (Para 6 Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Amendment) Regulations 2013)
- 10) A **LUNCH CLUB** worker or **PASTORAL VISITOR** who helps a vulnerable adult with their food or to go to the toilet must do an enhanced check with a barred list check.
- 11) A volunteer who **TRANSPORTS** elderly and vulnerable church members to church regularly/frequently is eligible for an enhanced check without a barred list check. (This must be organised by or on behalf of the church not a private arrangement). Transporting adults infrequently is **not eligible** unless it is from a care home or to receive social care or health care.
- 12) A volunteer who **TRANSPORTS ADULTS** in order for them to receive medical care or conveys someone from a care home to church must do an enhanced check (with barred list check).(This should be a church not private arrangement)
- 13) A **CHURCH TRUSTEE** in a church that organises activities for vulnerable adults such as weekly visiting of elderly and vulnerable members is eligible for an enhanced check (without a barred list check). If a church holds services where vulnerable adults attend but there are no other organised activities specifically for the vulnerable, the trustees are NOT eligible.

Other roles

- 14) **MINISTERS** should usually complete an enhanced check with a check of the child and adult barring lists. This is because of the usual or expected duties. However, the accurate completion of the verifiers form is important to check if the role includes regulated activity.
- 15) The roles of **SECRETARY** or **TREASURER, CARETAKER** or **ORGANIST** are not eligible unless the role is also a **TRUSTEE** (see 4 & 13 above) and/or meets the criteria as set out in Charts 2 / 3.

* See also notes on previous pages (2.4)

2.6 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application process

All volunteers and workers should be safely recruited including an application form and references (see Section 2.1).

The church should assess if the position needs a DBS check (using the charts in Section 2.4) or seek advice from the panel office.

Forms and information are available from the panel

The volunteer completes the DBS application form and makes an appointment with a panel verifier *
The Verifier checks 3 identity documents, completes the verifier's form and forwards the forms to panel office to be countersigned and sent to the DBS.

The applicant receives the Disclosure Certificate directly from the DBS and must send the original certificate to the panel office.

The check is not completed until this has been done.

The panel notes the certificate number, informs the church/ body responsible for the appointment that the process is complete and returns the certificate to the applicant.

A volunteer can subscribe to the Update Service (optional) for free within 30 days of the date of the Certificate. (This may enable the certificate to be used for other posts and renewals (there are exemptions).

<https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>

A blemished disclosure (certificate showing convictions or cautions) will be assessed following the process described in Section 2.7.

* The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel has a team of verifiers across Wales who can check identity documents locally to facilitate the DBS process. This includes ministers and church staff. They will need to see 3 documents and ask some simple questions about the role to confirm eligibility.

2.7 Blemished Disclosures

A blemished disclosure is a DBS certificate showing convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings, or information from the Police.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from working or volunteering.

The panel ensures that all individuals with a blemished record are treated fairly and confidentially

Many minor or old offences are **filtered**⁷ and will not appear on a DBS certificate. These rules were updated in November 2020 and youth cautions will no longer appear on the certificate. Adult cautions will be filtered after 6 years and minor offences committed when an adult will not appear after 11 years (5.5 years for an offence committed when under 18). However, offences leading to a custodial sentence and certain serious offences⁸ **will never be filtered** from a standard or enhanced disclosure even if they are spent. See the links below or contact the office for more information.

On receipt of a blemished disclosure, the panel office will contact the applicant to ask them to confirm the details and information shown on the certificate and to provide additional information if necessary. A risk assessment will be completed and the case will be referred anonymously to a confidential panel to consider if the information shared has safeguarding implications.

Often the panel advises that there is no specific safeguarding risk related to the disclosure and the individual can proceed with the work. In some cases, the panel may advise that the individual can work or volunteer but may make recommendations or stipulate conditions. Some crimes or barring decisions make it unlawful for a person to work with children and/or vulnerable adults and the panel will write to the individual to explain that it is not lawful for them to continue with the role.

If the blemished DBS certificate is a renewal and the applicant's circumstances and role are unchanged and the certificate content has been previously risk assessed by the panel, the previous decision regarding the applicant's suitability would normally remain in force.

Where the decision is that the applicant should not proceed, the panel will contact the church to offer advice and the General Secretary of the denomination will usually be notified.

The panel will write to the individual in each case, to explain the outcome.

An applicant has the right to appeal⁹ a decision made by the panel.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-list-of-offences-that-will-never-be-filtered-from-a-criminal-record-check>

⁹ See the policy page of our website for more on the process and how to appeal <https://panel.cymru/en/policies-and-information>

3. Children and Young People

Section 3:

Children and Young People

In this section you will find:

The policy statement and values of the church in relation to children and young people

3.1 Good practice when working with children and young people

- A. Good practice principles
- B. General practical guidelines:
 - 1) Planning activities
 - 2) Safe locations
 - 3) Adequate supervision
 - 4) Documents
 - 5) Food and drink
 - 6) First Aid Box
 - 7) Accident and Incident Record
 - 8) Insurance

3.2 Child protection

- A. How might a child suffer abuse
- B. Who abuses children?
- C. Categories of abuse and possible signs
- D. Initial response to a concern or allegation
- E. How to respond to a child who discloses abuse
- F. Flowchart – What to do if you see, hear or suspect something

3.3 Guidelines for specific activities

- A. Filming and taking photographs
- B. Safety when transporting children
- C. Residential courses
- D. Using church premises for accommodation
- E. On-line Safeguarding

Introduction

As a church community, we recognise the importance of providing a safe and caring environment for our children and young people. The church as a whole desires that children and young people are able to take a full and active part in the life of the church in an environment which helps them to grow spiritually and cares responsibly for them.

‘The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to have their say and to be listened to, properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect. All organisations that work with children should do what is best for them.’

UNCRC Articles 12, 19 and 3

Policy statement

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Union of Welsh Independents and the Baptist Union of Wales to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm. As churches, we are fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of our members and those entrusted to our care. Members of the church, paid staff and volunteers will at all times show respect for and understanding of children’s rights, promoting an ethos of listening to children and ensuring their safety, conducting themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Christian church.

The church will care for children and young people, and will safeguard them by way of good practice in relation to:

- Safe recruitment of workers (section 2)
- Promoting good working practice when working with children and young people (section 3.1)
- Training and supporting their workers in their role and in child protection (section 3.2)

The procedures and guidelines included in this document should be freely available to all workers and leaders and members within the church.

For clarity, any reference to child/children includes children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

Values

All human beings are made by God in His image. The image of God is His gift to us in childhood as well as adulthood.

We have a caring and compassionate God and we too are called to show His love and compassion as we work with others especially the most vulnerable.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Jesus' birth, growth and nurture within a family as well as his behaviour towards children during his ministry affirm the dignity and value conferred by God on children and young people. A child is a whole person with rights and needs, to be honoured and respected by us all. Indeed, children possess qualities which show adults the way to God's kingdom (Matthew 18:3).

Children, therefore, are valued, yet vulnerable members of the Christian community, who need our special care. We take seriously the charge given by Jesus to welcome children, to protect them and to allow them free access to Him.

Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. (Luke 9:48)

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these ... And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16)

Churches today have a unique opportunity to obey these commands of Jesus. Every church should model in its worship, fellowship and mission a community where:

- children are listened to, given a sense of belonging, nurtured, and kept safe;
- parents are supported and encouraged;
- those who work with children and young people are supported.

The church recognises the right of children and young people to be treated as individuals and to be encouraged to participate in the life of the church. It declares that threatening, violent or degrading behaviour is never acceptable.

The church wishes to promote good working practice, to create a safe and positive environment for children and young people in our churches and communities and for those working and volunteering in our midst.

3.1 Good practice when working with children and young people

Within our churches we have many skilled and compassionate people who share their time, gifts and faith as they work with children and young people.

Although much of the following section may appear to be “common sense” it is important that, across our different teams and churches, we are all working towards the same stated high standards in our work with children and young people. This is also useful to enable us to share expectations of roles with new workers and volunteers.

A. GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

1. Treat each child and young person with dignity and respect.
2. Empower children to safeguard themselves – through listening to them, giving them choices, believing them and giving them relevant advice and information (as befitting their age and understanding).
3. Always be mindful of the language you use, the tone of your voice, and your body language.
4. Touch is an essential part of everyday life and a way of communicating affection, warmth and reassurance. It should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child or young person, rather than the worker. It should be related to the child, young person’s needs, not the worker’s. Holding a child’s hand or offering a hug when they are upset is often a good way to reassure or comfort a child but always ask “Would you like a hug?” rather than assume. We all have different boundaries and these should be respected. Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is different from a hug behind closed doors.
5. Be open and transparent as a team. Team members should monitor one another in the area of behaviour or physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.
6. As well as being mindful of the children’s safety at all times also be mindful of your own safety and protect yourself from allegations. Behaviour should be open, transparent and accountable.
7. Learn how to control and discipline children without resorting to corporal punishment. NEVER smack or hit anyone and don’t shout. Change voice tone if necessary. Don’t be reluctant to call on support from other leaders if you are unable to cope with a situation.
8. Get to know the children you work with and find out what works for them as individuals and a group. Make age appropriate group agreements (ground rules) with the children and young people on what is acceptable behaviour (e.g. no hitting, shouting, name calling etc.) which you can review regularly together.
9. Agree some basic guidelines as workers for each activity so that you are all behaving in a consistent way and expectations are clear. Consider creating a booklet detailing who is responsible for each activity and how you will deal with discipline, so that you can share it with new workers or parents. (See example document at appendix 2)
10. Where possible avoid working alone with a child or a group. In church premises, this could mean leaving doors open, or arranging for two groups to undertake activities in the same room. This enables you to support each other and remain accountable to each other as a team. There will be exceptions or times when this is not possible and this is why we go through a safe recruitment process.
11. Respect the privacy of children but do not promise to keep secrets and generally do not enter into private or intimate conversations with children and young people on your own. We do want to be able to offer appropriate care and support so, in listening to a young person’s problem or offering advice, be wise about the location and setting of the discussion. Where possible, ensure that other leaders are aware of the meeting and others are around.

12. Do not play games which are unduly physical or sexually provocative and never make suggestive sexual remarks about an individual, or to him/her, even when it is part of 'banter'. Resist being drawn in when a young person seeks attention by way of means which are clearly sexual or physical by nature.
13. Do not invite children or young people into your home when you are alone; invite a group, or make sure that another adult is in the house. Make sure that a parent/guardian is aware of the child/young person's whereabouts.
14. Don't go into a home if a parent or carer is absent unless the child would be at risk of significant harm if you do not do so.
15. Avoid transporting a child/young person on your own. Try to ensure that another leader/helper accompanies you in the vehicle, or that other children/young people are present with you. If circumstances dictate that you have to transport a child/young person on your own, ensure that other leaders/helpers are aware of what is happening, and that the individual is in the rear seat of the vehicle.
16. Be wise in your use of social media and mobile phones with children and young people (see further guidance in section 3.3 E).
17. Never be afraid to ask for help and advice from your leaders or more experienced staff if you are unsure. The Interdenominational Protection Panel's Training and Safeguarding Officer is also available to give advice (See Appendix 1 for more sources of support)

B. GENERAL PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

Also see section 3.3 Guidelines for specific activities

1) In planning and preparing activities, please be aware of the following:

- Ensure that you have consent for each child or young person under 18 to take part in an activity.
- Organisations have a responsibility to **assess the risk** involved in the activities that are provided. A risk assessment template (see Form 10) works as a checklist to help you to consider the possible problems and risks involved in an activity. We do informal risk assessments all the time without even thinking about it. For example, we say, "It's dangerous to climb up on the chair – I'll go and get a stepladder". Often it is sufficient to assess risk informally at the beginning of a session or activity but for organised group activities it is usually good practice to have a formal paper copy that can be shared with members of the team and reviewed. (Further guidelines in Appendix 4)
- If possible, each activity should include someone who has a **First Aid** qualification. Where possible, **medication** should be administered by the child's parent or guardian. If it is essential that medication is administered during an activity, written consent and instruction by a parent/guardian or doctor should be obtained. Medication should be clearly marked and kept in a secure place, out of the reach of children.
- When planning games or 'ice breakers', be aware of the risks of physical injury, and guard against it.
- Make sure that there is a means of **calling for help** in the event of any emergency during an activity – either a mobile phone with a good signal or access to a land line.

2) Safe locations:

- Ensure that all sites/locations used by the church are safe to carry out any activity.
- Buildings being used for groups or activities should be properly maintained. The external fabric of the building, plus all internal fixtures, fittings, lighting, fire exits and equipment should meet the required safety standards. An annual review should also be carried out and, where necessary, action taken. All electrical equipment should have undergone an electrical safety test. In the UK these are known as PAT (Portable Appliance Testing). Outside play areas should be appropriately fenced off with secure gates to prevent small children from straying from the premises.

- Always be aware of potential dangers or risks in the building and the equipment and activities. Complete risk assessments regularly. In a building, the following may be considered hazardous: loose-fitting carpets, uneven floors, over-filled cupboards, very high shelves, blocked fire exits, glass doors, missing light bulbs, overloaded power points, trailing electrical cables, loose window fastenings.
- Move items which could cause injury during the activity, or avoid them.
- Young people must be supervised at all times by a helper/leader whilst in a kitchen area.
- Be aware of the location of fire exits, and ensure that they are clear. Know where the nearest fire extinguishers are located. These must be checked regularly by a qualified person. Occasionally, fire drills should be conducted to ensure that all young people know the evacuation procedure to follow in the event of fire. It is helpful to have a record of these.
- Don't use any area where maintenance work is taking place, and 'screen off' such areas where possible.

3) Adequate supervision

Children should be supervised at all times. Children should never be left unsupervised, whether inside or out in the open air. A leader should ensure that there are sufficient staff to meet recommended ratios (see below) and also adequate supervision of additional or dangerous equipment. In the case of certain apparatus, e.g. bouncy castles, adequate supervision by suitably trained individuals is essential. It may be that specialist/additional insurance cover is required for higher risk activities.

These are the ratios recommended by the NSPCC¹¹ in relation to supervision of children in voluntary organisations:-

0 - 2 years	at least 1 adult to 3 children.
2 - 3 years	at least 1 adult to 4 children.
4 - 8 years	at least 1 adult to 6 children.
9 - 12 years	at least 1 adult to 6 children
13 -18 years	at least 1 adult to 8 children

These are general minimum guidelines but they should be increased where circumstances require; for example, to offer appropriate support to a child with additional needs. Generally activities should be conducted by a minimum of two adults.

4) Documents

- When a child becomes involved in an activity run by an organisation, it is important at the outset that a general information and consent form is completed by their parent or guardian. This should give contact information, permission to seek medical help in an emergency and details of any allergies or reactions to certain foods. This form should be renewed annually. (Form 5 or 6: General Information and Consent)
- If you are planning on communicating with young people electronically or using social media it is important to have written permission. (See form 6 and 3.3 E)
- Additional consent should be obtained in relation to any activity which is over and above the regular activities. This could be an occasional 'high risk' activity; for example, climbing, or a trip or residential course. (Form 7: Additional Activity Consent Form)
- A register of attendance at the club or activity should also be maintained, together with a register of workers and volunteers at each session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities.

¹¹ NSPCC recommended ratios
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/briefings/adult-child-ratios_wda95200.html

5) Food and drink

If food and drink are provided during an activity, the following should be considered:

- Workers should follow good hand washing and hygiene principles.
- All food and drink is stored appropriately.
- Hot drinks should not be carried through an activity area and not placed within the reach of young children.
- Snacks and mealtimes should be appropriately supervised.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Systems are in place to ensure that children and young people do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic. Typically this can be nuts, milk, eggs, fish, shell fish and gluten.
- If meals are being prepared, the person responsible should possess a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate or equivalent and be knowledgeable in areas such as food preparation, handling, storage, disposal of waste, etc.

6) First Aid Box

Under the Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations it is the duty of every employer to provide at least one First Aid container for each work location. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and the designated worker should regularly check the contents.

7) Accident and Incident Record

Any accident, 'near miss' or incident should be recorded, including the date of the incident, details of witnesses and any further action required. (See Form 9: Accident/Incident Form)

8) Insurance

You must ensure that any activity is covered by an Insurance Policy held either by the local church or the relevant department of the denomination. Good practice clearly minimises risk, however, adequate insurance cover should also be in place for each and every activity. In the event of an accident, incident or if abuse is detected or suspected, it is important to notify the insurance company immediately, otherwise the insurance cover could be adversely affected.

3.2 Child Protection

A. How might a child suffer abuse?

Children can suffer abuse by being harmed by someone, by someone failing to prevent a child from being harmed, or by being neglected.

Abuse can happen within a family, within institutional premises, or in the community at large. They can be abused by someone whom they know or, more infrequently, by a stranger.

It's important that those who work with children and young people are able to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse because often children and young people are unable or unwilling to ask for help directly. However, it may be that other factors account for the child's behaviour, so that the person working with him/her should never take it upon himself to decide that abuse has taken place.

B. Who abuses children?

- An abuser is often someone known to the child. They may be a parent, sibling, other relation, family friend or neighbour.
- Sometimes, the abuser may be an adult who holds a position of authority or trust over children; this could apply within the church.
- The abuser can be of any background.
- An abuser may be male or female.
- There is no certain way of identifying a potential abuser; they don't appear different from the rest of society.
- Some adult abusers may have been abused themselves as children.

C. Categories of Abuse and possible signs

Type	Definition	Possible signs
<p>PHYSICAL ABUSE</p>	<p>Physical abuse can mean striking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, scalding with fire or water, drowning, choking or other form of causing physical injury to a child. It can also happen when a parent or carer pretends that a child is displaying certain symptoms, or intentionally causes a child to become ill. This is often described by using terms such as ‘imaginary illness by proxy’ or ‘Munchausen Syndrome by proxy’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them ● Injuries in places on the body not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc. ● Injuries that have not received medical attention ● Reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming ● Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains ● Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation ● Cuts/scratches/substance abuse*
<p>SEXUAL ABUSE</p>	<p>Sexual abuse means forcing or encouraging a child or young person to participate in sexual activity, whether the child is aware of what is happening or otherwise. This can involve touching the child, including penetration or activity which does not involve penetration.</p> <p>This can include non contact activities involving children in the production of pornography, encouraging them to watch pornography or sexual activity, or prompting them to behave in an inappropriate sexual manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse ● Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour ● Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing ● Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults ● Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home ● Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares ● Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia*

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

This involves abusing a child emotionally on a regular basis, causing the child's emotional development to be seriously and permanently affected. It can include telling a child that he is useless, that no one loves him, that he is deficient in certain ways, or that his only use in life is to satisfy the needs of others. It can mean having unreasonable expectations of a child in light of his age and development. It can mean causing a child to be afraid or to think that he is in danger, or using/corrupting a child.

Every case of abusing a child involves some degree of emotional abuse, but it can also 'stand alone'.

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, nervousness, obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

NEGLECT

This means constantly failing to satisfy the basic physical and psychological needs of a child which is likely to seriously affect the child's health or development. It can involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or accommodation, failing to protect a child from harm or physical danger, or failing to facilitate access to adequate medical care or treatment. It can also include neglecting the basic emotional needs of a child, or failing to respond to those needs.

- Undernourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food
- Untreated illnesses
- Inadequate care
- Regularly being inappropriately dressed for the weather

* These may also indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

D. Initial Response to a Concern or Allegation

If there is concern that a child or young person may have been abused, or a direct allegation of abuse has been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following:

1) Make notes as soon as possible:

- Write down exactly what has been said, when s/he said it, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of an activity). Keep it factual and do not express your opinion. Your report/notes could be used at a later date in a court of law (You can use Form 11 in section 7 if you wish).
- Describe any injury: its size and a drawing of its location and shape on the child's body.
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action taken and keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed up.
- These notes should be passed on to the church safeguarding co-ordinator to assist them should the matter need to be referred to Children's Social Services or the Police. Any referral should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours and you should expect an acknowledgement of your written referral within one working day of receiving it.
- If the church does not have a safeguarding co-ordinator, or deputy, or they are not contactable or they are the subject of the concerns, the statutory agencies should be contacted directly

2) Seek advice:

- If your church does not have a safeguarding co-ordinator you can contact the IPP Safeguarding Officer¹² or the denominational General Secretary for advice.
- The Churches Child Protection Advisory service (CCPAS)¹³ can also offer independent advice and operates a 24 hour confidential helpline and an in depth website.

3) In urgent cases:

- If there are concerns that a child may have been deliberately hurt, is at risk of 'significant harm' or is afraid to return home, contact the local Children's Social Services or the Police straight away. Do not tell the parents/carers in such circumstances.
- If a child needs urgent medical attention, an ambulance should be called or they should be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken. The hospital staff should be informed of any child protection concerns. They have a responsibility to pass these concerns on to the statutory authorities.

4) **DO NOT:** Investigate any circumstances, assertions or disclosures yourself. It is not your role or that of the church to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. Your responsibility is to report the matter to the appropriate person.

5) Concerns about possible poor parenting or neglect

- If the concerns for the child centre around poor parenting, it may be appropriate to speak to the parent/carer. You could offer practical domestic help and suggest, for example, a chat with the health visitor, doctor or Children's Social Services.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or frightened to seek help, then offer to accompany them. If they still fail to acknowledge the need for action, it is possible to informally discuss the situation with Children's Social Services without divulging their personal details (such as names and addresses) unless, of course, Children's Social Services consider the situation to be serious enough to do so. In

¹² Interdenominational Protection Panel 01745 817584

¹³ CCPAS (The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) is the only independent Christian safeguarding charity 0845120 45 50
<http://www.ccpas.co.uk/About.html>

these circumstances it is important to realise there may be a bigger picture. Information may have come to light that might be a vital missing piece in the jigsaw.

E. How to respond to a child who discloses abuse

- Be patient and sympathetic.
- Listen carefully – Be attentive and look at the child.
- If the child is sharing information with you, take it seriously. Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Do not question the child about what has happened or press the child to disclose further information.
- Stress to the child that he/she is not to blame.
- Reassure the child that he/she is doing the right thing by disclosing the information to you, and that you are treating the information seriously.
- If you think that the child is in serious or immediate danger, contact the Police or Social Services immediately.

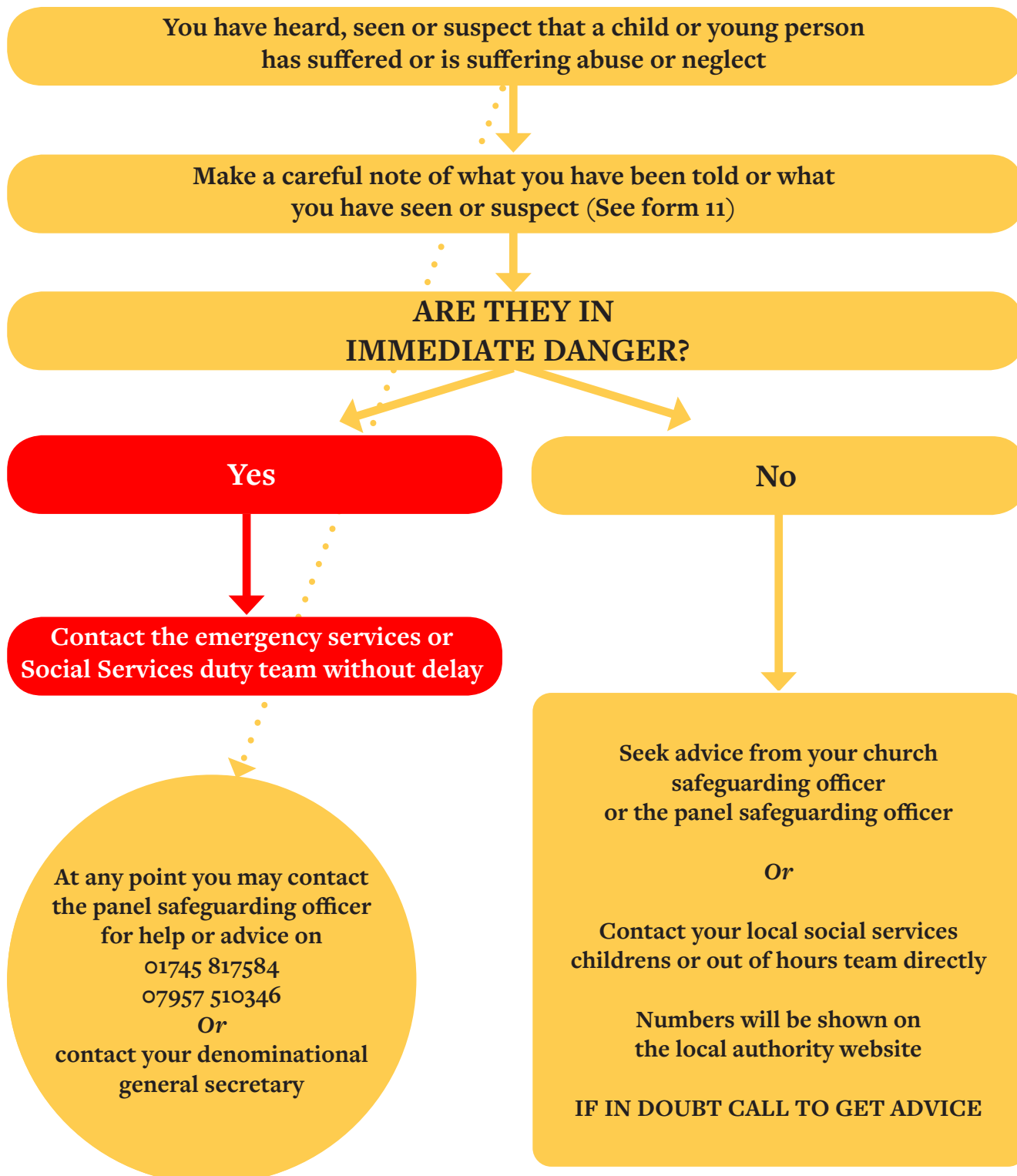
Do:

- Let the child know what you intend doing, with whom you will share the information and why, and – in simple terms – what will happen next.
- Make detailed notes as soon as possible after the disclosure and date and sign them. Make sure they are factual and not expressing your opinion.

Do not:

- Promise to keep secret any kind of abuse which is drawn to your attention. For example do not say, “This will never happen to you again” or “I won’t mention it to anyone else”.
- Express shock or disbelief to the child.
- Discuss the matter with the individual who is accused or suspected of committing the abuse.
- Question or challenge anyone who has been named as a possible abuser. Your responsibility is to report the matter to the appropriate person.

F. WHAT TO DO IF YOU: HEAR, SEE OR SUSPECT SOMETHING?



3.3 Guidelines for specific activities

A. Filming and taking photographs

Taking photographs of children, or filming them, is often a good way to record a positive event or advertise a club, but certain protocols must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to safeguard children and/or young people. You must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and consideration must be given to how the images are to be stored and used.

- The written consent of the parent/guardian must be obtained prior to filming or taking a photograph of a child during church activities. The relevant form must explain the purpose for making the film/taking the photograph e.g. for the church website, information boards, the press etc. It is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/guardian to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. (See form 8)
- Never place a photograph/film of the child(ren) on a website without the written consent of the parent/guardian.
- In publicity documents, do not include names or any information which will identify the children. The same precaution should be adhered to when sending photographs to the press. There will be some obvious exceptions such as celebrating an award or achievement but always get written permission first.
- Photographs of children should be kept in a safe place, to be decided upon by the church trustees. Their decision should be recorded.
- Workers should not store images on their personal phones or computers.
- It is an offence to keep, distribute or show indecent pictures of children.

B. Safety when Transporting

Most youth work will involve transporting young people at some stage, whether on a club night or to and from a residential course or activity. The good practice guidelines below, will help safeguard both young people and their leaders. All drivers must abide by the usual recruitment and checking procedures.

a) Private Cars

- Drivers should be aware of the limitations of third party insurance for transporting young people. Private cars can be used provided they are not used for hire or for carrying passengers for reward.
- Drivers must check with their insurance company regarding the adequacy of passenger liability. In particular, ministers/paid staff must ensure that their policy covers business use to ensure cover whilst driving during the course of their working activities and not simply social and domestic purposes and commuting to work.
- Avoid transporting a child/young person on your own where possible. Try to ensure that another leader/helper accompanies you in the vehicle, or that other children/young people are present with you. If circumstances dictate that you have to transport a child/young person on your own, ensure that other leaders/helpers are aware of what is happening, and that the individual is in the rear seat of the vehicle.
- Never overcrowd the vehicle; otherwise any insurance cover will be invalidated.
- Seat belts must always be worn.

b) Minibuses

Current regulations must be observed. You may be able to drive a minibus if you hold a car driving licence and follow certain conditions – otherwise you'll need to apply for a minibus licence.

Please check with the DVLA for up to date information. The regulations listed here could change at any time.¹⁴

You may be able to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats using your current car driving licence as long as it's **not for 'hire or reward'** – i.e. there's no payment from or on behalf of the passengers. If you need to charge, you will need a Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) licence.

If you held a driving licence before 1 January 1997

You can drive a minibus in the UK and on temporary visits abroad. When your car licence is next renewed at the age of 70, you'll need to re-apply for your entitlement and meet higher medical standards.

If you obtained your driving licence after 1 January 1997

You can drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats within the UK as long as the following conditions apply:-

- you're 21 or older
- the minibus is used for social purposes by a non-commercial body
- you've had your driving licence for at least 2 years
- you're driving on a voluntary basis and the minibus is used for social purposes by a non-commercial body
- the maximum weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tones (or 4.25 tonnes including specialist equipment for disabled passengers, e.g. a wheelchair ramp)
- you're not towing a trailer

(From DVLA website sourced Oct 2013)

Contact the DVLA or visit the website for further information about driving a minibus if you are not sure.

- If driving the congregation's minibus, drivers must be named on the congregation's insurance policy.
- The law states that it is the driver's responsibility to make sure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition before use. Failure to do so may result in the driver being legally liable in the event of any accident.

IF IN DOUBT, DO NOT DRIVE THE VEHICLE.

When hiring a minibus or larger bus, it is the responsibility of the user group to verify the legality and insurance cover of the operator prior to the use of the vehicle. If in doubt, ask to see a copy of the operator's insurance cover and operator's licence.

- Seat belts must be worn for any journey, no matter how short, and again it is the driver/leader's responsibility to enforce this.
- Leaders/helpers who accompany young people in minibuses should, where possible, sit amongst the young people. Preferably, a leader/helper should sit near the exit points of the vehicle.
- An accident report book/breakdown log book should be carried in church minibuses, and kept up to date.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/driving-a-minibus>

- Ensure that there is a First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher on the vehicle and familiarise yourself with them.
- Please note that the maximum speed for a minibus is 50 mph on single carriageway roads, 60 mph on dual carriageways, and 70 mph on motorways.

C. Residential Courses

When organising a residential course the leader in charge should note the following:

1) The Residential Centre

- The Centre must have adequate insurance cover for your group, and be licenced for the activities you undertake. Insurance should especially cover high risk activities such as canoeing, rock climbing, etc.
- The premises should comply with current Health & Safety legislation.
- The Centre should inform you about its rules and regulations. Make every effort to be aware of its timetable; examples would be whether the lights are turned off at a particular time, meal times, and what time the group is expected to arrive and depart.
- The Centre must provide access to First Aid/GP in the event of an emergency.
- The Centre must also provide separate sleeping accommodation for males and females.
- A strategy should be in place to inform parents/guardians in the case of emergency or unexpected or unavoidable changes to the programme or the venue. Ensure that a phone is accessible.

2) Parents

The consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) is a pre-requisite when taking a young person away for a residential experience. A registration form must be completed and signed by them, and should include any relevant medical information such as allergies, special diets, etc.

Before taking a group away, ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the following:

- The programme/activities in which their child will participate;
- The names and numbers of leaders/helpers accompanying the group. Where possible it is advisable to arrange a pre-residential briefing for parents, giving information and allowing them the opportunity to meet the leaders/helpers;
- The address and telephone number of the Centre;
- The group's 'contract', that is, the rules the young people will be asked to observe, and the possible consequences if they are broken;
- What clothes and other items the young people will need;
- How much pocket money is likely to be sufficient (it is advisable to set a limit on the amount taken).

3) The Young People

- They must have parental/guardian consent to participate in the residential course and its activities.
- They should be fully informed of the nature of the residential course and what is expected of them.
- They should never be coerced/forced into any activity with which they are uncomfortable.
- They should be allowed to 'negotiate' rules and a contract for behaviour, and be made aware of the sanctions in the event of the rules being broken.
- Children and young people should have access to a telephone. Childline and NSPCC numbers should be displayed.

D. Using church premises for accommodation

Church premises should only be used for accommodation if they comply with health & safety, fire and food regulations. If they are used for that purpose, certain factors need to be taken into consideration:-

- Try to use ground floor accommodation for sleeping.
- There should be appropriate male/female segregation and supervision.
- There should be at least two separate routes leading from the sleeping accommodation and out of the building.
- Doors should be checked for ease of opening in an emergency. Exits should be clearly marked and not blocked. Clear instructions in the event of a fire should be given to both young people and leaders/helpers.
- Portable heating appliances should not impede exits, and should be turned off during sleeping hours.
- Leaders/helpers should have torches in case of power failure.
- Make sure that there is a means to call for assistance. Check mobile phone coverage in advance. If there is a 'land-line' phone in the church building, the leaders/helpers should have access to it.
- Leaders/helpers should avoid staying on their own with a young person. Make sure that there are other leaders/helpers or a young person present.
- Sleeping accommodation for leaders/helpers and young people should, where possible, be separate, but the young people's accommodation ought to be easily accessible.

E. 'ON-LINE' SAFEGUARDING

In the past the church's responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and young people has meant preparing procedures dealing with safe activities and buildings, with good practice for its workers. Today, however, we must also take into consideration 'on-line' safeguarding.

The church can play its part in minimising the risks involved with using IT, mobile phones etc by:

Supporting children and their families to remain safe when 'on-line' by making them aware of the some of the dangers and means to use IT safely.

Guiding its workers and volunteers to use safe principles and practices when using IT within churches and as a means of communication with young people.

1. SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES TO REMAIN SAFE ON-LINE

The Internet is an excellent resource, and an integral part of modern life, but here are some of the problems that can occur.

- Cyber-bullying and 'fighting' on line, threats, 'sexting'.
- Meeting someone 'on-line', and the danger of being enticed/groomed.
- Failing to protect digital information, leading to breaches of privacy, identity theft, misuse of information and fraud.
- Sharing files and breaches of copyright legislation, insufficient computer protection (viruses etc.)
- Access to dangerous material such as pornography, sites which promote hatred and those which encourage self-harm, drugs, suicide or gambling.
- Over-use of the Internet, text messaging, mobile phones, video games – becoming dependent or addicted to technology.

Although the church does not hold itself out to be an expert in this field, it can encourage and assist children and their families to be aware of ‘on-line’ dangers. This includes prompting families to discuss the dangers with their children, installing ‘firewalls’ on home computers, and ensuring that children take appropriate steps to protect themselves.

With the help of local experts, churches can arrange training sessions to help parents and guardians better understand the subject. Churches’ youth workers can take simple steps such as informing children and their families about schemes such as:

The ‘Click Clever Click Safe’ Scheme

This was created by UKCCIS (UK Council for Child Internet Safety), and encourages children and young people to:



Zip it: get children to keep their passwords private maintain the privacy of personal information and consider carefully which information is appropriate to be shared on-line. The following should not be shared: full name, pictures, home and e-mail address, phone numbers, details of popular meeting places for young people etc.



Block It: Make sure your children know how to block people that upset them, block those who send ‘hate-mail’, delete suspicious e-mails, and not open anonymous links or attachments. It encourages young people to install adequate protection software.



Flag It: Ask your kids regularly if they have seen or done anything on-line that has upset them. Inform an appropriate individual if someone asks the young person ‘on-line’ to meet with him/her in person, or if any ‘on-line’ activity gives cause for concern.

A number of organisations offer detailed advice and training on internet safety:

<p>CEOP</p> <p>Child Exploitation & On-line Protection Centre – internet safety</p> <p>Advice and education</p> <p>Report inappropriate on-line behaviour</p>	<p>http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre</p> <p>http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/</p>
<p>WISEKIDS</p> <p>Promoting safe internet use</p>	<p>www.wisekids.org.uk</p> <p>40 Wood Crescent, Newport NP10 0AL</p> <p>Email: info @ wisekids.org.uk.</p> <p>Tel: 01633 673339/07540707258</p>
<p>BBC Webwise – advice for parents</p> <p>CBBC stay safe (for children)</p>	<p>http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privacy/internet-safety-for-kids</p> <p>http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/topics/stay-safe</p>
<p>Action for Children’s Net Smart</p> <p>Rules to help you to be safe and on-line.</p>	<p>http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-services/family-support/parenting-support/netsmart</p>

2. GUIDING WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS to use safe principles and practices when using IT within churches and as a means of communication with young people.

a) Computers belonging to the church:

- If the church allows children and others to use its computers, it is a pre-requisite that the prior written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) is obtained.
- Ensure that appropriate restrictions (e.g. parental supervision or safe search engines) are in place if children are to be allowed access to computers belonging to the church.
- Ensure that any 'on-line' activity, or the use of personal programmes, which may endanger the computer by way of viruses, etc, is avoided.

b) Websites:

- It is the responsibility of the church to ensure that its websites are safe and appropriate. A suitably qualified/experienced adult should be appointed to oversee the website.
- The church bears responsibility for the full contents of its websites forums, blogs, Twitter or other social networking sites. Inadequate monitoring can lead to the church's reputation being tarnished, and even financial repercussions. Consider very carefully the benefits/pitfalls of expanding a website to include message boards/forums/blogs etc.
- If you propose to include the names and telephone numbers of officers, their prior consent must be obtained.
- If a child's picture is to be shown on a website, the written consent of a parent/guardian must be obtained beforehand. Bear in mind that sex offenders use the internet to locate children or to communicate with them.
- Install the 'app' named 'Report Abuse' prepared by CEOP (Child Exploitation and On-line Protection) on your church website.

c) Communicating with children and young people electronically and using social media:

'On-line' social networking is not just a fad. It constitutes a fundamental change in the way in which we communicate with each other.

Facebook, Twitter, Beebo, e-mailing, text messaging, MySpace, Piczo and Skype, to name just a few, are all means whereby we can communicate with each other. Churches, ministers and workers can utilise this media to great affect but good practice and adequate care are essential.

Individual churches should discuss and record their agreed approach to electronic communication and 'on-line' social networking with children and young people. They should decide whether to allow young church members to be an 'electronic friend' with a member of staff or volunteer. **This decision should be minuted.**

Advantages – enabling the setting up of contemporary contacts and easy immediate contact.

Disadvantages – for a member of staff, clouding the boundary between his/her role as a mentor and his/her position of authority.

The following are good practice principles in relation to internet activity and communication

- Only those members of staff/individuals who have been recruited safely should communicate electronically on behalf of the church.
- ‘On-line’ activity should be undertaken responsibly and courteously. Staff and other workers should be mindful of the language/words used when communicating electronically to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation.
- Do not contact children electronically without appropriate consent. (Consent can be obtained on a separate form or included in general information and consent form – see Form 6).
- Never pressurise a child to disclose his/her personal details – e-mail address, mobile phone number, etc.
- The **minimum age** requirements stipulated by various networking sites should be observed. For example, children under 13 are not allowed to use Facebook, and the written consent of parents/guardians is required in respect of young people over the age of 13.
- **Electronic communication with a child of primary school age is inappropriate – communicate through the parent(s)/ guardian(s).**
- Arranging an ‘**accountability system**’ is good practice, asking a colleague to monitor any communication with children/young people. This is especially important with private means of communication such as text messaging on mobile phones. Consider carefully if this is an appropriate means of communication and if so keep messages short and for arrangements only.
- If a church agrees that its workers can include child members as ‘friends’, it should consider creating a separate list/category of ‘friends’ in respect of a particular church group. This means that only restricted information can be seen by that group. Another option is to create a ‘Fan Page’, which allows information to be shared, but does not have a ‘chatting’ facility.
- Church workers who communicate by means of social networking sites must check carefully the **privacy aspects of their ‘profile’**. They must ensure that the content of their site is appropriate to be seen by children, including photographs. Bear in mind that children can also see photographs/messages/information provided by others who are linked in (e.g. Facebook ‘friends’).
- Workers should refrain from sharing personal information with children and young people and should not respond to, or request personal information over and above that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their work.
- Electronic communications should generally only be used for the purpose of sharing information, not for ‘chatting’/social networking.
- Communications with children and young people should be kept in the public domain, to minimise the possibility of dubious situations arising. The biggest risk of Facebook is the private functions; messages cannot be seen by anyone but yourself and the recipient, so avoid sending messages. If sending a message is essential, then send to multiple people on Facebook and include other leaders in the message. If the conversation is too private for this then arrange to meet face to face applying normal safeguarding principles.
- Other children/ workers should not be discussed on social network sites.
- If a child communicates electronically when facing a crisis, or when in need, we recommend that you save this information and proceed as per a child protection concern (see section 3.2 above). When supporting a child in need, it is preferable to arrange ‘face to face’ meetings in accordance with good practice and safeguarding procedures.
- Electronic communications should be restricted to the hours between 8.00am - 10.00pm
- If an email is an official communication on behalf of the church display the church logo if possible
- Church workers should not keep photographs of children on their mobile phones.

4. Vulnerable Adults

Section 4:

Vulnerable adults

In this section you will find:

The policy statement and values of the church in relation to vulnerable adults

4.1 Good practice when working with vulnerable adults

A. Good practice principles

B. General practical guidelines:

1. Planning activities
2. Safe locations
3. Staffing
4. Food and drink
5. First Aid
6. Accident and Incident Record
7. Insurance

4.2 Protecting Vulnerable adults

A. How might an adult suffer abuse?

B. Who abuses vulnerable adults?

C. Categories of abuse and possible signs

D. Initial response to a concern or allegation

E. How to respond to an adult who discloses abuse

F. Flowchart – what to do if you hear, see or suspect something

Introduction

As a church community we recognise the importance of providing a safe and caring environment. The church has an obligation to follow good practice and principles in relation to the care of vulnerable adults and contribute towards our communities becoming places that are safer and free from prejudice.

The church as a whole desires that all, including vulnerable groups within our society are able to take part in the life of the church in an environment which helps them to grow spiritually and cares responsibly for them.

Vulnerable people constitute a large section of our communities. The needs of individuals can change; they may need care and support to live at home or in suitable accommodation which satisfies their needs.

Church members who visit people's homes and hospitals or run activities within the church must be alert to signs of poor care and support. This can include extended family members, and can involve listening to those who have concerns about vulnerable adults.

Policy statement

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, the Union of Welsh Independents and the Baptist Union of Wales to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable adults with whom we work. As churches, we are fully committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of our members and those entrusted to our care. Members of the church, paid staff and volunteers will at all times show respect to others, promoting an ethos of listening to vulnerable people and ensuring their safety, conducting themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Christian Church.

The church will care for vulnerable adults, and will safeguard them by way of good practice in relation to:-

Safer recruitment of workers (section 2)

Promoting good working practice with vulnerable adults (section 4.1)

Training and supporting their workers in their role and in the protection of vulnerable adults (section 4.2)

The procedures and guidelines included in this document should be freely available to all workers and leaders and members within the church.

Who is an 'vulnerable adult'?

An vulnerable adult is someone who is over 18 and may be:

- in need of community care services because of a disability, age or illness, and is unable to take care of him or herself, or
- is unable to stop someone else from harming or exploiting them.

An vulnerable adult may be someone with a learning disability, mental health needs, a physical or sensory impairment, or may be elderly and frail.

However, it is important to note that in relation to regulated activity with adults, the definition focuses on the activities provided which will mean that an adult will be considered vulnerable at that *particular time*. For example, at the point at which someone is receiving help with their personal care, they are considered vulnerable. This does not label adults as 'vulnerable' because of their personal characteristics or location.

Values

All human beings are made by God in His image. The image of God is His gift to us. Jesus treated all with compassion and dignity and particularly those who were most vulnerable.

We have a caring and compassionate God and we too are called to show His love and compassion as we work with others especially the most vulnerable.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

Churches today have a unique opportunity to show Jesus' love, care and compassion. Every church should model in its worship, fellowship and mission, a community where:-

- All people are listened to, given a sense of belonging, nurtured, and kept safe;
- Carers are supported and encouraged;
- Those who work with vulnerable people are supported.

The church recognises the right of everyone to be treated as an individual first and foremost, whatever their circumstances, and to be encouraged and helped to participate in the life of the church. It declares that threatening, violent or degrading behaviour is never acceptable.

The church recognises that everyone has a right to privacy, to live as independently as possible and to decide how to live his/her life. They have a right to full citizenship, whatever their race, sexuality, disability, age or religion.

The church wishes to promote good working practice, to create a safe and positive environment for vulnerable people in our churches and communities and for those working and volunteering in our midst.

4.1 Good practice when working with vulnerable adults

Within our churches, we have many skilled and compassionate people who share their time, gifts and faith as they work with vulnerable people within our church communities.

Although much of the following section may appear to be “common sense” it is important that, across our different teams and churches, we are all working towards the same stated high standards in our work with Vulnerable Adults. This is also useful to enable us to share expectations of roles with new workers and volunteers.

Good Practice and legislation are not intended to restrict the pastoral work undertaken by our churches in any way but rather shows our commitment to safeguarding and best practice.

A. GOOD PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

1. Listen and find out what the individual’s wishes are.
2. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to take part or not as they wish. Never force anyone to take part in an activity. Ensure that the choices offered to individuals are fully understood by them.
3. Don’t take things for granted. For example, ask if someone is happy for you to use his/her first name.
4. Use positive and appropriate language, and seek advice when the person with whom you are dealing has specific communication needs.
5. Respect the individual’s independence. Do not encourage the person to become dependent on you.
6. Always treat an individual with dignity and respect their privacy particularly when helping with their personal care requirements.
7. When visiting people, remember to knock on the door before entering the building or room.
8. Be aware of the length of visits.
9. When visiting hospitals or care homes always inform a member of staff that you are there.
10. Touch is an essential part of everyday life and a way of communicating affection, warmth and reassurance. Consider how appropriate physical contact is, whether instigated by you or the other person. We all have different boundaries and these should be respected. Holding a hand or offering a hug is often a good way to comfort, but ask first rather than assume.
11. When dealing with an individual’s financial affairs, it is vital that you do so with honesty, sincerity and transparency.
12. Do not partake in pastoral care which is beyond your responsibility and competence.
13. Don’t dismiss any concerns or worries you may have about someone’s safety. Seek advice or refer the situation straight away.
14. As well as being mindful of the safety of the vulnerable person, also be mindful of your own safety and protect yourself from allegations. Behaviour should be open, transparent and accountable.
15. Generally do not accept material or financial gifts. If it would upset or offend someone if you were to refuse the gift, make sure that you inform an elder/ deacon or leader as soon as possible. This will avoid any accusation or confusion later.
16. Be wise if visiting others on your own.
17. Avoid visiting vulnerable people at night except in emergencies.

B. GENERAL PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

Working with vulnerable people may involve group work, or one to one work with an individual. Not all of these points are relevant to every situation. It is important to note that when individuals visit as a 'friend', not within the formal 'ministry' of the church, these procedures would not apply although this may not always be easy to define.

1) In planning and preparing activities please be aware of the following practical arrangements:-

- Always seek the consent of the individual before undertaking activities with them. This will usually be verbal consent.
- Organisations have a responsibility to assess the risk involved in the activities that are provided. A risk assessment template works as a checklist to make sure you have considered the possible problems and risks in an activity, and helps to plan appropriate steps or actions (see Form 10). We do informal risk assessments all the time without even thinking about it. For example, we would say, "It's dangerous to climb up on the bench I'll go and get a ladder..." Often it is sufficient to do an informal check before the start of an activity but for organised group activities it is usually good practice to complete a written risk assessment at least annually. This can then be shared with trustees and those working together during an activity. (Further guidelines in Appendix 4).
- If possible, each group activity should include someone who has a First Aid qualification.
- Make sure that a telephone is installed on the premises or that a mobile telephone is available during every activity to call for support or assistance.

2) Safe locations

- Ensure that all sites/locations used by the church are safe to carry out any activity.
- Buildings being used for groups or activities should be properly maintained. The external fabric of the building, plus all internal fixtures, fittings, lighting, fire exits and equipment should meet the required safety standards. An annual review should also be carried out and, where necessary, action taken. All electrical equipment should have undergone an electrical safety test. In the UK these are known as PAT (Portable Appliance Testing).
- Always be aware of potential dangers or risks in the premises/building and the equipment and activities. In a building, the following may be considered hazardous: loose-fitting carpets, uneven floors, over-filled cupboards, very high shelves, blocked fire exits, glass doors, missing light bulbs, overloaded power points, trailing electrical cables, loose window fastenings. Be aware of these within the church building, but also in places you are visiting in order to keep yourself safe.
- Move items which could cause injury during the activity, or avoid them.
- Be aware of the location of fire exits, and ensure that they are clear. Know where the nearest fire extinguishers are located. These must be checked regularly by a qualified person. Occasionally, fire drills should be conducted to ensure that everyone know the evacuation procedure to follow in the event of fire. It is helpful to have a record of these.
- Do not use any area where maintenance work is taking place, and 'screen off' such areas where possible.

3) Staffing

- Ensure that there are enough staff and volunteers to carry out all tasks safely and effectively and to support each other.

4) Food and drink

If food and drink are provided during an activity, the following should be considered:

- Workers should follow good personal hygiene.
- Basic health and hygiene regulations should be adhered to.
- All food and drink is stored appropriately.
- Great care should be taken with hot drinks.
- Snacks and mealtimes are appropriately supervised.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Systems are in place to ensure that those at risk do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic. Typically this can be nuts, milk, eggs, fish, shell fish and gluten.
- If meals are being prepared, the person with responsibility for this should possess a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate or equivalent and be knowledgeable in areas such as food preparation, handling, storage, disposal of waste etc.

5) First Aid

Under the Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations, it is the duty of every employer to provide at least one First Aid container for each work location. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and the designated worker should regularly check the contents.

6) Accident and Incident Record

Any accident, 'near miss' or incident should be recorded, including the date of the incident, details of witnesses and any further action required. (See Form 9: Accident/Incident Form).

7) Insurance

- You must ensure that any activity is covered by an Insurance Policy held either by the local church or the relevant department of the denomination.
- Good practice clearly minimises risk, however, adequate insurance cover should also be in place for each and every activity.
- Appropriate steps should be taken to prevent injury, loss or harm of any kind, and to recognise any situation whereby any vulnerable persons could be harmed during a church activity.
- In the event of an accident/near miss, or if abuse is detected or suspected, it is vital to notify the insurance company immediately, otherwise the insurance cover could be adversely affected.

4.2 Protecting Vulnerable adults

A. How might an adult suffer abuse?

It is important that those who work with vulnerable people are able to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse, because often they are unable or unwilling to ask for help directly.

Abuse is defined as:

A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons which results in significant harm. (In Safe Hands, National Assembly for Wales, July 2000)

Abuse may be:

- a single or repeated act, or multiple acts;
- a lack of appropriate action;
- perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent;
- negligence or ignorance; and/or
- an act of omission (failing to act) or neglect.

Abuse may involve the vulnerable adult being persuaded or forced to enter into a financial or sexual arrangement to which they have not, or could not, consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and fundamentally is an abuse of trust, including failure to meet a duty of care.¹

B. Who abuses vulnerable adults?

Abuse can happen within a family, within institutional premises, or in the community at large. Vulnerable people can be abused by someone whom they know or, more infrequently, by a stranger.

- An abuser is often someone known to the vulnerable person.
- Sometimes, the abuser may be an adult who holds a position of authority and/or trust; this could apply within the church.
- The abuser can be of any background.
- An abuser may be male or female.
- There is no certain way of identifying a potential abuser; they don't appear different from the rest of society.

¹ (November 2010) Wales Interim Policy & Procedures For the Protection Of Vulnerable Adults From Abuse

C. Categories of abuse and possible signs

Type	Definition	Possible indicators
PHYSICAL	An action or a failure to act, including striking, kicking, intentional injury or scalding/burning, lack of nutrition, lack of personal care. Misuse of medication, or refusing to administer medication or inappropriate use of medication to restrict an individual. Restricting sleep. Forcing an individual to work in dangerous circumstances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A history of unexplained injuries. • Bruises, especially those which are out of sight or of a particular shape. • Pressure injuries. • Hypothermia. • Dehydration. • Poor personal cleanliness. • Being extremely tired. • Incorrect medical records.
SEXUAL	Any sexual act to which the individual has not consented. Denying an individual the right to express his/her sexuality, or refusing to meet that person's needs within socially acceptable boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical symptoms – bleeding, bruising or infection. Stomach pains. • Behaviour which is not understood by a vulnerable adult. • A change in behaviour. • Self-harm; being introverted/ extroverted.
PSYCHO-LOGICAL	Threats, bullying, harassing, belittling, denying one's human rights, denying one's right to privacy. Denying dignity and respect, not including the individual when making decisions, being over-protective, denying the right to take risks, shaming, racism, excluding or confining someone. Inappropriate use of faith/religion. Verbal abuses, making someone feel worthless.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless, anxious or quiet when with a carer. • Complaining of being belittled. • Depression. • Being afraid of making decisions. • A change in eating or sleeping habits. • Tearful, feeling that the world is coming to an end. • The carer talking inappropriately or belittling.
FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL	Theft, fraud, pressurising someone to change his/her will, improper use of state benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained failure to pay bills. Withdrawing money from an account without reason. • Inconsistency in terms of assets and living conditions. • Reluctance to receive help. • Items disappearing, e.g. jewellery, personal effects. • Carer showing excessive interest in a vulnerable adult's finances and assets.
NEGLECT	Lack of care, including preventing or restricting access to healthcare. Failure to care for someone, including medical care. Failure to undertake a risk assessment. Failure to administer medication. Failings in terms of nutrition, heating and personal care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor personal cleanliness. • Depression and loneliness. • Poor nutrition, pressure bruises, lack of medication or too much of it being administered. • Unusually unkempt. • Lack of basic care. • Intentionally placing the individual at risk. • Lack of adequate heating.

INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

A lack of appropriate care and support stemming from poor practice across the entire care provision.

Institutional abuse thrives when the wishes and aspirations of the individual are sacrificed to maintain the day to day running of the service or organisation.

When care providers utilise unduly strict arrangements, practices, policies and procedures, it can effect negatively on the individual's right to respect, independence, dignity and choice.

Possible indicators of institutional abuse

- Insufficient training and supervision of staff
- Poor management which undermines joint-working, and stifles new ideas and developments
- Lack of flexibility, e.g. enforcing strict times for going to bed or to the toilet.
- Lack of clothing and personal effects
- Failing to motivate individuals to participate in activities, and lack of choice
- Not allowing the individual to express ideas regarding the decor of the establishment
- Lack of choice with menus, and poor menu planning
- Improper use of medical technology
- Abuse of power and control
- Treating those who need care and support with a lack of respect and dignity
- Failing to acknowledge a person's individuality in terms of dress, beliefs, faith/religion, nutrition and culture

D. Initial Response to a Concern or Allegation

If there is a concern that a vulnerable adult may have been abused or a direct allegation of abuse is been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following:

1) Make notes as soon as possible:

- Write down exactly what has been said, when s/he said it, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of an activity). (You may use Form 11 in Section 7 – reporting a concern form).
- Describe any injury, its size, and a drawing of its location and shape. Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action taken and keep all hand written notes, even if subsequently typed up.
- These notes should be passed on to the church safeguarding co-ordinator to assist them should the matter need to be referred to Adult Social Services or the police. Any referral should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours and you should expect an acknowledgement of your written referral within one working day of receiving it.
- If the church does not have a safeguarding co-ordinator, or deputy, or they are not contactable or they are the subject of the concerns, the statutory agencies should be contacted directly.

2) Seek advice:

- If your church does not have a safeguarding co-ordinator you can contact the IPP Safeguarding Officer or the General Secretary of your denomination.
- The Churches Child Protection Advisory service (CCPAS) can also offer independent advice and operate a 24 hour confidential helpline and website.

3) In urgent cases:

- If there are concerns that someone may have been deliberately hurt or is at risk of ‘significant harm’, contact Adult Social Services or the police straight away.
- If urgent medical attention is needed, an ambulance should be called or they should be taken to hospital.

4) DO NOT:

- Investigate any circumstances, assertions or disclosures yourself. It is not your role or that of the church to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. Your responsibility is to report the matter to the appropriate person.

E. How to respond to an adult who discloses abuse

- Be patient, and sympathise with the complainant.
- Listen carefully, but do not question the person about what has happened or press them to disclose further information.
- Show acceptance of what they say by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Reassure them that he/she is doing the right thing by disclosing the information to you, and that you are treating the information seriously.
- If in your opinion a vulnerable adult is in serious danger, contact the Police or Adult Social Services immediately.

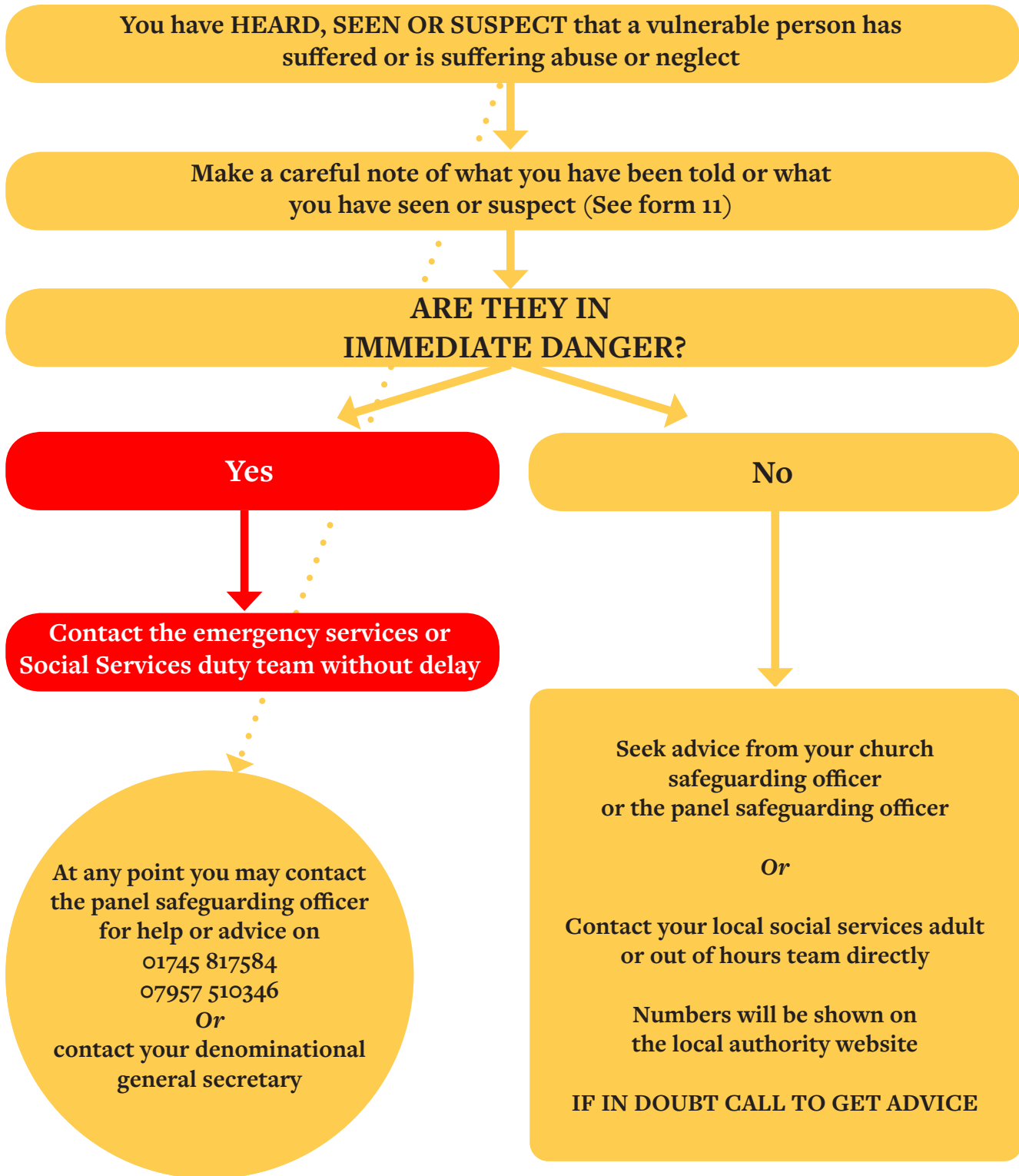
Do:

- Let the person know what you intend doing, with whom you will share the information and why, and – in simple terms – what will happen next.
- Make detailed notes as soon as possible after the disclosure and date and sign them. Keep it factual and do not express your opinion. Your report/notes could be used at a later date in a court of law.

Do not:

- Promise to keep secret any kind of abuse which is drawn to your attention. For example do not say “This will never happen to you again” or “I won’t mention it to anyone else”.
- Express shock or disbelief.
- Do not discuss the matter with the individual who is accused or suspected of committing the abuse. In no circumstances should you investigate any circumstances, assertions or disclosures. It is not your role or that of the church to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. Your responsibility is to report the matter to the appropriate person.

F. What TO DO IF YOU: HEAR, SEE or SUSPECT SOMETHING?



5. Pastoral Care

Section 5:

Pastoral care

In this section you will find information about

- 5.1 Supporting people who have suffered abuse in the past
- 5.2 Supporting those affected by suspected abuse and disclosures
- 5.3 Good practice when dealing with people who are known offenders or abusers
- 5.4 Treatment for offenders and sources of support

Introduction

Any organisation that is involved with children, young people or adults should be aware that those who come through their doors may have been affected by abuse at some point in their lives. It may be in the present, recent or distant past but the effects can be devastating not only for the person who has been abused but also family members, friends and social groups.

The church has a unique opportunity to offer sensitive pastoral ministry to all who are affected but we must also be responsible and understand our limitations. It is probable that most people will require specialist advice but the church community can provide a supportive and caring environment and assistance to access the right support and help.

There is a difference between counselling and listening/pastoral care. All are of value and often work alongside each other but it is important that counselling is left to those who are appropriately qualified. Problems can arise when boundaries are not respected and well-meaning but inexperienced individuals assume a counselling role. Counselling for sexual abuse in particular is complex, requiring a great deal of skill and training.

5.1 Supporting people who have suffered abuse in the past

It is possible that within your church are adults who suffered abuse during their childhood are now members of the church community. These survivors may never have disclosed or come to terms with what happened in the past. The abuse may or may not have taken place in a church setting.

“There is clear evidence that the proportion of people within the church who have experienced abuse is no lower than in the rest of society”¹⁵

Training in relation to abuse can also trigger memories of incidents which the worker may have experienced him/herself which may cause considerable trauma or distress.

Those who have survived abuse need someone to listen to them, and to believe what they say. Their recovery is likely to be a lengthy process which requires specialist help or guidance. It is important to be mindful of the vulnerability of individuals; some referrals and actions, even within the Church, can evoke painful memories.

The guidelines in these circumstances are the same as those for individuals who disclose current cases of abuse¹⁶; listen to them, believe what they say, and assure them that they are not to blame. Start with the individual’s circumstances, not your own fears or doubts. Usually, the appropriate way to help a survivor is to refer him/her to a professional who is experienced in dealing with such matters.

Both adults and children who have previously been abused – can be vulnerable to further abuse.

A number of organisations specialise in offering support to survivors of abuse

The Survivors Trust is an umbrella agency for over 135 specialist voluntary sector agencies providing a range of counselling, therapeutic and support services working with women, men and children who are victims/ survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

<http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/find-support/>

¹⁵ CTBI (2002) Rev K Galloway and Rev D Gamble, Time for Action: A Report of Sexual Abuse Issues.

¹⁶ See Section 4.2E

MACSAS (Ministry and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors) is a support group for women and men from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by Ministers or Clergy, as children or as adults. They support both survivors who have remained within their Christian communities and those who have left. <http://www.macsas.org.uk/>

NAPAC – National Association for People Abused in Childhood campaigns and offers support. It has a Freephone information line on 0800 085 3330 and a resources website. www.napac.org.uk

5.2 Supporting those affected by suspected child abuse and disclosures

The church has a unique opportunity to offer sensitive pastoral ministry to all who are involved. When, in a case of suspected abuse, the safety of the individual has been assured, it is vital that the church creates structures whereby workers can be counselled and supported.

Similar help can be offered to others surrounding the child or vulnerable adult who may be adversely affected by what has happened. This may include the abuser and those who are close to him/her but the safety and wellbeing of the child or vulnerable person must always be a priority.

The church community has a significant role to play in providing a supportive and caring environment but it is likely that most people will require specialist advice and support by experienced professionals or counsellors.

5.3 Good practice when dealing with people who are known offenders or abusers

When a known offender joins a church, it is important that he/she is welcomed in a friendly manner; however, it is equally important that a frank discussion takes place with the individual. The church has a responsibility to consider and respond to the risk, but also has an opportunity to provide support and care to the individual.

The Interdenominational Panel's Safeguarding Officer should be included at the beginning of any response to the situation and will work with the church and any relevant professionals from statutory agencies to implement a plan. This will set out clear boundaries to protect the children/young people/vulnerable adults and also to limit any possibility that the individual is wrongly accused of abusing someone.

Part of this plan will be an agreement which will be signed by the offender and will be reviewed and enforced. It may include the following statements:

The individual should:

- only attend specific meetings
- sit apart from children
- stay away from parts of a building frequented by children
- attend a 'house group' which does not include children
- decline hospitality where there are children
- never be alone with children
- never work with children

Also:

- Consideration will be given to the appropriateness of informing the church. This should only be done in conjunction with a formal public protection plan.
- Ensure that key leaders are aware of the situation and that people are in place to offer support and monitor the situation locally.
- The offender should be aware of the consequences if he/she breaches the agreement. This may include being banned from the church and other churches, and the agencies who are involved with the public protection plan being informed.

5.4 Treatment for Offenders and sources of support

Research shows that those who complete treatment are less likely to fantasise about children or deny they harmed their victims, and show more self-control. They are, therefore, less likely to re-offend. The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, acknowledged experts in the area of sex offending, provides community based assessment and intervention programmes.

They also manage 'Stop It Now! UK & Ireland', which provides a confidential helpline for adults uneasy about their sexual inclinations, as well as those who have concerns about the behaviour of someone else such as a partner, relative or friend. The evidence shows that potential offenders are more likely to contact 'Stop It Now! UK & Ireland' when they need help.

For information regarding referrals, training or consultancy contact:

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation
2 Birch House, Harris Business Park
Hanbury Road
Stoke Prior Bromsgrove
B60 4DJ
Tel: 01527 591922
<https://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk>

Stop It Now! UK and Ireland

<https://www.stopitnow.org.uk>
helpline 08081000900

Circles UK

Circles of Support and Accountability are an innovative and successful community contribution to reducing sex offending, working in close partnership with criminal justice agencies.
Abbey House, Abbey Square
Reading RG1 3BE
0118 9500068
<https://circles-uk.org.uk/>

6. Appendices

Appendices

Contents

1. Further resources and sources of support
- 2a. Code of conduct
2. Guidelines and safe working practices (example document)
3. Relevant legislation
4. Carrying out a risk assessment
5. Policy statement on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information
6. Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders
7. Charity trustees and safeguarding
8. The use and sharing of images of children - information and model policy
9. Additional definitions
10. The safer church - safeguarding checklist and self-assessment tool

APPENDIX 1: sources of help, information and support

EMERGENCY HELPLINES see also: <https://panel.cymru/en/emergency-contact-numbers>

Your local **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Find local numbers on your local council website or directory.

Note your local numbers here:

Children's social services:

Adult social services:

Out of hours team:

POLICE

Emergency calls 999

General calls 101

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

For advice and support if you are worried about a child or to report a concern.

0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/

CHILDLINE free 24/7 confidential helpline, chat, email and website

0800 1111 <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

HOURGLASS

(formerly Action on Elder Abuse)

Confidential helpline 0808 808 8141

www.wearehourglass.cymru/wales

SOURCES OF SUPPORT OR INFORMATION

INTERDENOMINATIONAL SAFEGUARDING PANEL

We are here to support and advise the "3 denominations" on all safeguarding matters: Training, policy, advice, facilitating DBS checks and dealing with safeguarding concerns and allegations.

<https://panel.cymru>

post@panel.cymru

Unit 1, Vale Parc, Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh, LL16 5TA

01745 817584 / 07957 510346 (not 24 hour)

THIRTY ONE: EIGHT (formerly CCPAS)

An independent Christian charity providing professional advice support training and resources in all areas of safeguarding vulnerable groups and for those affected by abuse.

<https://thirtyoneeight.org>

PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent. BR8 7UQ

0303 003 1111

info@thirtyoneeight.org

KIDSCAPE

UK charity established specifically to prevent bullying. Support, advice and training. Helpline for parents concerned about bullying.

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

8-10 South Street Epsom Surrey KT18 7PF

Email: parentsupport@kidscape.org.uk

Helpline 0207823 5430

CARE INSPECTORATE WALES (CIW)

On receiving a concern or complaint about a provider CIW look to see whether they are providing a safe service or are failing to meet the requirements and conditions of their registration.

They can carry out an inspection or ensure that the aspect causing concern is checked at the next scheduled inspection.

CIW is not a complaints agency, and cannot deal with complaints linked to individual circumstances.

Telephone: 0300 7900 126

Email: CIW@gov.wales

Fax: 0872 437 7301

<https://www.careinspectorate.wales>

ONLINE SAFETY

CEOP Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre
Report inappropriate online behaviour
and get help and information

<http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>

CEOP EDUCATION from the National Crime Agency: working to protect children and young people from online child sexual abuse both online

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

CHILDNET

UK-based charity who empower children, young people, and those who support them in their online lives

<https://www.childnet.com/>

SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

The Survivors Trust is an umbrella agency for over 135 specialist voluntary sector agencies providing a range of counselling, therapeutic and support services working with women, men and children who are victims/survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

www.thesurvivorstrust.org/
Unit 2, Eastlands Court Business Centre, St Peter's Road, Rugby, Warwickshire. CV21 3QP
Tel: 01788 550554
Email: info@thesurvivorstrust.org

MACSAS (Ministry and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors) support group for people from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by ministers or clergy, as children or as adults. They support survivors who have remained within their Christian communities or have left

<http://www.macsas.org.uk/>

part time helpline: 0808 801 0340

NAPAC – National Association for People Abused in Childhood Campaigns and offers support.

Resources website: <https://napac.org.uk/>
Freephone information line: 0800 085 3330

SUPPORT AND TREATMENT FOR OFFENDERS (see also 5.4)

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (LFF)
UK-wide child protection charity dedicated to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. They work with entire families that have been affected by sexual abuse including: adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours; victims of abuse and other family members.

For information regarding referrals, training or consultancy
www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/about.html
Email: contact@lucyfaithfull.org
2 Birch House, Harris Business Park Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4DJ
Tel: 01527 591922 Fax: 01527 591924

Stop it Now! Confidential helpline for people concerned about any aspect of child sexual abuse. For families and friends, people working in the field of child sexual abuse and offenders or individuals concerned about their own thoughts/ behaviour

<https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/>

0808 1000 900

help@stopitnow.org.uk

DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINES

LIVE FEAR FREE: 24 Hour advice and support call / text / live chat or email free of charge

0808 8010 800 Text: 07860077333
Email: info@livefearfreehelpline.wales
<https://gov.wales/live-fear-free/domestic-abuse-wales>

UK 24-HOUR NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE

0808 2000 247
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Appendix 2a: Our safeguarding code of conduct

This code of conduct is a set of guidelines outlining the main responsibilities and practices for those working and volunteering with vulnerable groups. It is based on the statement of intent and guidelines from the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook.

As a _____ (role) at _____ (church)

working with children* / vulnerable adults*, I will:

1. Follow our policy, procedures and best practice guidelines in relation to the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults.
2. Cooperate with the safer recruitment processes including a DBS check where the role is eligible.
3. Attend safeguarding training and any training relevant to my role as requested by leaders.
4. Endeavour to ensure the safety and protection of children and vulnerable adults in church situations and activities (including online) and follow measures outlined in any risk assessments.
5. Endeavour to recognise situations where children and young people and vulnerable adults could potentially suffer harm during church activities and seek advice from a leader when necessary.
6. Follow our policy and procedures by responding immediately to all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions of abuse by reporting them to the panel safeguarding officer, the denominational general secretary or the church safeguarding coordinator .
In an emergency, I will contact the police, ambulance or social services without delay.
7. Report any misuse of authority by an individual to the panel safeguarding officer or general secretary.
8. Never agree to keep any abuse or safeguarding concerns a secret.
9. Listen to children and vulnerable adults, respond sensitively, treat them with respect and in line with our policy and guidelines.
10. Follow safeguarding advice and guidance provided by the panel's safeguarding officer, and/or the general secretary of the denomination and cooperate fully with statutory services in the event of any investigations or interventions.

Declaration

I agree to abide by the expectations outlined above and confirm that I have read the safeguarding policies and procedures that are relevant to my role.

Name _____ Signed _____

Date _____

Witnessed by _____ (signature) _____ (name and role)

Signed _____

¹ It is recommended that churches appoint a local safeguarding coordinator, but we accept that not all churches have this role. In this event, please contact the panel safeguarding officer straightaway. A local safeguarding coordinator should inform the panel safeguarding officer of all safeguarding concerns/cases as soon as possible.

*Delete as appropriate

Appendix 2: Guidelines and safe working practices (Example document)

This is an example summary document which should always be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook.

This is a practical document which can be adapted to local circumstances and can be shared with staff and volunteers to promote consistency and good working practices. It can also be shared with parents for information. It should be reviewed regularly (at least annually) and immediately if new activities are developed.

All volunteers will be given a copy of this document and updates

General Guidelines for all activities

1. Whenever possible, have two or more adults present with a group. Avoid being on your own with any child. (An obvious exception will be taking a young child to the toilet).
2. Avoid transporting a child home on your own – preferably have another helper with you or else ensure that the last two children are dropped off together. In the event of an emergency, make sure you inform a leader as soon as is possible.
3. Be wise in your physical contact with children. Holding a child's hand or offering a hug when they are upset is often a good way to reassure or comfort a child but always ask "Would you like a hug?" rather than assume. We all have different boundaries and these should be respected. Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is different from a hug behind closed doors.
4. Never smack, hit or physically discipline a child.
5. Treat children and young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
6. Respect the privacy of children but do not promise to keep secrets and generally do not enter into private or intimate conversations with children and young people on your own. (See also 9. below)
7. Discuss any concerns immediately with the safeguarding coordinator/ leader or supervisor.
8. Avoid activity and comments which could be questionable or misinterpreted e.g. rough/provocative games or comments and, if you feel a child may have a "crush" on you, talk to a leader for advice.
9. We do want to support young people appropriately. Be wise when listening to a young person's problem/ offering advice and support. Ensure that others know the discussion is taking place or that someone else is around.
10. Be mindful of the safety of children and young people at all times.
11. Be mindful of your own safety at all times including protecting yourself from allegations. (All actions should be open and transparent and accountable).
12. Be willing to listen to advice and comments from the leader of the activity or the child safeguarding coordinators.
13. It should be accepted that anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which causes concern or could be misinterpreted should speak to the individual and a leader about the concern.
14. Leaders and helpers of activities should regularly meet to discuss how the group is going, share information and pray for the young people in the group.
15. Activities and contact should be open and transparent.
16. An opportunity should also be regularly created (no less than annually) to review procedures, update training, share concerns and identify any other matters that may need clarity or guidance.

**DON'T KEEP CONCERNS, QUESTIONS AND WORRIES TO YOURSELF.
IF IN DOUBT, ASK!**

Sunday school

Leader: _____

Staff: _____

All staff will have undergone a safe recruitment process and hold a current DBS check as appropriate

Child to adult ratio: 3 years old 1: 4. 4 to 8 years 1: 6 (minimum of 2 adults)

Age: Sunday school is for children over 3 years old

Location: Sunday school is usually held in _____

Personal care (Toileting, Changing Nappies) should be appropriate and minimum and related to the age and ability of the child. Parental/carer support may be sought during the session where necessary to assist with their child.

Record keeping: A register will be kept of attendance at Sunday school.

Permission: Children are usually accompanied to church by an adult and that adult remains in the building (in the main service) during Sunday school. Where children are regularly attending independently, Sunday club leaders will endeavour to visit the family and gain permission and contact details.

Discipline/ behaviour: Children will be treated courteously and with respect and will be encouraged to treat each other and the leaders likewise. In the event of discipline problems or disruptive behaviour, children will be:

- Verbally asked to listen, behave, participate, apologise (as appropriate).
- Asked to sit in another part of the room to think, calm down.
- Parental support will be sought/the child will be taken to their parent carer.
- Staff will discuss/agree procedure with parent where behaviour is becoming a pattern.

Parent's involvement: Where a parent/carer is regularly attending a session, the leader may approach them to become official helpers and follow the recruitment/DBS procedure.

Parents should collect children from Sunday school promptly at the end of the service. (A list will be held in Sunday school of children whose parents are happy to for their children to go home independently.)

Accident/Incident reporting: Any accidents/incidents will be noted in the church accident record and also discussed with the parent and carer on collection.

Youth club

Leaders: _____

Staff: _____

All staff will be safely recruited and DBS checked as appropriate

Child to adult ratio: 1-2 members of staff for up to 8 children.

Age: secondary school aged children

Location: _____

Permission: All young people attending should present a completed consent and information form which is kept by the leaders at the location.

Parents/carers are responsible for transport but leaders can transport the young people in emergencies.

Additional consent is sought for attendance at events.

Discipline/ behaviour: Young people will be treated courteously and with respect and will be encouraged to treat each other and the leaders likewise. In the event of discipline problems or disruptive behaviour, young people will be:

- Verbally asked to listen, behave, participate, apologise (as appropriate).
- If behaviour continues to disrupt, the young person's parent/carer may be asked to collect the young person
- If behaviour is regularly difficult to manage, leaders will discuss with parents/carer to form an appropriate action plan.
- Staff will follow up and listen to the young person and offer help or support as appropriate.

Accident/Incident reporting: Any accidents/incidents will be noted in the church accident record and also discussed with the parent/carer as soon as possible.

Appendix 3: Relevant legislation

The following form the main legislative and good practice framework for working with vulnerable groups in Wales. This list is not exhaustive.

- **The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014**
The Act has 11 parts. Part 7 of the Act relates to safeguarding. Part 7 is intended to be read in the context of the Act as a whole <https://gov.wales/safeguarding-people-introduction>
- **The Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019** replaces the All-Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 and the Wales Interim Policy & Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse 2010 <https://safeguarding.wales/>
- **Children Act 1989** is the principal piece of legislation which makes provision about the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children. It gives every child the right to protection from abuse and exploitation and the right to inquiries to safeguard their welfare.
- **The Children's Act 2004** is a development from the 1989 Act and stresses that all people and organisations working with children have a responsibility to help safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC)** is an international agreement setting out the 42 rights of children that give children and young people what they need to grow up happily, healthily, and safely. In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to make the UNCRC part of its domestic law.
- **Human Rights Act 1998** sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to.
- **Equality Act 2010** The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society replacing previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act.
- **Data Protection Act 2018** The DPA 2018 sets out the framework for data protection law in the UK. It updates and replaces the Data Protection Act 1998 and came into effect on 25 May 2018. It sits alongside the GDPR, and tailors how the GDPR applies in the UK.
- **Charities Act 2011** brings together provisions of the Recreational Charities Act 1958, the Charities Act 1993 and much of the Charities Act 2006, all since amended by other legislation. The Act updates the text and simplifies the structure of the existing legislation, but it does not change the existing law or introduce new policy.
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and (Controlled Activity) (Wales) Regulations 2010** sets out the scope of regulated activity and operation of the barring element of DBS, which was previously undertaken by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).
- **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012** established the DBS whereby the responsibilities of ISA were merged with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) to create one body, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) which is responsible for criminal record disclosures and referrals for barring consideration and maintaining the list of barred individuals. Part 5 of the Act covers the reduction in scope of the definition of regulated activity, new services provided by the DBS, and disregarding convictions and cautions for consensual gay sex.
- **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974** sets out in legislation rehabilitation periods, and that individuals do not have to disclose spent convictions unless they are covered in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 which sets out the exceptions when an individual can be asked about spent convictions – known as asking ‘an exempted question’.
- **Police Act 1997 Part V** allowed for the formation of the Criminal Records system. This led to the formation of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for England and Wales in 2002. (updated by Protection of Freedoms Act 2012).
- **Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000** created the National Probation Service for England and Wales and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) and set up an integrated statutory system to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003** makes new provision about sexual offences and measures for protecting the public from sexual harm.

Appendix 4: Completing a risk assessment

A risk assessment is a useful way of thinking through the risks and potential problems that may occur in any activity. It helps you to come up with solutions, it shows that you have planned carefully and helps you to take the reasonable steps necessary to keep everyone safe and also to protect the reputation of the organisation. It is also a good way to share important information with other members of the team to ensure that everybody is following the best practice possible to operate in a safe and accountable manner.

Use a risk assessment form as a checklist to help you to think through possible risks, problems and solutions. This step by step guide is based on Form 10 in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook. There are many different formats for risk assessment forms that you could use. Please contact the panel office if you would like help, advice or for alternative formats.

A step by step guide

Step 1 – Describe the activity, event or location to be assessed.

Risk assessments are not only about buildings. Have you done a risk assessment on activities like a luncheon club for vulnerable adults or a children's club trip or homework club? In fact, a risk assessment is a good way to carefully think through many of your church activities.

Step 2 – What are the risks associated with the activity or location?

'Risk' is the chance, high or low, that someone will be harmed by some kind of activity event or hazard. Think about activities which take place at your premises and which groups use them (e.g., youth club, toddler group). The risks may be different for different groups of people. A 'Hazard' is anything that can cause harm (e.g., slipping/tripping hazards, cables, flooring) Check them by walking around the building and look for hazards that could cause serious harm or affect a number of people. But do remember it's not all about fixtures and fittings.

Looking at the examples in Step 1 above, the risk could be something such as: a Vulnerable adult having an allergic reaction to food or drink during the luncheon club; a child going missing during the trip; or a child accessing inappropriate online material during a homework club.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks and decide whether it is a high low or medium risk.

How likely is it that each risk or hazard you have identified could cause harm? How severe would the consequences be? You can use this matrix to help with your assessment:

a) Assess the likelihood of incidence/injury occurring as follows:

1 = Improbable, 2 = Possible, 3 = Likely, 4 = Very Likely, 5 = certain

b) Assess the severity of the consequences as follows: 1 = Trivial (e.g. grazing, soreness), 2 = Minor (small cuts, bruising), 3 = Severe (broken bones), 4 = Major, 5 = Fatal.

Now multiply the 'likelihood of the risk' occurring with the 'severity of the consequence' and note your total. **A total of 1-4 is low risk, 5-7 is moderate and 8+ high risk**

This helps us to quantify the risk and prioritise the action that needs to be taken.

Step 4 - Who is at Risk?

Children, vulnerable adults, members of staff, members of the public etc.

Step 5 – Note down the measures that you are putting in place to control the risk.

Control measures could include things like ensuring enough trained staff to supervise children, having a trained first aider, it could be ensuring that there is a completed consent form for each child giving medical and photograph consent or it could be taping down a loose cable.

Back to the examples. How could you reduce the risk of the problems noted in **Step 2** occurring?

- a) *The lunch club members – a control measure could be to use a simple form to ask if they have any allergies so that you can avoid anything that would pose a danger.*
- b) *The children’s club trip – a control measure would be to ensure that there a sufficient ratio of volunteers to children to ensure adequate supervision.*
- c) *The homework club – control measures would be ensuring there are controls on internet access and sites that can be visited and providing some safe internet use education.*

Note any control measures and solutions down and ensure that you put them place. Make this document an action plan not just a paper exercise.

Step 6 - Are the control measures adequate?

Do you need any further measures or actions to reduce the risk to an acceptable level or are there further actions needed to put the measures into practice?

NOW sign and date your assessment and share it with all relevant parties

Step 7 - Review your assessment and revise it when necessary.

It is good practice to review your assessment from time to time (at least annually) to ensure that precautions are still working effectively. Set a date for review and keep to it – at the very least this should be annually. Remember if you bring in new equipment or change the way you work then you will need to go through the procedure again, identifying hazards, assessing risk and taking action. Add any of these findings to your original record and it will ensure that it stays up to date.

Employers, employees, volunteers and others

www.hse.gov.uk

Where an organisation, including charitable or voluntary groups, has at least one employee who works under a contract of employment, it is considered to be an employer for the purposes of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes a “duty of every employer to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.”

This generally means that organisations which have both employees and volunteers have a statutory responsibility not to harm or damage the health of volunteers through their involvement in the activities of that organisation.

The Health and Safety Executive operates throughout the UK. For more information about health and safety visit their website.

Appendix 5: Policy statement on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information

General principles

As an organisation accessing the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, is appointed by the **Union of Welsh Independents, Baptist Union of Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales** to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust. The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel also complies fully with their obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.



Storage and access

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to the Lead Counter Signatory, the Safeguarding officer and the Administrative Officer of The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, and those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties according to the agreed policy of The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and we recognise that it is a Criminal Offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject and their postal code at the time of the application, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Acting as an umbrella body

As an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives Disclosure information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that they can comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice. We will also take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of Disclosure information in full compliance with the DBS Code and in full accordance with this policy. We will also ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for Disclosure are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

Appendix 6: Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation accessing the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, is appointed by the **Union of Welsh Independents, Baptist Union of Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales** to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, we comply with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.



The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, and responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all potential workers and volunteers based on their skills, qualifications and experience and encourage our service users to operate in the same manner.

A Disclosure is only requested for eligible positions as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders ACT (ROA) 1974(Exceptions) 1975 Order and the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records). For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that each applicant signs a self declaration, and inform us of any further disclosure information, by sending this under separate, confidential cover, to their employer or to the Lead Counter Signatory of The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows The Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel to ask questions about your entire criminal record we only ask about “unspent” and convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

The Interdenominational Child Protection Panel has adopted a safer recruitment process which is outlined in its Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook, and will train all those involved in dealing with Disclosure information and in the Recruiting Process in its content and use.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

Appendix 7: Charity trustees and safeguarding

Within our churches some local church officers are also charity trustees. As trustees they have a duty of care and responsibility for ensuring the safe and effective running of the charity including taking the necessary steps to safeguard vulnerable groups. They also need to make sure that protecting people from harm is central to the charities culture. A charity should be a safe and trusted environment for all.

Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, regardless of size, type, or income, not just those working with groups traditionally considered at risk. It is an essential duty for trustees to take reasonable steps to safeguard beneficiaries and to protect them from abuse.¹

This appendix is a quick summary guide. For more information, please refer to the Charity Commission website which has lots of useful information to help trustees to understand their safeguarding responsibilities. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

Here are some of the key responsibilities:

- 1. Policies:** You should have safeguarding policies and procedures that all trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of and follow. You should appoint a local safeguarding lead.
Are you and all relevant people familiar with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook and is it implemented effectively in your church? Are you displaying the individual church policy document in your building, have you appointed a safeguarding lead, and do you regularly discuss safeguarding in your church meetings?
<https://panel.cymru/en/policies-and-information>
- 2. Safer recruitment and DBS checks:** You should make sure that those who are working or volunteering with vulnerable groups are suitable and safe. You should follow a safer recruitment procedure which includes DBS checks. These checks should be repeated regularly. (Our current policy is every four years). Trustees themselves are eligible to do a DBS check if their charity works directly with vulnerable groups even if they themselves are not personally doing this work.
Are your volunteers recruited safely and do you have DBS checks for all roles that are eligible? See Section 2 of the Handbook for more information or look on the panel website for safer recruitment and DBS information.
https://panel.cymru/images/DBS_flowchart_-_checklist_07_2020_min.pdf
<https://panel.cymru/en/recruiting-volunteers>
- 3. Responding to concerns:** You should know how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns, complaints, and allegations in an appropriate manner.
Are you, and all those working directly with vulnerable groups, aware how to report your concerns to the panel safeguarding officer and to relevant statutory organisations such as the police or social services as soon as concerns are suspected or identified? https://panel.cymru/images/responding_to_a_concern_flow_chart.pdf
- 4. Reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission:** Trustees are required to report all appropriate incidents to the Charity Commission. This would include things such as an allegation of abuse related to the charity. The trustees of an excepted charity have the same responsibility as a registered charity. If you are unsure, the Charity Commission helpline and website can help.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>
- 5. Training:** You should make sure all staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding vulnerable groups training.
Have all trustees and those working directly with children and vulnerable adults attended training in the last 4 years? This will help with many of the responsibilities noted above <https://panel.cymru/en/training>

Following the safeguarding policy and procedures produced for you by the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel, attending safeguarding training and ensuring that DBS checks are completed for all who are eligible will help you to fulfil your safeguarding responsibilities as trustees.

¹ Charity commission 2022

Appendix 8: Using and sharing images of children - information and model policy

Based on guidance from the NSPCC Learning website and used with permission. To see more go to <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/photography-sharing-images-guidance>

Use this model policy to write a document that reflects the safeguarding needs of the children and young people that you work with. It's good practice to share your photography policy with children and parents and seek their consent at the beginning of the year. You may also need to get additional consent in specific circumstances (if for instance, you are bringing in a professional photographer or the photos might appear in the local or national media).

Model policy: USING AND SHARING IMAGES OF CHILDREN

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to take and use images of children safely.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement is to:

- protect children and young people who take part in our services, events and activities, specifically those where photographs and videos may be taken
- set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to photographs/videos being taken of children and young people during our events and activities
- to ensure that we operate in line with our values and within the law when creating, using and sharing images of children and young people. This policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers and other adults associated with our activities

We recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used
- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with their use and distribution
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- asking for written consent¹ from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- explaining what images will be used for
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children whose images are used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
- avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

- If we become aware of the misuse of images of children we will follow our child protection procedures for reporting

Photography and/or filming for personal use

When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will refer them to our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- reminding parents, carers and children that they need to give consent for us to take and use their images
- asking people to gain permission from children, their parents and carers before sharing photographs and videos taken during our events
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share
- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

Photography and/or filming for our church / group's use

We recognise that our group leaders may use photography and filming as an aid in activities and to celebrate or publicise events and achievements. Children, young people, parents and carers must be made aware if photography and filming is part of the programme and give written consent. If we hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour and ask them to always wear identification
- informing children, their parents and carers that a photographer will be present and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our child protection procedures.

Photography and/or filming for wider use

If people such as local journalists, professional photographers wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, they should seek permission in advance.) They should provide:

- the name and address of the person using the camera
- the names of children they wish to take images of (if possible)
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for
- a signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

The church/organisation will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for photographs/films to be taken. We will seek consent from the children and their parents and inform the photographer of anyone who does not give consent. At the event we will inform all that an external photographer is present and ensure the photographer is easily identifiable, for example by issuing them with a coloured identification badge. If the church is concerned that someone unknown to us is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, we will ask them to leave and follow our child protection procedures as appropriate.

If consent to take photographs is not given

We will respect their wishes. We will agree in advance how they would like to be identified so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them and ensure this is done in a way that does not single out the child or make them feel isolated. We will never exclude a child from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

¹ See form 8: consent for use of images <https://panel.cymru/en/useful-forms>

Appendix 9: Additional definitions and types of abuse

The main categories of abuse are described in Sections 3 and 4 of the handbook but some new and specific definitions are now being used as well. Some of the more commonly used ones are described here along with links taking you to the source of the definitions and to find more information.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)ⁱ

Is a form of sexual abuse that can include sex or any form of sexual activity with a child (up to the age of 18 years old); the production of indecent images and/or any other indecent material involving children

- Involves some form of exchange it can include the giving or withdrawal of something, such as the withdrawal of violence or threats to abuse another person.
- There may be a facilitator who receives something in addition to or instead of the child who is exploited.
- Children may not recognise the exploitative nature of the relationship or exchange. Children may feel that they have given consent.

GROOMINGⁱⁱ is when someone (often an adult or older young person) builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Any child is at risk of being groomed. It can take place online or offline and will often involve the groomer providing the child with a relationship in which they feel understood or important. Grooming may involve the provision of material goods or experiences. Groomers work to develop a situation where the child trusts them and/or feels that the groomer can provide them with something they cannot get from anyone else. This could be friendship, a relationship which the child believes is a romantic relationship, a sense of belonging or a sense of importance where they are given status or goods which impress their peers.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)ⁱ Occurs when a child under the age of 18 years is involved in criminal activities including the movement of drugs or money which results in personal gain for an individual, group or organised criminal gang. It involves an element of exchange and can still be exploitation even if the activity appears consensual. CCE involves force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence. It is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation

BULLYINGⁱⁱⁱ is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time. Bullying can take different forms. It could include:

- physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing
- verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone
- non-verbal abuse: hand signs or text messages
- emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone
- undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- controlling or manipulating someone
- making silent, hoax or abusive calls

The following types of bullying are also HATE CRIME: racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying, bullying someone because they have a disability

CYBERBULLYING / ONLINE ABUSEⁱⁱⁱ is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone. Cyberbullying can include:

- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing images or videos
- trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games

- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- shaming someone online
- setting up hate sites/ groups about a child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass or cause trouble
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversation

DOMESTIC ABUSE or VIOLENCE^{iv} is abusive behaviour taking place in a relationship as a way for one person in that relationship to gain or maintain control over another. It includes physical sexual emotional psychological and financial abuse. **COERCIVE CONTROL** is a purposeful pattern of incidents that occur over time in order for one individual to exert power, control or coercion over another. Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 provides for the offence of controlling or coercive behaviour, where the perpetrator and the victim are personally connected. Victims who experience the type of behaviour that stops short of serious physical violence, but amounts to extreme psychological and emotional abuse, can bring their perpetrators to justice.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE^v is characterised by an ongoing, systematic pattern of coercive control within a religious context (Oakley, 2017). Key elements of this experience are manipulation, exploitation, control through the misuse and abuse of scripture and divine position, censorship of decision-making, pressure to conform, enforced accountability, requirement of obedience, and isolation... characterised by perpetuating patterns of behaviour that include blaming, shaming, intimidation and controlling behaviour (Oakley 2009, Oakley and Kinmond 2013). As in all other types of abuse, spiritual abuse will sometimes co-exist with and be used to legitimise other forms of abuse and harmful cultures. As already stated, there will always be an emotional or psychological element and as such it can be considered a subcategory of psychological abuse. In some more extreme cases, there may also be physical and sexual abuse occurring allied to the spiritually abusive elements.

NON-RECENT CHILD ABUSE / HISTORICAL ABUSE^{vi} is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18. Sometimes adults who were abused in childhood blame themselves or are made to feel it's their fault.

MODERN SLAVERY^{vii} is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, criminal exploitation and organ harvesting. Victims of modern slavery can be any age, gender, nationality, or ethnicity. They are tricked or threatened into work and may feel unable to leave or report the crime through fear or intimidation. They may not recognise themselves as a victim.

RADICALISATION^{viii} is the term that describes the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, participate in terrorist groups.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)^{ix} is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting', FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK

These definitions are based on information sourced from the following websites and the panel acknowledges that these are not our original definitions. All were sourced in 07/2022

ⁱ Child sexual criminal exploitation and criminal exploitation <https://safeguarding.wales>

ⁱⁱ Grooming <https://safercommunities.wales> <https://safeguarding.wales>

ⁱⁱⁱ Bullying and cyberbullying www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/

^{iv} Domestic abuse / coercive control <https://safeguarding.wales/glossary.html> Domestic Abuse Bill 2020: GOV.UK

^v Spiritual Abuse [spiritual-abuse-position-statement.pdf](https://www.spiritual-abuse-position-statement.pdf) (thirtyoneeight.org)

^{vi} Historical Abuse www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/non-recent-abuse/

^{vii} Modern Slavery <https://safercommunities.wales/modern-slavery-exploitation/>

^{viii} Radicalisation | <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/radicalisation>

^{ix} Female Genital Mutilation | <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/fgm>

Appendix 10: The safer church - self assessment checklist¹

Safeguarding

1. Is everyone aware of your church's safeguarding policies and proceduresⁱ and where to find them?
2. Do you consider that your church understands what safeguarding is?ⁱⁱ

Prevention

3. Do you have a Safeguarding coordinator?ⁱⁱⁱ
4. Are your Trustees/leaders aware of their safeguarding responsibility?^{iv}
5. Do you follow safer recruitment guidelines when finding and employing volunteers and staff including DBS checks?^v
6. Are you confident that leaders, staff and volunteers in your church are aware of their safeguarding role and responsibility? Have they attended appropriate training including refresher training?^{vi}
7. Are they aware that safeguarding is preventative and proactive? Have you considered who may be at risk in your congregation and taken appropriate steps to keep them safe?

Recognising Reporting and recording

8. Are you confident that your staff and volunteers would recognise and respond appropriately to suspicions, allegations or disclosures of abuse and neglect? Do they recognise that abuse "could happen here"?
9. Are you confident that staff /volunteers would raise poor practice issues as well as more serious abuse?
10. Where concerns have been recognised or reported, can you show that your organisation has reacted promptly and appropriately?
11. Have all safeguarding matters been reported to the panel safeguarding officer?
12. Are your trustees aware of their responsibilities to report relevant safeguarding matters to the Charities Commission?^{iv}

Review

13. Do you regularly review your safeguarding arrangements? (at least annually or after any concerns or incidents).
14. Do you ensure that lessons are learned and communicated following concerns and incidents?
15. If you have any safeguarding risk assessments or contracts of agreed behaviour in place – are these reviewed as agreed or annually?

Take action

16. Make a list of any actions that are necessary following your assessment and include target dates to review progress.
17. Contact the panel safeguarding officer if you would like to discuss the results of your assessment and for advice and support on any safeguarding matter.

¹ This document is based on the interactive safeguarding checklist from the Ann Craft Trust: used with permission and thanks <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/checklist-overview/>

ⁱ The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook <https://panel.cymru/en/safeguarding-vulnerable>

ⁱⁱ Have you displayed the individual church policy and considered arranging a Safeguarding Sunday service?

ⁱⁱⁱ See page 3 of the church safeguarding policy statement <https://panel.cymru/en/policies-and-information>

^{iv} See appendix 7 in the 2022 handbook

^v See section 2 of the handbook and <https://panel.cymru/en/recruiting-volunteers>

^{vi} See the training page on our website <https://panel.cymru/en/training>

7. Forms

Section 7:

Forms

UK GDPR and panel forms

1. Volunteer application form
2. Self-declaration form
3. Individual applicant check list
4. Reference letter and form

5. General information and consent form under 11
6. General information and consent form over 11 - including electronic communications
7. Special activity consent form
8. Photograph consent form

9. Accident and incident form
10. Risk assessment form
11. Reporting a concern form

Section 7: UK GDPR and panel forms

You can access the most up to date forms on the panel website: panel.cymru/en/useful-forms

Please note the following when using the forms in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook:

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) came into force on May 25, 2018. Within the UK this led to the creation of the Data Protection Act (2018), which superseded the previous 1998 Data Protection Act. Since Britain's exit from the EU, we now refer to the UK GDPR.

The UK GDPR sets out seven key principles which should be central to any data processing. You should apply the following principles when you handle personal information such as the information you collect using the forms included in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Handbook. The principles apply whether the information is held in paper or electronic formats.

1. **Processed Lawfully**, fairly and in a transparent manner.
2. **Purpose limitation** – Collect data for a specific purpose and do not use it for any other purpose.
3. **Data minimisation** – Only collect the data that you need.
4. **Accurate**: Endeavour to ensure that personal information is accurate.
5. **Storage limitation** – retained only for as long as it is required.
6. **Integrity and confidentiality (security)** – protect information from unauthorised or accidental disclosure.
7. **Accountability** – Those who collect data are responsible and should demonstrate compliance with the above principles.

For more information refer to the Information Commissioner's website <https://ico.org.uk/>

The example forms in the handbook are for local church use and all personal data should be collected/ used/retained /destroyed by the church following GDPR guidelines and under your local or denominational privacy policy.

RECRUITMENT FORMS (forms 1-4): make sure you respect confidentiality and privacy when collecting and storing any information from the application and self-disclosure forms. Store forms securely and confidentially and do not retain application forms from people who have not been selected to work or volunteer.

Do not retain or make copies of DBS disclosure certificates. You will be informed by the panel office when a DBS process has been completed by the applicant. Certificates should be retained by the applicant not the church. (See also the panel privacy statement under the DBS section of our website which explains how we collect and use your information to carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service Check).

CHILDREN'S CONSENT FORMS (forms 5-8): To carry out activities, take photographs or seek medical help for children under 18 you need to obtain consent from those with parental responsibility for the child. Consent is a lawful basis for processing personal data. You should also consider if the child is able to give their own consent in addition e.g., if they are unhappy to have their picture taken or used even if the parent has already agreed. Children need protection when

you are collecting and processing their personal data because they may be less aware of the risks involved. Children have the same rights as adults over their personal data including the rights to access; request rectification; object to processing and have their personal data erased. See also the note on safeguarding below.

ACCIDENT FORMS (form 9): As an accident form contains personal data of those involved in an accident, witnesses and those responsible for implementing actions etc., GDPR rules apply.

Accident records should be kept for a minimum of 3 years (unless they fall under COSHH regulations). Organisations are required to delete data when it's no longer needed. If organisations wish to keep accident reports longer than three years, they may be anonymised so that they no longer contain any personal details but may continue to inform policy or risk assessments going forward.

REPORTING A CONCERN (form 11): make sure you respect confidentiality and privacy when collecting and storing information about abuse or allegations. It is likely that the information will need to be shared to safeguard children or vulnerable adults so please note the information in the box below.

SAFEGUARDING AND UK GDPR:

UK GDPR does not prevent the sharing of information for safeguarding purposes.

Information may be shared without consent for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting welfare if there is a lawful basis to process any personal information and if to gain consent would place a child or vulnerable person at risk.

Form 1: Application form for voluntary work with children, young people and vulnerable adults

Strictly confidential

Name of place of worship/organisation

Job or Role
(e.g. Sunday school teacher)

We ask all prospective workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults to complete this form. If there is insufficient room to fully answer any questions, please continue on separate sheet. The information will be kept confidentially by the place of worship /organisation, unless requested by an appropriate authority.

1. Personal Details

Full Name:.....

..... Postcode:

Tel No:.....

Email Address:.....

2. Experience

Please tell us about your Christian experience/experiences in the church(es)/ organisation(s) in which you have been involved, including names, dates and detail of areas of your involvement:

Please give details of your previous experience of working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. This should include any relevant qualifications.

3. References

Please complete the details below of two people who would be willing to provide a personal reference. If you are currently working (paid or voluntary), one of these should be your present employer. We reserve the right to take up character references from any other individuals deemed necessary.

Name: Name:

Address: Address:

Post Code: Post Code:

Tel No: Tel No:

Role: Role:

Relationship: Relationship:

4. Declaration

I confirm that the submitted information is correct and complete.

I understand and agree to the conditions involving a Criminal Disclosure Check and agree, if I am appointed, to make an application through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

I have sent the self-declaration form to the Recruiter in a separate, sealed envelope.

Signed: Date:

Please return this form to the person responsible for appointing volunteers

As an organisation we undertake to meet the requirements of the UK GDPR and relevant data protection legislation, and all legislation in relation to criminal record disclosures.

Form 2: Self-declaration form for a voluntary position requiring a disclosure

Strictly confidential

As a place of worship/organisation, we undertake to meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation, and the expectations of the Information Commissioners Office relating to the data privacy of individuals.

All applicants/volunteers are asked to complete this form, detach it from the Application Form, and return it **to the Recruiter detailed below, in a separate sealed envelope***

Name and address of the recruiter:

Name of the candidate:

Voluntary position applied for:

DECLARATION OF CRIMINAL HISTORY

Do you have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not “protected” as defined by the rehabilitation of offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975 (as amended in 2013) by SI 2013 1198

Yes No (please tick)

Do you have any unspent convictions; or are you at present the subject of a criminal investigation/ pending prosecution?

Yes No (please tick)

If yes, please give details including the nature of the offences and the dates.

Have you ever been the subject of a police investigation that didn't lead to a criminal conviction (and is not subject to DBS filtering rules)? (see notes)

Yes No (please tick)

Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding your conduct with children, young people, and vulnerable adults?

Yes No if yes, please give details.

**If preferred you may return this form to the Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel Office,
Unit 1, Vale Parc, Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh LL16 5TA*

DECLARATION

I (full name) of (address)

.....
 consent to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if appointed to the position for which I have applied. I am aware that details of pending prosecutions, previous convictions, cautions, or bind overs against me may be disclosed along with any other relevant information which may be known to the police.

I agree to inform the person within the place of worship/organisation responsible for processing my applications if I am convicted of an offence after I take up any post within the place of worship/organisation. I understand that failure to do so may lead to the immediate suspension of my work with children or vulnerable adults and/or the termination of my employment.

I agree to inform the person within the place of worship/organisation responsible for processing my application if I become the subject of a police and/or a social services/(Children’s Social Care or Adult Social Services)/Social Work Department investigation. I understand that failure to do so may lead to the immediate suspension of my work with children or vulnerable adults and/or the termination of my employment.

Signed: Date:

Notes:

*The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provides that certain spent convictions and cautions are ‘protected’ and not subject to disclosure to employers, and can not be taken into account. The guidelines and criteria on the filter of these warnings and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>
 *<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/filtering-rules-for-criminal-record-check-certificates>
 **https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/148542/rehabilitationoffenders.pdf*

Form 3: Individual applicant checklist

Name:

Role:

Action required	Date	Initials
Application form		
..... Issued		
..... Returned		
Discussion/interview about the role:		
Self-declaration form		
Qualifications checked (delete if not relevant)		
Written references:		
..... Requested (number)		
..... Received (number)		
DBS Check:		
DBS form requested from Interdenominational Safeguarding Panel		
Issued to applicant with completion guidance		
Completed by applicant		
I.D. verified and forms sent to panel office		
Clearance received from panel office		
Training:		
Note training courses attended and dates		
Probationary period begins:		
Probationary period due to end:		
Notes including decision – notes on probationary period etc.:		

Form 4: Reference letter and form

Dear

Re: Reference Request for **[Name of Applicant]**

The above named person has applied to be a worker with the children/young people/vulnerable adults at
..... [*name of place of worship/organisation*]

As I am sure you are aware, before we can accept anyone to work with children/ vulnerable adults*, whether on a voluntary or paid basis, we must be sure that they are suitable. This applicant has given your name as a referee.

I would be grateful if you could give your opinion of the person's suitability for the post by completing the enclosed form and return it in the pre-paid envelope as soon as possible. A description of the job/role is enclosed.

Please note that this position is exempt from Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order as applicable in the UK). It is not, therefore, in any way contrary to the Act to reveal any information you may have concerning convictions which would otherwise be considered "spent".

Any information you are able to give will be kept in strictest confidence and used only in consideration of the suitability of the applicant for this position.

Should you require any further information do not hesitate to contact

on telephone number

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

**Reference Form for those working with children or vulnerable adults
Private and Confidential.**

REFERENCE FOR:

POSITION APPLIED FOR:

Your name:

Occupation:

How long have you known this person?

In what capacity?

1. Does this applicant have any previous experience of looking after or working with children and young people/vulnerable adults* or with any other groups in a responsible or caring capacity?

Yes (please give details) No

2. The position for which this person is being considered gives substantial access to children/and young people/ vulnerable adults. * To your knowledge, is there any reason why this person should not be entrusted with care of children/vulnerable adults? If so, please provide details.

Yes (please give details) No

3. Does the applicant have any health problems, mental or physical, which might affect the person's work with children/vulnerable adults?

Yes No

If yes, please give more details including any additional support or supervision that the applicant may need

Please use additional sheets if necessary

Signed: Date:

Thank you for your help.

Please return this form to:

*delete as applicable

Form 5: General information and consent form (under 11's)

Place of Worship/Organisation:

Group (including usual time and day):

Full name of child:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Name of GP: Tel No:

Address:

Date of last anti-tetanus injection, if known:

Details of any regular medication, medical problem (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, allergies, dietary needs, etc.) or disability which may affect normal activity. Also details of any additional information that the leader may need to support and care for the child effectively.

I agree to advise the group leaders in writing if any of the above details change.

Name of parents/carers:

Tel no: Day..... Eve

Parent/ carer Mobile 1: Parent /carer Mobile 2:

Additional contact (grandparent etc. or other holding parental responsibility)

Name: Tel no:

If you do not have parental responsibility (e.g. you are a foster carer/grandparent etc.) please give details of those with parental responsibility

Name(s): Tel no:

Address:

.....

**I give permission for (name)
to take part in the normal activities of this group.**

I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group. I understand that while involved he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and/or other adults approved by the place of worship/organisation leadership, and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take all reasonable care of the children, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of, the activity.

I give permission for medical treatment to be administered in the case of an emergency.

Whenever medical advice or treatment is needed, the assistance of a GP or A&E Department of a hospital should be sought. The Children Act 1989 allows a doctor to provide any necessary treatment by doing 'what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'. However, the parent/carer will be contacted and advised of the situation as soon as possible.

Transport

Unless specific arrangements have been agreed, the leaders of the group will not be responsible for transporting the child to and from the group. Any arrangements between parents to share transport will be private arrangements.

In the event of an emergency or in order to seek medical assistance, the child may be transported in the leader's or other approved adult's car.

Accident/Incident reporting: Any accidents/incidents will be noted in the church accident/incident record and also discussed with the parent and carer as soon as possible.

Signed: Date:

This information will be used and stored in line with UK GDPR regulations

Form 6: General information and consent form - including electronic communications (over 11's)

Place of Worship/Organisation:

Group (including usual time and day):

Full name of child/young person:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Name of GP: Tel No:

Address:

Date of last anti-tetanus injection, if known:

Details of any regular medication, medical problem (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs, etc.) or disability which may affect normal activity: Also details of any additional information that the leader may need to support and care for the young person effectively.

I agree to advise the group leaders in writing if any of the above details change.

I agree to advise the group leaders in writing if any of the above details change.

Name of parents/carers:

Tel no: Day..... Eve

Parent/ carer Mobile 1: Parent /carer Mobile 2:

Additional contact (grandparent etc. or other holding parental responsibility)

Name: Tel no:

If you do not have parental responsibility (e.g. you are a foster carer/grandparent etc.) please give details of those with parental responsibility

Name(s): Tel no:

Address:

.....

I give permission for (name)
to take part in the normal activities of this group.

I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group. I understand that while involved he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and/or other adults approved by the place of worship/organisation leadership, and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take all reasonable care of the children, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of, the activity.

I give permission for medical treatment to be administered in the case of an emergency.

Whenever medical advice or treatment is needed, the assistance of a GP or A&E Department of a hospital should be sought. The Children Act 1989 allows a doctor to provide any necessary treatment by doing 'what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'. However, the parent/carer will be contacted and advised of the situation as soon as possible.

Transport

Unless specific arrangements have been agreed, the leaders of the group will not be responsible for transporting the young people to and from the group. Any arrangements between parents to share transport will be private arrangements.

In the event of an emergency or in order to seek medical assistance, the young person may be transported in the leader's or other approved adult's car.

Accident/Incident reporting: Any accidents/incidents will be noted in the church accident/incident record and also discussed with the parent and carer as soon as possible.

Signed: Date:

Optional section:

Consent for Electronic Communication with children & young people

Many children and young people communicate electronically via, mobile, email and the internet social media sites and this can make organisation faster and more convenient.

Please note that, as Facebook is not intended for use for those under 13, it will not be used to contact children under 13.

Do you give permission for youth workers to communicate with your child via these methods?

If you do not give permission, your child will not be at any disadvantage and the leaders will contact you to make arrangements.

I give permission for my child and the youth/children's workers to communicate using /mobile/ email/ or internet for the purpose of arranging children/youth activities.

Or

I do not give permission for my child and the youth/children's workers to communicate using mobile/ email/internet for the purpose of arranging children/youth activities.

(Please delete any forms of communication you do not give permission for)

Signed: Date:

November 2013 Based on CCPAS form – used with permission

This information will be used and stored in line with UK GDPR regulations

Form 7: Special activity information and consent form

Church /Organisation: Group:.....

GIVE DETAILS OF THE ACTIVITY AND ANY COST:

Full name of child/young person:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Name of parents/carers and contact details:

Parent/ carer 1:.....

Parent /carer 2:.....

**I give permission for (name)
to take part in the above named activity.**

I understand that, while involved, he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and/or other adults approved by the church/organisation leadership and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take all reasonable care of the children, they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of the activity.

I give permission for medical treatment to be administered in the case of an emergency.

However, the parent/carers should be contacted and advised of the situation as soon as possible.

Please note below any medical conditions or disability, regular medication and any additional information that the leader may need to care for the child effectively during the above named activity.

Transport

Unless specifically agreed otherwise in advance and noted below, you are responsible for transport to the above activity. The leader will transport the child if necessary in the event of an emergency.

I give permission for my child to be transported *to and from the activity/in the event of an emergency (delete as appropriate)

In signing below you are agreeing for your child to take part in this activity, for medical advice or treatment to be sought if necessary, and for the leader to transport your child as noted above.

Signed: (parent/carers) Date:

Form 8: Consent for use of images

(Over 18's may complete this form themselves)

I, the (relationship/ position)

of: (Child/ Young person's full name)

Hereby give (name of church or organisation)
permission to use any still and/or moving image being video footage, photographs and/or frames and/or
audio footage depicting the above named child/young person and taken on behalf of the organisation.

If this permission is related to a specific event and date please note here E.g specific outing or activity

We use images such as these to help us raise awareness of the work of the organisation or for publicity purposes or to share information. The above consents will apply for a year from the date below unless otherwise stated.

Signed: Date:

Address:

.....

Please return this form to:

Form 9: Accident and incident form

This form should be completed immediately after any accident or significant incident. The worker should discuss with the appropriate leader for the group/activity what follow up action is necessary.

Day, date and time of the incident

Names of those involved in the incident

.....

Where did this incident take place?

Describe the accident/incident (include injuries received and any first aid or medical treatment given):

Who witnessed the incident? (Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and ages if under 16)

.....

Have you retained any defective equipment?

YES NO NONE INVOLVED (Please tick)

If yes, where is it being kept and by whom?

.....

What action have you taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident?

.....

Is the site or premises still safe for your group to use YES NO (Please tick)

Is the equipment still safe for your group to use? YES NO (Please tick)

Who else do you need to inform?

Have they been informed? YES NO (Please tick)

If so, when and by whom?

Signature of person in charge of group at time of accident/incident:

Signed: Print Name: Date:

Form seen by: (State role e.g. Church Minister, elder, deacon)

Signed: Print Name: Date:

November 2013 Based on CCPAS form – used with permission

Form 10: Risk assessment form

Church/Chapel

Activity/Circumstances to be assessed – brief description

.....

Risk associated with the activity

.....

High Low or medium risk

.....

Who is at risk? (Members of the public, children, vulnerable adults, members of staff etc.)

.....

Current measures to control the risk

.....

Further action necessary

.....

Date Assessment done

Date due for monitoring

Name Signature

It is advisable to review a Risk Assessment when necessary, or at least annually

See also guidelines appendix 4

Form 11: Reporting a concern form

Report concerning: (name) Child Adult

Current Address of child/vulnerable adult:

Contact number: Date of Report:

Is the vulnerable adult aware of this report? No Yes

Do you have authority to share this report? No Yes

Information which prompts the report

Where did it happen?

Describe the alleged abuse/any injury

Have steps been taken to protect anyone?

The individual suspected of committing the alleged abuse (if known)

Name: Contact Number:

Address:

Is he/she aware of this report? No Yes

Relevant witness (if any)

Name: Contact Number:

Address:

The person who has completed this form

Name: Contact Number:

Address:

Date and time when the form was completed:

Signature:

