

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 :-

SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR: * _____ (Name)

Contact details _____

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING DEACON /ELDER/ TRUSTEE _____ (Name)

Contact details _____

Dated _____

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. 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 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 page 3 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 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 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 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.