

Trinity Community Church

Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

Trinity Community Church is committed to provide a caring and supportive environment for all its users. It believes that young or vulnerable people should be safeguarded from harm and will respond to all cases of suspected abuse. The church will take steps to minimise the risk or protect people from further harm.

Statement of Principles

The Church accepts that it has a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of its users under the age of 18 and its vulnerable adults i.e. those with learning difficulties, illnesses or have significant disabilities which render them unable to have capacity to make logical and moral decisions. The Church will:-

- establish a safe environment in which all people can worship and develop,
- provide people with information so as to make them aware of how to keep themselves safe,
- ensure people know who they can approach if they are concerned.
- maintain clear procedures to identify and refer suspected cases of abuse and harm, ensuring all staff are aware of and follow Trinity Community Church Safeguarding Protection Procedures,
- link with appropriate agencies to safeguard any children or adults, who are a concern,
- adopt appropriate recruitment procedures, including arrangements for checks on staff and volunteers working with young people and vulnerable adults.
- provide up-to-date safeguarding related training for all staff and volunteers working or visiting children and vulnerable adults,
- collect information about available services in order to provide appropriate support

Responsibilities and Duties

The Church has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 & 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of its users. The Church accepts that recognition of abuse can be very difficult to identify and staff and volunteers are encouraged to talk to the Safeguarding Officer, in the absence of the SO staff can contact a Deputy or the Pastor/Vicar. It is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person over the age of 18, in a position of trust i.e. a leader of Junior Church or Youth Work, to enter into a sexual relationship with any person under 18 years old, even if the relationship is consensual the Safeguarding Officer would ask for the relationship to end immediately and the member of staff would stand down from their duties. The church would then report the matter to the authorities.

The church will meet the needs, where reasonably practicable, of all vulnerable adults who wish to join church activities. Every case will be discussed on an individual basis and procedures put in place. Group leaders will be informed of any special circumstances.

Protection Procedures – responding to a disclosure of abuse or neglect

The Church is an agent for referral and it is not the responsibility of any member of staff or volunteer to investigate any suspected case of abuse. The Church will ensure that all safeguarding concerns are acted upon in accordance with the joint agency policy for the Anglican and Baptist Church. It is the responsibility of all staff or volunteer to record and report protection concerns. If staff have heard rumours of abuse or suspicion without firm evidence staff should contact the Safeguarding Officer.

Church staff when either receiving a disclosure of abuse or suspecting that abuse is occurring must notify the Safeguarding Officer without delay. The person should be notified that confidentiality cannot be offered, as it is a legal obligation to inform the Safeguarding Officer; however only those who need to know should be told. Staff must not ask leading questions, make suggestions or attempt to investigate the situation themselves. If a person tells a member of staff abuse is taking place he/she should be acknowledged, taken seriously and listened to. Some may not disclose directly and it is important that staff are aware of signs of abuse and report concerns. Also some vulnerable adults may not be clear about whether they are experiencing abuse.

All documentation and details must remain confidential and be discussed on a 'need to know' basis. The church member of staff receiving the disclosure must make an accurate record. This written record must be sent in a sealed envelope to the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hrs. No copies should be made of any details of the disclosure. The reporting form should be completed as fully as possible.

The Safeguarding Officer will contact the relevant Duty Team, if needed, following up this telephone contact within 24 hours with a Professional Referral Form as required.

The Safeguarding Officer should expect to receive feedback as to what action is being taken by the Duty Team within 72 hours of the Duty Team receipt of the referral, upon which an appropriate level of detail (which is individual to each case), will be communicated by the Safeguarding Officer to the member of Church staff who raised the concern.

Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

Trinity will respond to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse respecting the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of any accused Church Officer including clergy. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the inquiry. As the process progresses additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered.

Trinity will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families, parishes and congregations affected by Church Officers facing allegations and concerns.

Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Church, based on the message of the Gospel, opens its doors to all. It will endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community whom may present a known risk.

The Church will assure that any risk is assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with House of Bishops policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law,

Ensuring a safe workforce

Church staff and volunteers who may have regular or close contact with young people and vulnerable adults will be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) procedures. Staff will apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the Safeguarding Officer. The enhanced disclosure will be kept for three years. After this period the staff member or volunteer must re-apply via application from the Safeguarding Officer.

Allegations involving Church Staff /Volunteers

If allegations of abuse involve a member of staff, steps must be taken to ensure the person does not need to have contact with him/her and the Church's SO will be informed. The alleged will be suspended from all work with church users and young children and will be investigated by outside agency teams. The Pastor/Vicar will support the alleged whilst the SO will support the young person or church user through the process. Investigations will not be carried out by other church members.

Training

Church staff, volunteers and all those who come into contact with the young people and vulnerable adults will have access to Safeguarding Training at a level appropriate to their role. All staff require training every three years and must familiarise themselves with protection issues and responsibilities and this policy. All Safeguarding Training is compulsory. Staff member's attendance in undertaking this training is monitored by the ECC and Safeguarding Officer. Any staff or volunteer who do not comply to attend compulsory training will be asked to stand down from their role within Church.

Explanation of key Terms

Adult	A person over the age of 18 years
Abuse	Suffering, or being at risk to suffering significant harm. A violation of a persons' human or civil rights, the misuse of power.
Checks	There will be checks of identity by the Data Barring Service
Child or young person	A person under the age of 18
Emotional	Where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth.
Financial abuse	Abuse or exploitation financially including fraud and extortion.

Harm	Ill treatment or the impairment of health or development.
Neglect	Persistent or severe failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of a person's health or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation.
Physical	Causes harm to a person. It may involve hitting shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or by a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.
Sexual	Involves a person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the person to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the person is irrelevant.
Vulnerable adults	People over 18 who are affected by mental ill-health, have a learning difficulty or disability or a physical disability or impairment. This can also apply to adults who are considered vulnerable due to significant difficulties in their lives. Any person at any time can become vulnerable due to temporary issues that render them unable to have capacity to make rational and logical decisions.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be maintained and reviewed by the Safeguarding Officer and the ECC.

Originated by Adele Cox Safeguarding Officer : _____

Accepted by:

Church Warden: _____ Date: _____

Church Warden: _____ Date: _____

Review Date: November 2020 Or when new legislation becomes current.