

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS 2019

This document was last updated in February 2019

INTRODUCTION

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.

This document sets out the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult's policy of Nxtion Family. Nxtion Family's safeguarding policy statement is based on 5 foundations and offers 6 overarching policy commitments:

- Promoting a Safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. We consider that the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice in order to protect vulnerable people in our church.

We will cooperate with the statutory authorities in any investigation, will follow multi-agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We will refer concerns about staff - volunteers and paid, lay and ordained - that meet the relevant criteria to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

AIM AND PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised involving children and adults within our church, or those who attend our activities and events.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Pastors and applies to:

- all those who attend our church
- our trustees and staff (both paid and voluntary)
- Organisations who hire our building with the agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy
- Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy and our procedures.
- The term 'children' refers to those under the age of 18 years.

DUTY OF CARE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

We have a duty of care to all members/ visitors of the church, whether adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality at all times, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm.

PREVENTING ABUSE

The church will appoint Safeguarding and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator(s) for safeguarding children and adults. Both roles are members of Nxtion Family's Legacy Builders Department.

Activities will be organised in accordance with Nxtion Family's good practice guidelines so as to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimising opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusation. For each event, risk assessments will be carried out, appropriate consent forms will be used (for children's activities), appropriate records will be kept and adequate insurance will be in place.

WHAT ARE WE PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. A copy of the definitions relating to children and adults is within this policy.

HOW TO RECOGNISE ABUSE

It is important to be aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories of abuse.

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

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

If a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and / or an allegation of abuse against someone, it is important that the person being told;

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling.
- Does not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Explains that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- Does not promise to keep secret what they have been told.
- Informs the church Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, inform the Deputy or the Lead Safeguarding Officer).
- Makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record. This should be given to the church Safeguarding Coordinator and stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.

Procedure in the event of a concern of abuse If there is an immediate threat of harm, the Police should be contacted without delay.

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

- The concern should be discussed with the church Safeguarding Coordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to the statutory authorities.
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and the circumstances surrounding it. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory authorities if a referral is made.
- The person about whom the allegation is made must not be informed by anyone in the church if it is judged that to do so could place a child or adult at increased risk. If the statutory authorities are involved, they should be consulted beforehand.
- The Lead Safeguarding Officer should be kept informed of any serious concerns.

IF SOMEONE IN THE CHURCH IS ALLEGED OR KNOWN TO HAVE HARMED CHILDREN OR ADULTS

We will inform the Lead Safeguarding Officer so that they can offer advice and support, and we will contact the relevant statutory authority.

IF THE ALLEGATION CONCERNS A CHURCH STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

For any concerns relating to children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales will be contacted. The timing and method of any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the LADO. This will cover communication with the worker, suspension, investigation and possible strategy meetings. A decision will be taken by the LADO about when to inform the worker and the church will follow this advice.

For concerns relating to adults, Adult Social Care will be contacted.

In accordance with the law, a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) if the church withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with children / adults at risk OR would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a different position because the employer believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct, satisfied the harm test, or committed an offence that would lead to automatic inclusion on a barred list.

In such cases, a report will also be made to the Charity Commission, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and therefore require notification. Concerns, Complaints and Compliments