



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Policy Summary

This policy sets out the principles of safeguarding and procedures to be followed by all Faith at Work in Worcestershire (FWW) volunteers and staff. Its aim is to:

- Safeguard children and vulnerable adults that those working with FWW have contact with
- Set down clear procedures for protecting children and vulnerable adults
- Safeguard FWW staff and volunteers from becoming victims of abuse or having false allegations of abuse made against them
- Describe how FWW will work with partner organisations (including denominational bodies, churches, businesses and organisations where chaplains visit) and which have their own Safeguarding Policies
- Train staff and volunteers in safeguarding procedures and practice, as set out in this policy, including when they join the organisation and at regular intervals thereafter.

Document Version Control

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1) INTRODUCTION

Every vulnerable person deserves to be safe and secure in their life and activities. Faith at Work in Worcestershire (FWW) believes that every human being has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ.

Amongst other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm. God's Church is intended to be a place where men, women and children, including those who are hurt and damaged, may find healing and wholeness. It is the Christian calling to be agents of healing and justice in such a way that enables all who have suffered from abuse to lead lives with dignity, in a community of peace.

FWW seldom works with children or vulnerable people in a one to one, unsupervised situation. Nevertheless, FWW has put in place safeguards to protect children, young people or vulnerable adults. FWW has also put in place safeguards to avoid putting their staff and volunteers in positions where abuse might be alleged, and to ensure that all know exactly what to do should abuse be suspected. FWW believes it is important to not only protect the vulnerable from abuse but to actively promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults - not just to protect, but to safeguard. FWW will work in partnership with the policies and procedures of places where chaplaincy takes place, and other organisations to do this.

2) FWW VALUES FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

A Child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined by the Children Act 1989 when addressing issues of abuse. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this document. Although 16-18 year olds are legally able to give their consent to sexual activity, they may nevertheless be harmed by those who are responsible for them and whom they trust:

*"The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders' Institution, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989."*¹

Our values in working with children:

- The needs of the child are paramount and should underpin all child protection work.
- All children and young people have the right to grow up in a caring and safe environment.
- Children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse of all types, and to expect that adults in positions of responsibility will do everything possible to foster those rights.

In the course of workplace chaplaincy chaplains would only very rarely come into contact with children under the age of 16. They are more likely to have contact with those aged 16 – 18 who may be employed in the workplace they visit, particularly in the case of some industries such as the retail industry. Even though such occurrences are unusual, FWW will maintain the highest standards of safeguarding policy and practice in respect of all children and young people because such contact is possible.

3) FWW VALUES FOR SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person "who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation."² For the purposes of this policy, this category can be extended to those in temporary emotional distress, which in many cases can render an individual susceptible to manipulation or exploitation. A chaplain may encounter such people who might be described as 'temporarily vulnerable'.

¹ Paragraph 1.19 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' HM Government Department for children, schools and families. March 2010.

² 'No secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse' HM Government, Department of Health 2000 paragraph 2.3

Our values within our work with such people are:

- **Privacy:** The right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention into their affairs.
- **Dignity:** Recognition of the intrinsic value of people regardless of circumstances by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs and by treating them with respect.
- **Independence:** Opportunities to act and think without reference to another person, including a willingness to incur a degree of calculated risk.
- **Choice:** Opportunity to select independently from a range of options.
- **Justice and Rights:** The maintenance of all entitlements associated with citizenship.
- **Fulfilment:** The realisation of personal aspirations and abilities in all aspects of daily life.
- **Valuing Diversity:** Respect for different cultures, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, religions, ages, genders, and sexual preferences.
- **Safety:** No-one should be expected or allowed to work or live in an unsafe environment in respect of their physical or emotional safety.

4) FWW SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES & GUIDANCE

a) Chaplaincy Contact with Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults

FWW chaplains may work with children, young people and vulnerable adults directly and indirectly through their chaplaincy work of visiting. Chaplains may build strong relationships on the basis of providing a listening ear. Chaplains should pay particular attention to the following:

- Chaplains should avoid situations where they are alone with children or vulnerable adults.
- If someone asks for a private meeting in the workplace care should be taken in choosing a place where others may observe, whilst not overhearing, the conversation. Alternatively, a chaplain might meet someone away from the workplace, in which case this should happen in a public space, such as a coffee shop or open space. This is to protect both parties from unfounded allegations of abuse.
- Chaplains should avoid physical contact, or language, that might be misconstrued.
- Chaplains should not offer any form of private meeting or relationship, or on-line/social media contact beyond the context of chaplaincy.
- Chaplains receiving abuse disclosure, or with concerns about safeguarding, should report these within the structure of the organisation hosting chaplaincy, in the first instance, and inform the local FWW Team Leader, and the FWW Development Officer, that this referral has been made.
- In the case that the host organisation does not have a clear procedure, or there is not a clear line of reporting, the local FWW Team Leader and FWW Development Officer should be informed in the first instance.
- If a Chaplain believes a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, they should either contact Social Services or the police, as well as informing the host organisation and the FWW Development Officer.
- All allegations of abuse against a chaplain, however minor, are to be reported to the FWW Development Officer, who is the FWW Safeguarding Officer.

b) Preventing Opportunities for Abuse

Most FWW staff and volunteer posts are not eligible for DBS checking under the current guidelines. If a chaplaincy assignment is with an organisation which involves the chaplain in regular and significant contact with children/vulnerable adults (e.g. where there are employees under the age of 18 or where employees fall within the definition of persons “who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness . . .” rather than those who might be experiencing ‘temporary emotional distress’, and are therefore temporarily vulnerable) the role is eligible for a DBS check. In these circumstances an enhanced check will be made by FWW, with the administrative support of one of the regional bodies of the five partner denominations (Diocese, District etc).

FWW aims to:

- Work with the host organization to make sure that chaplains adhere to local safeguarding practices.
- Make its safeguarding policy available, and ensure all chaplains adhere to this policy. Sanctions may be taken against Chaplains who fail to abide by this policy, notably a withdrawal of accreditation.
- Provide FWW staff and volunteers with training upon recruitment on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, *raising awareness of domestic abuse*³ and keeping themselves safe in a chaplaincy context, and refresher training *every 2 years*⁴.
- Review its safeguarding practice and policy annually.
- Ensure it practices Safer Recruitment⁵ in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work in the environment they are appointed to.

c) Safer Recruitment

Safer Recruitment means that FWW will:

- Ensure that the person responsible and authorized to appoint staff and volunteers is clear. For staff this shall be by the trustees or delegated by the trustees to the Development Officer. For volunteers the responsible person will be the Development Officer in conjunction with local lead chaplains.
- Provide a Job Description or Job Role which will include a statement on the principles and standards that should guide their work, including principles of safeguarding; clear lines of accountability and support; what the staff/volunteer can expect from FWW; a brief statement of their activities.
- Use a transparent and accountable process of recruitment and appointment. For staff and volunteers this will include an application form and interview, seeking at least 2 references, DBS checks and the completion of a Confidential Declaration as required. For volunteers the form and interview may be replaced with a discussion. One reference should be from their senior church minister/elder and volunteers should be endorsed and supported by their home church and a commissioning service held.
- Provide a letter of appointment, including a statement of FWW's safeguarding procedures and 'What to do if' guidance.⁶
- Include induction on the policies of FWW and initial and continuing training; to include safeguarding and health, safety and wellbeing.
- Supervision and regular review by persons assigned to this role by FWW. This will include an initial settling in period of 6 months, and regular annual review. To address any concerns of the staff/volunteer as to their confidence in fulfilling the assigned role and the support they receive from FWW, and any questions concerning their suitability for that role, particularly in respect of safeguarding. Extra meetings and supervision may be undertaken as needs arise.

³ Added to policy March 2025

⁴ Added to policy March 2022

⁵ Following the 'Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance' issued by the Joint Safeguarding Group of the Methodist Church and Church of England July 2016.

⁶ See Appendix B

Appendix A: DEFINITIONS OF TYPES OF ABUSE

1. Physical Abuse of Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

Physical Abuse – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained injuries – bruises / abrasions / lacerations ▪ The account of the accident may be vague or may vary from one telling to another ▪ Unexplained burns ▪ Regular occurrence of unexplained injuries <p>Most accidental injuries occur on parts of the body where the skin passes over a bony protrusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Withdrawn or aggressive behavioural extremes ▪ Uncomfortable with physical contact ▪ Seems afraid to go home ▪ Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably ▪ Wears clothing inappropriate for the weather, in order to cover body ▪ The interaction between the child, vulnerable adult and its carer

2. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's or vulnerable adults health or development. Neglect may involve a parent/carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter;
- Protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

Neglect – Indicators	
Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unattended medical need ▪ Underweight or obesity ▪ Recurrent infection ▪ Unkempt dirty appearance ▪ Smelly ▪ Inadequate / unwashed clothes ▪ Consistent lack of supervision ▪ Consistent hunger ▪ Inappropriately dressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor social relationships ▪ Indiscriminate friendliness ▪ Poor concentration ▪ Low self-esteem ▪ Regularly displays fatigue or lethargic ▪ Frequently falls asleep ▪ Frequent unexplained absences

3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's or vulnerable adult's emotional development. Emotional Abuse is often to be a consequence of other forms of abuse and may involve:

- Conveying to children or a vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's or vulnerable adult's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child or vulnerable adult participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another;
- Serious bullying, causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults.

Emotional Abuse – Indicators	
<i>Physical Indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural Indicators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attachment relationship ▪ Unresponsive/neglectful behaviour towards the child's or vulnerable adults emotional needs ▪ Persistent negative comments about the child or vulnerable adult ▪ Inappropriate or inconsistent expectations ▪ Self harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low self-esteem ▪ Unhappiness, anxiety ▪ Withdrawn, insecure ▪ Attention seeking ▪ Passive or aggressive behavioural extremes

4. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual Abuse – Indicators	
<i>Physical Indicators</i>	<i>Behavioural Indicators</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign of blood / discharge on the child's or vulnerable adult's underclothing ▪ Awkwardness in walking / sitting ▪ Pain or itching – genital area ▪ Bruising, scratching, bites on the inner thighs / external genitalia ▪ Self harm ▪ Eating disorders ▪ Enuresis / encopresis ▪ Sudden weight loss or gain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexually proactive behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with a child's age & understanding ▪ Drawings & or written work that is sexually explicit ▪ Self harm / Suicide attempts ▪ Running away ▪ Substance abuse ▪ Significant devaluing of self ▪ Loss of concentration

5. Discriminatory forms of Abuse

This form of abuse involves direct or indirect discrimination of children or vulnerable adults because of their race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, mental health status or age.

Discriminatory Abuse – Examples:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of culturally or gender sensitivity in care practices • Access to services denied due to lack of disability awareness and access needs of members • No attempt to address language barriers • No provision of culturally sensitive food • No awareness of importance of faith festivals etc.

Appendix B

What to do if...

... you have concerns about possible abuse (including allegations):

1. In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
2. If you have concerns always consult with children's or adult care services.
3. Report it to the person to whom you are responsible in FWW and the FWW Development Officer.
4. Keep a record of what happened, your concerns and your actions.

... a child, young person or adult wishes to disclose they have been abused:

1. Listen. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate.
2. Do not promise confidentiality; tell them we need to share this.
3. Assure them they are not to blame.
4. Tell them what you are going to do and that they will be told what happens.
5. Make careful notes of what is said, record dates, times, events and when you are told.
6. Report it to the person to whom you are responsible in FWW and the FWW Development Officer.
7. Only tell those who need to know.

... you are the subject of an allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour:

1. Do not respond directly; tell the person you will be reporting the allegation, and withdraw immediately.
2. Make careful notes of what is said, including dates, times, events and when you are told.
3. Report it to the person to whom you are responsible in FWW and the FWW Development Officer.
4. Only tell those who need to know.

Things to remember:

1. Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example for others.
2. Respect personal space and privacy.
3. Ensure any actions cannot be misrepresented by someone else.
4. Challenge unacceptable behaviour.
5. Do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
6. Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
7. You must not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret.