

Matthews House, Safeguarding Policy
(Registered Charity of The Hill Church Swansea Charity No.1151797)
(Version 5 revised 10th January 2018)

Introduction and Purpose

All people have dignity and value before man and before God. We have a responsibility to care and protect one another from coming to any degree of harm - whether that be emotional, physical, financial, sexual or spiritual. The Charity is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable people. In developing our policy we recognise that the safety and welfare of the children, young people (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable person (over the age of 18) is paramount. No policy can specify each and every situation that may arise. Therefore the policy will always require situational interpretation and application. In view of this it is important to remember that the purpose of the policy, and therefore any interpretation and application, is to care for and protect those at risk of harm from coming anywhere close to that harm. The policy does this by identifying roles, responsibilities and best (or required) practice to achieve this end.

Harmed and Harmer

One challenge with a safeguarding policy is that the Charity expressly believes in both the recovery from harm of victims and the potential redemption from acts of harm by offenders. No such statement should be taken to mean that we will not put the welfare of victims or potential victims first and foremost in our practice. For example: no person who has been shown to cause such acts of harm, or there are probable grounds to believe that they may, will be permitted to work amongst children, young people or vulnerable person (18 years or older).

Any person who has been shown to cause such acts of harm, or there are probable grounds to believe that they may have, will be required to conform to a written *Pastoral Action Strategy* managed by a member of the Pastoral Leadership of the Charity. Failure to fully participate and comply with such a Strategy will result in immediate discipline and most likely a removal from the day-to-day running of the Charity. Such a Strategy will always be tailored to the circumstances. However, it will be developed with the agreement of the Senior Leadership and Trustees. It will have a regular review date and whilst it will have levels of confidentiality, it will be shared amongst the primary leadership of all those involved in Pastoral Care in the Charity.

External Support

We recognise that there are secular agencies and charities who are experts in safeguarding and abuse of trust, and in some cases have a duty by law to regulate and enforce practice and deal with breaches. We fully acknowledge them, thank them and will engage with them in a transparent and open manner. We recognise that we are not experts and therefore our policy and practice should be under constant review. This is done by subscription to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) which regularly advises our Safeguarding Team of best practice.

Gatekeeping

The Charity is a member of CCPAS. We shall use them as a source of advice, guidance and training resources. They are the provider we use for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). In order for a person to serve in the Charity, specifically with children, young people or vulnerable person (or in a position of pastoral authority or financial trust) we require that they are cleared first through the DBS. We have a dedicated Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who monitors and manages the DBS process. Stage Two to the process is that an applicant must provide two current written references supporting their service in that area of provision.

Finally, the Safeguarding Team will review either an application or applications and either agree, discuss, defer or decline the service. All applicants must agree to comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Practice of the Charity.

Best Practice

Working, being or meeting with children, young people or vulnerable person (in the context of the Charity, not just meetings) should not be in an isolated context - unless it is for very specific pastoral

reasons, which should be agreed beforehand with a member of the current Safeguarding Team in the Charity. Any such decision would need to be carefully considered, written down and reviewed by members of the Safeguarding Team. Any such note should record date, time, location, persons involved, circumstances and rationale for the decision.

Whilst it is difficult to define *isolated* it should be understood to mean a private, secluded or restricted context involving just one adult and one or two children. It is not intended to stop a server driving a group of children, young people or vulnerable person from one place to another. However, such a practice should be agreed by the Pastoral Leadership, as the Charity would want to avoid persons being 'dropped off' leaving a worker alone with the subjects of this policy.

Where there is any concern as to whether a particular practice conforms to the above, it should be understood that any such activity that is regularly happening (on 2 or more occasions) it should be reviewed by the relevant Leadership and then passed for approval to the Safeguarding Team.

Health and Safety

The Charity is committed to employing both deliberate and dynamic risk assessments. This approach is intended to protect from harm all persons and property under the specific care, responsibility and duty of The Charity.

Definition of Vulnerable Person

To a greater or lesser extent all of us are vulnerable. The degree of vulnerability can depend on any number of internal or external factors. It can be a permanent or temporary state and this should be borne in mind when applying this policy. However, it will always include any person aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

Procedures for Referrals

If any person connected either directly or indirectly to the Charity has any safeguarding concerns they should, at the earliest opportunity, refer it to one of the Safeguarding Team. Our role is not to investigate, but merely to establish basic facts, sufficient for advice or referral to any relevant agency. Should a disclosure be made to any persons by a child or vulnerable person, the listener should be very careful not to say anything that may suggest or prompt a particular answer. Anything said by the reporter should be recorded, using the actual words used by them. This record should be made available to a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team is made up of very experienced members who have worked in the safeguarding arenas for many years.

Hannah Lynch	Team Leader
Alison Ellerby	Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Annie Johnston	Safeguarding Co-ordinator
Robin Vincent	Safeguarding Team Member

Review Meeting

This should take place within the first six weeks of each calendar year. In addition, dynamic reviews shall take place at the request of any of the Trustees, Safeguarding Team or Senior Leadership Team. This is version 5 of the policy and is dated below.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Acting on behalf of the Team