



The Hill Church Swansea (Charity No.1151797) Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy replaces all previous policies connected to safeguarding in connection with The Hill Church Swansea (known hereafter as the charity) and its project Matthew's House.

The charity is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable people. Developing this policy, we recognised that the safety and welfare of the children, young people (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults (over the age of 18) is paramount.

We also recognise the need to ensure that volunteers, within any of the activities of the charity are in an environment which is safe and supports the individual in their particular role.

Policy statement

The primary legislation on Safeguarding in Wales is contained within the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 (SSWBA), Section 7, which was implemented in April 2016. This covers both adult and child protection. The definitions and terminology used in this policy will reflect this legislation. We recognise that other countries will have their own legislation, but as the charity operates primarily within Wales, this is the legislation that is relevant.

1. Definition of Safeguarding

The term *safeguarding* means a range of activities aimed at upholding an individual's fundamental right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding means enabling people to live their lives free from harm, abuse and neglect, and to have their health, wellbeing and human rights protected.

2. What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can be physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, neglect or financial. It may be intentional or unintentional. It causes harm to the individual, either temporarily or over a period of time. Abuse can be a single or repeated act; a lack of appropriate action; perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent; negligence or ignorance; and/or an action of omission (failing to act) or neglect.

3. Examples of abuse

Physical abuse - Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint or physical interventions.

Sexual abuse – Rape, sexual assault, sex trafficking, made to watch pornography where person lacks the capacity to consent or is pressured to engage in, any form of sexual activity where the person is unable to consent to or is pressured to do so.

Psychological abuse – Bullying, teasing, harassment, hurtful behaviour repeated over time, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse.

Verbal Abuse - Any language or behaviour that seeks to pressure its victim to doubt themselves and crush themselves to the abuser; Blatantly offensive language designed to humiliate and gain power over another person. Verbal abuse can also be silence.

Financial or material abuse – Fraud, theft, undue pressure to change a will, property or inheritance; misuse or misappropriation of benefits; “forcing” people to beg for money for the perpetrator.



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Neglect or acts of omission - Failure to access medical care or services; negligence in the face of risk taking; failure to give prescribed medication; poor nutrition or lack of heating.

Hate Crime - Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.

4. Definition of vulnerable adult (adult at risk)

The terminology *vulnerable adult* has, under the SSWBA been changed to *adult at risk*. Therefore, an adult at risk is identified as someone over the age of 18 years who:

- a) Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
- b) Has needs for care and support or *may* have needs (whether or not an authority is meeting any of those needs)
- c) As a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

5. Definition of a child at risk

This is a child who is:

- a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm
- b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

Recruitment and selection

The charity has a clear recruitment and selection process. This includes:

1. DBS checks are undertaken on all volunteers, as appropriate to their role.
2. Two satisfactory references received prior to appointment.
3. An interview with those responsible for the relevant area of work, alongside oversight from a member of the leadership of the charity.

In addition, for volunteers working within activities related to Matthew's House, the following is required:

1. Completion of an application form (appendix 1)
2. Attendance at an informal interview (appendix 2)
3. Participation in an induction programme (appendix 3)

Training

The charity recognises the importance of equipping its volunteers and enabling them to undertake their role responsibly and safely. As such the following is in place.

1. Training

- a) We aim to deliver child protection training is on an annual basis. This is always delivered by a volunteer within the charity who professionally works with children. The charity presently has limited involvement relating to direct work involving children (those under the age of 18), which doesn't necessitate an increase in the delivery of this training. However, if the situation changes then there is scope to increase the frequency of this training.



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- b) Adult Safeguarding training is undertaken on a quarterly basis. If there is a need to increase this frequency (for example, if there is an influx of new volunteers) then this can be facilitated. All MH volunteers are required to attend this training.
- c) This training was developed by a former member of the Safeguarding team of the charity who, for 14 years was the Safeguarding Adults Manager in a Local Authority in Wales and intrinsically involved in developing guidance and policy around Safeguarding Adults in Wales, prior to the inception of SSWBA.
- d) The training is delivered by the chair of the safeguarding team alongside the management team of Matthew's House.
- e) Refresher training is delivered on a 2-yearly basis with additional sessions if required.
- f) Safeguarding is a regular agenda item in Matthew House leadership team meetings.

2. Information

The charity recognises the need to provide information around safeguarding to its participants in activities. As such the following documents have been produced which are reviewed and revised as necessary.

- a) Code of Conduct for volunteers at Matthew's House (appendix 4)
- b) Safeguarding Booklet for Matthew's House (appendix 5)
- c) Volunteers at Matthew's House welcome letter (appendix 6)
- d) Safeguarding Booklet for participants of The Hill Church (appendix 7)

Staff responsibilities

It is acknowledged that Safeguarding is *everyone's* responsibility. However, there are individuals who have the responsibility of ensuring that the safeguarding policy and process is adhered to.

There is an experienced safeguarding team who meet twice a year, unless there are additional issues to discuss, when a meeting will be called as an emergency. Confidential minutes are taken of all discussions and stored on secure password protected software. During these meetings this policy and other documentation is reviewed and revised. Any proposed amendments are reported to the Trustees. Safeguarding matters are discussed and lessons learnt or best practice revised. The current version of the Safeguarding policy is stated at the end.

The charity safeguarding team comprises of the following people.

Hannah Lynch (Chair)

A registered social worker who works in a children and family setting in a busy urban Local Authority in Wales. As such she has extensive experience around child protection, child exploitation and child trafficking.

Alison Ellerby

A registered nurse and is a Children Looked After Nurse.

Hannah Vincent

Designated Safeguarding Lead at a large Comprehensive school and also manages the pastoral team who are responsible for student welfare.



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Reporting procedures

There is a clear recording process for all safeguarding issues or concerns.

All staff and volunteers receive Safeguarding training which covers the **4 R's**:

- Recognise
- Respond
- Record
- Report

This empowers and equips everyone to be confident in each of these areas. In addition, on the reverse of volunteers' name badges is a reminder of the 4 R's.

Within Matthew's House, there are copies of the safeguarding policy and all contact details. A copy of the policy is also kept on The Hill website as well as Matthew's House website.

There is a clear reporting process which all volunteers and staff are aware of. 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 or the project manager of Matthew's House.

Our role is not to investigate, but merely to establish basic facts, prior to contacting the relevant statutory 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. If a disclosure is made against a staff member or a volunteer, then the alerter will need to pass this information on immediately, where a decision will need to be made about the safety of that individual to continue to be present as a staff member or a volunteer while investigations occur. This is to protect that individual as well as any children or adults who may be at risk.

There may be occasions when volunteers have disclosed a past criminal offence and/or safeguarding issue, or an offence has been identified via the DBS process. This will not necessarily preclude an individual from volunteering at the charity, but discussion will take place between the individual and the leadership and safeguarding team to ensure that all are kept safe. A risk assessment will be carried out and reviewed as appropriate.

Contact details

1. If the issue is an emergency one and where there is actual harm sustained, then 999 is to be called immediately.
2. If not an emergency situation then the first point of contact for issues relating to Matthew's House should be the project manager or the project co-ordinator, unless they are not available, or it involves them in any way, or if you feel uncomfortable about talking to them about the matter.



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Alternatively, and if the reporter prefers, they may and can contact **any** of the following directly:

Hannah Lynch

Safeguarding Team Designated Officer

Safeguarding@the-hill.co

Swansea Social Services Adult Safeguarding

01792 636854

adult.safeguarding@swansea.gov.uk

Swansea Child Safeguarding

01792 635700

access.information@swansea.gov.uk

Social Services urgent out-of-hours team (formerly Emergency Duty Team)

01792 636888

In addition, the charity has a reciprocal arrangement with an independent charity to us, Reading Family Church. Their Safeguarding team will review any matter raised to them that relates to the charity. They can be contacted on 01189876278 and request to speak to their designated safeguarding point of contact.

This policy will be reviewed annually, unless there is a need to do so in the interim period.

This is version 16 of the Safeguarding Policy.



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Signed:

Name: Hannah Lynch

Date: 10.02.26

Safeguarding Chair and Designated Point of Contact

Signed:

Name:

Date:

A Trustee of the Charity acting for the board of the charity

Appendix List

- 1 – Matthew's House application form
- 2 – Matthew's House interview form
- 3 – Matthew's House induction form
- 4 – Code of Conduct for Matthew's House
- 5 – Safeguarding Booklet for Matthew's House
- 6 – Volunteers at Matthew's House welcome letter
- 7 – Safeguarding Booklet for The Hil