

ZINAFE

Promoting Safeguarding
Preventing Abuse
Protecting All – children and adults.

Safeguarding Policy
Children & Adults

Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that protecting people from abuse, harm or neglect is central to our culture. It provides procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children and adults at risk. 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 applies to:

- all members of our organisation
- all those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- our trustees, committee members and clergy

Our Values as per Church of England guidelines.

We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our community.

ZINAFE will:

- Promote a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others

Definitions

The terms 'children' and 'young people' refers to those under the age of 18 years.

The term 'adult at risk' refers to any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, are permanently, or for time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of the church, whether adults, children or young people. We will always maintain confidentiality, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm or abuse.

Preventing abuse

ZINAFE will appoint a National Safeguarding and Deputy Safeguarding Officer for safeguarding children and adults. A job/role description will be made available to these officers.

The Safeguarding Officer role is mandatory, and all branches will appoint a Safeguarding Officer accordingly. In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer, the branch Vice Secretary will assume interim safeguarding responsibilities. Where branches do not have a Vice

Secretary in post, the interim safeguarding responsibilities will fall to the Secretary. The substantive Safeguarding Officer role must be filled within 3 months of becoming vacant.

Activities will be organised in accordance with ZINAFE's safeguarding policy and guidance to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimising opportunities for harm or misunderstandings. For each event, risk assessments will be carried out which are signed off by the Branch and/or National Safeguarding Officers as appropriate. Accessible consent forms will be used (for children's activities or activities for people with additional needs), appropriate records will be kept, and adequate insurance will be in place. For children, the absence of a consent form being in place will result in the activity not going ahead.

We are committed to safer recruitment selection of all Trustees, clergy and committee members. We will treat members who have a criminal record fairly and will not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed and ensure that all safer recruitment-related procedures are followed, which include:

- obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks for eligible roles and positions
- interviewing new clergy
- providing trustees with written contracts.
- Liaising with the National/Deputy Safeguarding Officer in the event a member has a positive DBS.
- National/Deputy Safeguarding Officer will complete risk assessments for members with a positive DBS.
- Safeguarding contracts to be provided to members where there is identified risk or wherever deemed appropriate.

All trustees, clergy and committee members will work within a code of conduct and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or the termination of people's service.

If we become aware of someone within our congregation known to have harmed children or adults, we will inform the Branch Safeguarding Officer and Chairperson within 24 hours and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory authorities to put in place a plan to minimise the risk of harm to children, young people and adults.

How to recognise abuse

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

<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/-/media/services/vco/documents/pdf/signs%20and%20symptoms%20of%20abuse%20and%20neglect.pdf>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-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. There might be domestic abuse that requires a different approach. The indicators 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.

All members will pay attention to online safety and their electronic communications with children and adults. Grooming and abuse of any form can occur offline (both physically and verbally) and online. Appropriate supervision of minors by parents and /or guardians or those with delegated authority will be required at all times and valid consent to be in place for any and all activities involving children and young people under 18.

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 have been abused, it is important that the person being told:

- stays calm and listens carefully
- reassures 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 branch Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours (if they are implicated in the allegation, inform the National Safeguarding Officer)
- makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record using an incident reporting form.

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 will be discussed with the Branch Safeguarding Officer or the Chairperson **within 24 hours** and a decision needs to be made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to 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 further risk. If the statutory authorities are involved, they should be consulted beforehand.
- The National Safeguarding Officers and the Priest in Charge will be kept informed of any serious concerns and all referrals to police and statutory authorities.

Consideration will be given to consulting the child and the parent/carer before a referral is made. However, our duty to refer and the need to protect vulnerable groups will be prioritised. If the concern involves, for example alleged or suspected child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, Honour Based Violence, fabricated or induced illness, or the Local Authority or Safeguarding Officer has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing will be said to

the parent/carer ahead of the referral. A rationale for the decision to progress without consent will be provided with the referral.

In the case of referrals to adult social care or other services for adults at risk, information will be shared with consent if the adult has capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and if this does not place the referrer, them or others at an increased risk. A person's right to confidentiality is not absolute and may be overridden where there is evidence that sharing information is necessary to support an investigation or where there is a risk to others.

If the allegation is regarding a church committee member, clergy or Trustee

If someone in the church is alleged or known to harm/have harmed children or adults, the National Safeguarding Officers and the Priest in Charge will be informed so that they can offer advice and support.

For allegations against adults working with children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 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.

<https://national-lado-network.co.uk/the-role-of-the-lado-local-authority-designated-officer/>

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

In accordance with the law, a referral needs to be made to the DBS for consideration of barring to share information about any individual in regulated activity where for safeguarding reasons the organisation has either terminated their position, failed to appoint, or would have terminated the position had the individual not moved on through resignation. In such cases, the National Safeguarding Officers will be informed.

Depending on the seriousness of incidents or allegations, a report to the Charity Commission will also need to be considered at the management committee/trustees' meeting, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and require notification. This will be done by either the Trustees or the National Safeguarding Officer on their behalf. Serious Incidents, other than a referral to the DBS, will also be reported to the Charity Commission.

Managing those who may pose a risk to the welfare of people

The use of rigorous and careful supervision is paramount to protect people from the risks associated with known offenders within the congregation, including implementing safeguarding contracts with known or alleged offenders and those who have been assessed as posing a risk.

If anyone is made aware that a person attending their church has been convicted of an offence against a child or adult at risk, or has had an allegation of this nature made against them at any time, they must immediately inform the National Safeguarding Officer.

It is important to provide known or alleged offenders with a group of people who will offer support and supervision. Following advice from the National Safeguarding Officer, when

appropriate, a formal safeguarding contract will be drawn up between the church, the person who is considered to pose a risk to the welfare of people in the church, and any statutory agencies when involved. Specialist training will be provided by the National Safeguarding Officer to anyone supporting or supervising anyone known to pose a risk to vulnerable groups.

Training

Safeguarding training will be provided to committee members, clergy and Trustees. They will also be given support and supervision in their role. The Safeguarding Officer(s) should ensure that trustees committee members, clergy and people involved in regulated activities with children or adults have undergone safeguarding training, as recommended by the Church of England.

Safe storage of Personal Information

It shall be the responsibility of individual branch members and/or guilds to safely and correctly store information collected about members, including their contact details. Branch Chairpersons, Secretaries and Safeguarding Officers to oversee this process and ensure only those with a need to know have access to folders which contain the personal information of members.

Useful Contacts

Branch Safeguarding Officers will keep local records of how to contact the relevant Statutory safeguarding partners for the areas they cover.

All Safeguarding Officers to keep a record of the National Safeguarding Officers and how to contact them, should the need arise.

Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or compliments please contact:

Name

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Telephone No

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Email

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It would be helpful to have complaints in writing, as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing, complaints will be acted upon.

Any written complaint will be responded to within 20 days.

Key Contacts: Sources of advice and support

- The National **Safeguarding Officer** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations relating to children, young people or adults should be addressed:

Name Fadzai Tande-Mutasa

Telephone No 07581342488

Email fadzai.m@zinafe.org.uk

- In the absence of the National Safeguarding Officer, the **Deputy Safeguarding Officer** can be contacted:

Name Martha Matiza-Nyamurundira

Telephone No 07866773959

Email Martha.mm@zinafe.org.uk

- **ThirtyOne: Eight** (This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact the Safeguarding Officers and/or Chairpersons)

helpline: 0845 120 4550

Review

The Management Committee will review this policy annually, amending and updating it as required, and informing Church Meeting that this has been done.

Date of the most recent review: _____

Date of the next review: _____

Signed: _____

(on behalf of the Management Committee

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