

# The Christian Community in Great Britain

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

### General Policy Statement

The Christian Community in Great Britain recognises its duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults. We are committed to fulfilling the requirements of the **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012; The Care Act 2014** and other relevant legislation aimed at the protection of vulnerable adults.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “vulnerable adults”. This term is used to mean “those aged 18 and over”.

- 1.1 The Council of Management is committed to ensuring that the organisation
  - Provides a safe environment for vulnerable adults
  - Identifies vulnerable adults who are suffering
  - Takes appropriate action to see that such vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm
- 1.2 In pursuit of these aims, the governing body will approve and review policies and procedures with the aim of:
  - Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for the vulnerable adults and young people.
  - Providing procedures for reporting concerns
  - Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
  - The safe recruitment of staff
- 1.3 The organisation has nominated Revd.Siobhan Porter as designated person with special responsibility for vulnerable adults protection issues. She will undertake appropriate training. This person is a member of the Executive Committee.
- 1.4 Staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults will receive training adequate to familiarise them with vulnerable adults’ protection issues and responsibilities and the organisations procedures and policies, with refresher training at least every 3 years. If appropriate there will be also be a member of the management team or volunteer who may through their employment background have particular expertise in vulnerable adults protection issues. He/she may be delegated by the management committee.
- 1.5 The Council of Management will receive from the designated person with lead responsibility for vulnerable adult’s protection an annual report which reviews how the duties have been discharged.

## 2. The governing body recognises the following as definitions of abuse:

### 2.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse causes harm to a vulnerable adult’s person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

### **2.3 Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the vulnerable adult's health or development.

### **2.4 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves a vulnerable adults or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the vulnerable adults to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the vulnerable adults is irrelevant.

### **2.5 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the vulnerable adult's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

### **2.6 Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse may be emotional or physical and occurs in the home from one or more members of the household towards others in the household.

## **3. 'Relevant conduct' under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

3.1 In addition, the governing body accepts the following definitions of relevant conduct under Schedule 3 of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 in relation to the barring of those who pose of a risk of harm to vulnerable adults. A relevant conduct is a conduct which must be referred to the DBS and which could lead to a barring decision. It includes any:

- conduct which endangers a child or vulnerable adult or is likely to endanger a child or vulnerable adult
- conduct which if repeated against or in relation to a child or vulnerable adult would endanger that child or vulnerable adult
- conduct involving sexual material relating to children (including possession of such material)
- conduct involving sexually explicit images depicting violence against human beings
- conduct of a sexual nature involving a child or vulnerable adult (or in the case of a vulnerable adult - an act that is considered inappropriate)

## **4. Protecting vulnerable adults under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.1**

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Chapter 5 defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 and over who is in receipt of any of the following services –

- a. health care from a regulated health care professional - provided by, or under the direction or supervision of a regulated health care professional
- b. Personal care for adults involving hands-on physical assistance - with washing and dressing, eating, drinking and toileting; prompting and supervising an adult with any of these tasks because of their age, illness or disability; or teaching someone to do one of these task
- c. Assistance with social care - provision by a social care worker of social work which is required in connection with any health services or social services
- d. Assistance with paying bills, shopping because of age, illness or disability arranged via 3<sup>rd</sup> party
- e. Help with conducting own affairs under a formal appointment

- f. Being conveyed for reasons of age, illness or disability to a place where they will receive health care, personal care or social work arranged by a third party

#### **4.1 Regulated Activity with Vulnerable Adults under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**

- a. Anyone providing a vulnerable adult with any of the above services in paragraph D 1 is considered to be undertaking a regulated activity under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and must therefore have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check in order to perform the role.
- b. Note that the specified establishment (a care home) has been removed by the protection of Freedoms Act. The focus is now on activities needed by the vulnerable adult, not where the activity takes place.
- c. An individual only needs to engage in the activities listed above once to be carrying out regulated activity relating to adults.
- d. The definition focuses on those activities which are required by any adult at any given point, this means that an adult is considered vulnerable at the point of receiving them and may not be a vulnerable adult once the service ceases.
- e. Note that a person whose role includes the day-to-day management or supervision of any person engaging in regulated activity, is also in regulated activity even if they are not directly involved in providing the service.
- f. Note also that regulated activity relating to adults excludes any activity carried out in the course of family relationships, and personal, non-commercial relationships.

#### **5. Person with lead responsibility for protection of vulnerable adults**

The designated person with lead responsibility for vulnerable adults protection issues is Revd. Siobhan Porter. He/she has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the organisation of issues relating to the welfare of vulnerable adults and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the vulnerable adults and young people.

- 5.1 He/she is responsible for ensuring that Priests are informed that the position meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All Priests will be asked to obtain a DBS check at the start of their work in the UK. This record includes details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions. A criminal record will not automatically bar a person from successfully taking up this post”.
- 5.2 He/she has received appropriate training and should keep up to date with developments in vulnerable adults protection issues. He/she will also have responsibility for making new staff and volunteers aware of the existing vulnerable adults’ protection policy.
- 5.3 He/she will be the main contact point for vulnerable adults’ Protection issues and will have contact details for relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers. This list will usually include contact details of relevant individuals and the local police.

#### **6. Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns**

- 6.1 If a vulnerable adult or young person tells a member of staff about possible abuse:
  - a) Listen carefully and stay calm.
  - b) Do not interview the vulnerable adult, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the vulnerable adults is telling you.
  - c) Do not put words into the vulnerable adult’s mouth.

- d) Reassure the vulnerable adult that by telling you, they have done the right thing.
- e) Inform the vulnerable adult that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter.
- f) Note the main points carefully.
- g) Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the vulnerable adult said, did and your questions etc.
- h) Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Designated Person.

### **Reporting Allegations of Abuse**

- 6.1 The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or Priests as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.
- 6.2 Because of their frequent contact with vulnerable adults, staff may have allegations of abuse made against them. The Christian Community recognises that an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that the investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

## **7. Duty to refer to the DBS**

- 7.1 The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 also makes it mandatory to refer anyone known to pose a threat of harm to a child or vulnerable people to the DBS. The designated person responsible for safeguarding must not knowingly employ anyone who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults, this includes anyone who is believed to have committed a relevant conduct while on the job or who has a record of such conduct.
- 7.2 The organisation has a legal duty to refer a Priest or Volunteer who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to the DBS, failure to do so can result in a fine and/or up to 5 years imprisonment. There must be sufficient and solid evidence that the employee or volunteer poses a risk of harm before they can be referred to the DBS. The DBS will not consider evidence based on rumour or unsubstantiated reports. The employer should also inform the police and other relevant authorities if they believe a relevant conduct has occurred.
- 7.3 Referral forms can be downloaded from the DBS’s website [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs)

## **8. The DBS’s barring process**

- 8.1 Whenever new relevant information (such as a conviction or caution) becomes known, the information will be sent to the DBS. The DBS will consider this information, together with other information known on the individual, and decide whether it indicates that the individual poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups. If so, the DBS will commence its barring process and the DBS will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant with the barring information.
- 8.2 The applicant should be advised by the designated member of staff to make a representation to the DBS regarding the barring information. The DBS will assess the barring information and representation and decide whether to bar the applicant. If

there is sufficient barring evidence, the applicant will be placed on either the **Children's Barred List** or the **Vulnerable Adults Barred List** or both depending on the offence. The applicant must then be removed from regulated activity.

- 8.3 The applicant has the right of appeal to a tribunal and must be advised of this right. Serious offences committed against vulnerable people will lead to automatic barring and the applicant will have no right to make representations or to appeal against a barring decision.

#### **9. Ensuring safer recruitment and selection**

The Christian Community in Great Britain does not employ priests; rather they are sent to a congregation by the leadership of The Christian Community which is based in Germany; once they start work in Great Britain priests are considered by HMRC to be self employed. Others who work in the organisation are either self employed and work for us on a part-time basis or are volunteers.

Reviewed and agreed by the Executive Committee May 2021