

# Church of Scotland Policy on the Protection of Children, Young People And Vulnerable Adults

## Church of Scotland Safeguarding Policy Statement 2010

### Ensuring a Safe Church for All

The Church of Scotland has a deep concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each individual. Through its Congregations, working together with the Safeguarding Service and statutory agencies, the Church seeks to safeguard the welfare of all people who come into contact with the Church and its services.

The Gospel proclaims that it's the responsibility of everyone within the fellowship of the Church to prevent harm, be it physical, sexual or emotional, and we will always seek to reduce risk.

The Church's commitment to safeguarding reminds us that God cares passionately about the welfare and wellbeing of all people.

*Further details of the Church's theology of Safeguarding can be found in the 'For of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven' General Assembly Report, May 2009 on the Church of Scotland Website.*

### **The Church's key safeguarding message:**

**If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Co-ordinator**

## **YOU MUST**

- Treat all children and young people with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, there is more than one adult present during your organisation's activities with children or young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Operate within the Church's Code of Good Practice and the procedures of the organisation or club.

## YOU MUST NOT

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour.
- Make suggestive/derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Rely on your good name or that of the Church to protect you.
- Believe “it could never happen to me.”
- Take a chance when common sense, policy and practice suggest another more prudent approach.
- Ignore the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures operating within the organisation.

## WHAT TO DO

How to respond when a child or adult at risk tells you about a harmful situation.

- **Recognising:** listen and take what they say seriously. If appropriate you can ask who, what, when and where questions to establish the basic facts. But do not ask ‘why’ questions. Do not investigate – where needed that is the role of the police or social work services.
- **Reporting:** tell the person that you will have to share this information with your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager.
- **Recording:** as soon as possible write down everything the child or adult at risk has told you.

For more information, please see the [Church of Scotland website](#).

### Safeguarding Coordinator

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### Minister

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