



Sunday Assembly chapter Safeguarding Policy (Children and Vulnerable Adults)

DRAFT

Template Metadata

Ratified by	Name, Position, Organisation
Ratification Date	Date
Next Review Date	Date

Chapter	Sunday Assembly Reading, UK
Nominated Safeguarding Lead	Ben Robinson
Nominated Safeguarding Second	Sam Butler
Chapter Lead	Stephen Paul
Policy Ratified	Date
Next Review Date	Date

1. INTRODUCTORY NOTES

- Where the terms ‘child’ or ‘children’ are used in this document, they may also be applied to young people and vulnerable adults.
- Principles set down in this document apply to all children, young people and vulnerable adults, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- The term substantial access refers to the situation of being in a position of authority or influence when working with young people.
- The term parent is a generic term that refers to parents, guardians and carers.
- The term Core volunteer (abbreviated to volunteer) is any person who regularly helps in the execution of an Assembly and has signed the chapter’s Code of Conduct.
- The term staff is any person who is paid by the chapter. Note, some people may be Core Volunteers and staff depending on the circumstance.
- The term Safeguarding Team refers to persons designated by the chapter’s committee to ensure safeguarding documentation is complete and also acts as a contact point for the chapter’s team and the congregation.
- The term chapter refers to a single instance of a Sunday Assembly, such as Sunday Assembly Reading.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. The chapter is committed to practices that protect children and vulnerable adults from harm in accordance with the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004. Staff and volunteers in the chapter accept and recognise responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children and vulnerable adults harm.
- 2.2. We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice formally every 12 months.

2.3. The chapter will endeavor to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing management for staff and volunteers through support and training.

3. OVERVIEW

- 3.1. If the chapter has knowledge of or a suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering significant harm or is at risk of significant harm, it has a duty to refer their concern to one of the statutory agencies - Social Services, NSPCC or Police.
- 3.2. In cases where a staff or volunteer suspects a child is being abused they should inform a member of the chapter's Safeguarding Team and the statutory agencies directly.
- 3.3. Every staff and volunteer is to be aware of the signs of abuse and what to do if concerns arise through training.
- 3.4. Any concerns are logged as soon as possible on that day. If in doubt, staff and volunteers must seek advice. See Appendix B for template logging sheet.
- 3.5. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and incidents should only be discussed with the Safeguarding Team and where relevant to the chapter's Committee in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.
- 3.6. Ensure the chapter's position on child protection is clearly publicised. Display literature so that everyone understands that child protection is taken seriously.
- 3.7. Keep an accident book and record all injuries however slight, with details of any treatment given. Record how and where the accident happened and include dates and times, action taken and the details of any witnesses. This information may be relied upon in the event of an insurance claim.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. These responsibilities apply to how volunteers and staff interact with the chapter's community.

4.2. Staff and Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential.
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and vulnerable adults, or at least that you are within others' sight or hearing.
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy and encourage children and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that even physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted.
- Adopt extra caution when discussing sensitive issues with children or vulnerable adults.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying of any kind.
- Report allegations and suspicions of abuse.
- Not to promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

4.3 Staff and Volunteers should never:

- Strike a child.
- Use profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.

- Spend excessive amount of time alone with a child or vulnerable adult, away from others. (Meetings with individual children or young people should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left ajar and other staff and volunteers informed of the meeting).
- Take children alone on car journeys, no matter how short, without first consulting the parents.
- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Meet children outside organised activities. If this is unavoidable, inform a senior member of the team and always be contactable by phone.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.
- Intrude into the private life of a child.
- Allow or engage in any unnecessary physical contact with a child (physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be clear).
- Make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to, a child, even in fun.
- Allow a child to use inappropriate language unchallenged, and in particular racist, sexist or homophobic language.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations of abuse or poor practice to go unreported or unrecorded.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Rely on their good name to protect them.
- Allow a sexual relationship to develop between yourself and a young person between 16 and 18 years of age whilst there is a relationship of trust between you.

- 4.4 Staff and volunteers must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering himself or others, or causing damage to property, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury.
- 4.5 Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness in a Incident/Accident Report Form - see Appendix B.
- 4.6 We recognise that touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff and volunteers have been given guidance, via this document, to ensure they are clear about their boundaries.

5. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of the chapter's Safeguard Team members to deal with allegations or suspicions of abuse. All volunteers must be aware that the Safeguard Team should always be informed of any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.
- 5.2. The Safeguarding Team should note the following guidance on dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- 5.3. Have a pen and paper readily available to take notes and also an Incident Report Form (see Appendix B). Contact details for the local Social Services Department and Police should also be readily available (See Appendix A). If contacted by telephone ask the caller for their contact details so that you may call them back if their call is disconnected – but do not persist to the point that they hang up.

6. Guidance for Volunteers

- 6.1. If the member of the Safeguarding Team is contactable always refer to them in the first instance.
- 6.2. If a child is in immediate danger call the police.
- 6.3. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Team to contact the local social services department or go directly to the police if out of hours.
- 6.4. If a member of the Safeguarding team is not contactable, remember that you are not qualified to determine whether or not abuse has taken place – that is the responsibility of the Social Services and/or local police. Your responsibility is to inform them.
- 6.5. Stay calm.
- 6.6. Try to record facts and get dates and times.
- 6.7. Record names and contact details of everyone who is involved or has been informed.
- 6.8. Do not “judge” or assume.

- 6.9. Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- 6.10. Do not ask questions except to clarify the information required on the Incident Report Form.
- 6.11. Do not try to stop the child telling you about their problem.
- 6.12. Do not allow anyone else outside the police or social services to interview or ask questions of the child.
- 6.13. Offer them the NSPCC helpline (See Appendix A)
- 6.14. Ensure you make a full record of what had been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible. This record will be referred to during further investigations.
- 6.15. The record should be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.
- 6.16. Take the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer and follow this up with confidential written confirmation within 24 hours of receiving the allegation.
- 6.17. The parents should be contacted as soon as possible (unless they are the alleged perpetrators). The social services department will advise accordingly.
- 6.18. The legal principle that the 'welfare of the child is paramount' means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the organisation, should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Confidentiality should be maintained on a strictly "need to know" basis and any relevant documentation stored in a secure place with access available to designated people only. For further information see Data Protection Policy.

Appendix A - Useful contact details

Local Social Services Department	0118 937 3641
Local police telephone number	01865 841148
NSPCC helpline number	0808 800 5000
Safeguarding Team lead	Ben Robinson 0794 180 5691 safeguarding-male@sundayassemblyreading.uk
Safeguarding Team second	Sam Butler 07886 445665 safeguarding-female@sundayassemblyreading.uk
Chapter lead	Stephen Paul 07784725248 chair@sundayassemblyreading.uk
Link to this policy on your website	https://www.sundayassemblyreading.uk/

Appendix B - INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

Reference (IR- <i>date-nnn</i>)								
Chapter's Name								
Reporter's Name								
Name of injured person								
Address of injured person								
Nature of incident								
Date and time of incident								
Venue where incident took place								
Explanation of how and where the incident happened								
Explain the action taken (e.g. first aid, first aider's name, etc)								
Were any of the following contacted (please tick):	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Ambulance</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parent/Guardian</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Police</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Ambulance		Parent/Guardian		Police	
Ambulance								
Parent/Guardian								
Police								
Post injured activity (e.g. went home, to hospital, carried on, etc								
Signed and Dated								

Appendix C - Logging a concern about a child/vulnerable person's safety and welfare
Part 1 (for use by any staff or volunteer)

Reference (<i>LC-date-nnn</i>):	
Child's name:	Date of birth/age approx:
Date and time of incident:	Date and Time (of writing):
Reporter's name (print):	Signature:
<p>Record the following factually: What are you worried about? Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?</p>	
<p>What is the child's account/perspective?</p>	
<p>Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion). Previous concerns etc.</p>	

What needs to happen? Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed and when.

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.
Please pass this form to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Part 2 (for use by DSL)

Time and date information received, and from whom.

Any advice sought – if required (date, time, name, role, organisation and advice given).

Note time, date, names, who information shared with and when etc.

Parent's informed? Y/N and reasons.	
Outcome - Record names of individuals/agencies who have given information regarding outcome of any referral (if made).	
Signed	Printed name

Revision history

Revision	Summary of changes	Made by	Date
Beta Version	Adopted from proposed SAI policy	Stephen Paul, Ben Robinson	14th Feb 2018

