

STAGE 1

A worker/church attendee has a concern about the welfare of a child or the behaviour of an adult

The person who has the concern has a duty to

RECORD AND REPORT

A written record must be made of the concern using a standard incident report form and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.

(Standard Incident Forms are kept in a folder in the church office)



STAGE 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

then has a duty to

REVIEW AND REFER

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.



STAGE 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee, and the Minister, may have a duty to

SUPPORT AND REPORT

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the local Association, the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Charity Commission.

If the Designated Person for Safeguarding is not available, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the Safeguarding Team.

Appendix 4

STAGE 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to RECORD their concerns in writing and to REPORT their concerns to the Designated Person. If he/she is not contactable reports should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee.

The report to the Designated Person should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised.

The duty to RECORD & REPORT

As soon as possible after a child tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

The record should:

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- include the child's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed
- include an exact record of what the child has said using the child's words
- include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- be signed and dated
- be kept secure and confidential and made available only to:
 - the Safeguarding Team
 - the church minister as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child concerned and possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved
 - representatives of the professional agencies

If such a report is made in an emergency without reference to one of the Safeguarding Team, one of the Safeguarding Team should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's group, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group leader. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Designated Person.

It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and report their concerns to the Designated Person.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the workers the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report, and will also themselves have a duty to report the concern to the Designated Person.

If a child is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services (see page 2 of the Policy and Procedures for relevant numbers.)

Appendix 4

STAGE 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that has been reported and to REFER the concern on to the appropriate people.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Safeguarding Team:

- should take account of their own experience and expertise in assessing risk to children
- must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- may speak with others in the church (including the Minister) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be made
- such conversations should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action.
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised.

The duty to REFER

The Safeguarding Team will make a decision about who the report should be referred on to. They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child is being harmed. asking for appropriate continued observation
- refer the concern to others who work with the child/children in question asking for continued observation
- refer to the adult about whom the concern has been raised
 - This may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children's workers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Designated Person should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the police or Social Services. To do so may place the child at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child may be intimidated.
- Make a formal referral to the local Social Services Department

All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

Appendix 4

STAGE 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

Responsibilities in stage 3 of the process are shared by the Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

The duty to REPORT

Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services the Designated Person should:

- report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- report the referral to the Minister
- report the referral to the Regional Minister of the local Association

In certain circumstances the Safeguarding Trustee acting on behalf of the trustees may also need to make further reports for example to Charity Commission

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If a worker has an allegation made against them they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated.

If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children and young people there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

If a worker in the church has been accused of causing harm to children or young people this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission in the annual return.

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy.

The duty to SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected, e.g. Child, Other Family Members, Church Worker/Volunteer, Safeguarding Team, Ministers/ Leadership Team.