

## The Church's Key Safeguarding Message is:

**If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or line manager.**

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[www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)

## Where to get more information

For more information about what you need to know and do to protect children and adults at risk please see the Safeguarding Service Publications on the Church of Scotland public website.



**For details about all safeguarding activity, publications and guidance visit:**

**[www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding-service](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding-service)**

## How to contact the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service.

The service is available 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. You can leave a telephone or email message out with this time. **If a crime has occurred or you think someone is at immediate risk of harm contact Police without delay.**



**The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service  
121 George Street Edinburgh, EH2 4YN**

**Tel: 0131 240 2256**

**Email: [safeguarding@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@churchofscotland.org.uk)**

## Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Harm

Key Information  
for workers and  
volunteers

## Who is a child?

Child protection procedures may be considered for a person up to the age of 18. However, the legal boundaries of childhood and adulthood are variously defined. There are overlaps. Where a young person aged between 16-18 years requires support and protection consideration should be given to the legal framework that best fits the young persons needs and circumstances.

## Who is an adult at risk of harm?

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an adult at risk as someone aged 16 and over who

- Can't look after their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests
- and are at risk of harm
- and because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected

## What is meant by Harm or Abuse?

Harm or abuse can take many different forms. Harm may include:

- Physical Harm
- Emotional/Psychological harm
- Sexual Harm/Sexual Exploitation
- Financial harm
- Neglect
- Online Abuse

Harm or abuse of children or adults at risk can happen or be disclosed anywhere, including church communities and services. The person causing the harm may be a stranger or may be known to the person being harmed. They may be a relative, a friend, a volunteer or a professional.

**Not too sure if it is harm or abuse?** If it looks, sounds or feels wrong, then it probably is wrong. Trust your gut feeling and report your concerns to your safeguarding co-ordinator or line manager.

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

- Listen carefully
- Don't question
- Don't judge
- Don't investigate-this is the job of Police and Social Work staff
- Never promise confidentiality
- Tell the person what action you are going to take (unless to do so places them or others at risk of harm)
- As soon as possible write down everything the child or adult at risk has told you but
- Don't delay in acting-contact your Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Line Manager who must then contact the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service for advice
- **If a crime has occurred or you think someone is at immediate risk of harm contact Police without delay**