

Appendix 1: Code of Good Safeguarding Practice

What is the Code of Good Safeguarding Practice?

This Code of Practice is a checklist, or set of standards, of what good safeguarding practice looks like.

It is for all paid staff, volunteers and those in positions of leadership and pastoral responsibility in the Church who have a responsibility for organising, managing or providing care and support to children and adults at risk.

The 'Church' means congregations, all Ministries and CrossReach services.

This Code of Good Safeguarding Practice will ensure that all those within the Church who work with children and adults at risk follow the same standards of safeguarding practice. It demonstrates a commitment by the Church to the safety, well-being and care of children and adults at risk of harm.

This Code is a working document and, unlike the [Safeguarding Policy Statement](#), not for display in Church buildings or CrossReach services.

This is what the Church expects to see in place.

Code of Good Safeguarding Practice 2018

Policy

The Church of Scotland is committed to 'Ensuring a Safe Church for All'. All churches must use and display The Church of Scotland [Safeguarding Policy Statement](#).

Paid staff and volunteers, through the provision of safe and appropriate standards of care, will minimise the likelihood of harmful situations occurring.

The Church will respond to the needs of victims of harm or abuse as appropriate and ensure as far as possible that the person can feel safe in the Church community.

Recognising and reporting harm or abuse

The Church has clear written procedures for responding to witnessed, suspected or reported harm or abuse. These can be found in the [Publications](#) section of the Safeguarding Service website. The Church's key message about recognising and reporting harm or abuse 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, for CrossReach services, your line manager.

Paid staff and volunteers in the Church will use the 4 Rs of Safeguarding: being able to **recognise** harm or abuse, ensuring that it is **reported** to the Safeguarding Coordinator or Line Manager, **recording** the details in writing and **referring** on to social work and the police in appropriate cases.

Confidentiality: information about a person who has allegedly been harmed, or is at risk of harm, can be shared without their permission if they, or others, are at risk of harm.

Safe recruitment and management

Every congregation must have a formally recruited Safeguarding Coordinator. Some congregations may choose to have more than one to share the work and responsibility.

All paid staff and volunteers working with children or protected adults, as defined in the [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#) or the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), must be formally and safely recruited. This means:

- Every post must have a written job description
- Applicants must be interviewed, provide two references (which must be followed up) and also have a PVG Scheme Record (Scotland) or DBS Certificate (England, Channel Islands and Wales) and have been cleared by the Safeguarding Service to take up regulated work or regulated activities

It is an offence for organisations to employ individuals whose name appears on a barred list.

When recruiting individuals who were born outside the UK or who have lived outside the UK to undertake regulated work with children or protected adults, there are two issues to consider.

The first is confirming someone's identity by ensuring robust recruitment practices are in place and that suitable references are pursued.

The second is ensuring that appropriate police checks have been undertaken in the country they were born and/or resided.

The onus is on the individual to provide details of their criminal conviction history from their home country or countries of previous residence.

All volunteers should receive one-to-one supervision with the person to whom they are responsible.

All volunteers and paid staff should attend Church of Scotland safeguarding training as meets the needs of the post holder.

Training is mandatory for those undertaking regulated work. More information about training courses can be found on our [training page](#).

All paid staff and volunteers, with suitable training and support, must be able to recognise harm and abuse and be confident enough to report it to their Safeguarding Coordinator or, for CrossReach services, their line manager.

If allegations of harm against a paid member of staff are found to be unsubstantiated but there are good grounds for believing that the person continues to pose a risk, 'compromise agreements' should not be used to end the person's employment. A compromise agreement is where a person agrees to resign, the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference.

A referral may need to be made to Disclosure Scotland in respect of the individual.

Paid and volunteer posts should have a [Code of Conduct](#) so that workers are clear about expected behaviour (what is said and done and to ensure appropriate boundaries between themselves and children and adults at risk).

Working with sex offenders known to congregations

When it is known or suspected that there is a convicted sex offender in the congregation, or someone under investigation for sexual offences, this information must be reported to The Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service.

The Safeguarding Service will then provide full advice and support with setting up a Covenant of Responsibilities to ensure the person's safe inclusion in the life of the Church should that be appropriate. For more information, see Chapter 6 – Managing those who pose a risk.

Responsibilities

Employees and volunteers of the Church must follow verbal and written advice provided by the Church's Safeguarding Service in cases where harm is witnessed, suspected or reported

Every congregation must appoint a Safeguarding Panel. This can comprise of the Minister, the Safeguarding Coordinator plus one or more other people with a suitable understanding of or professional background in safeguarding. Some congregations may choose not to have the Minister on the Safeguarding Panel as this could present a conflict of interests if pastoral support is also required for the victim and/or the perpetrator.

Kirk Sessions will ensure that all paid staff and volunteers working with children and adults at risk know what the Church's Safeguarding Policy is and receive appropriate safeguarding training.

An appropriate level of safeguarding training will be provided for Presbytery Safeguarding Trainers, Safeguarding Coordinators, Kirk Sessions, Presbytery and Parish Workers and paid staff and volunteers in congregations and all staff in CrossReach services.