

## **Section 1**

### **Details of the place of worship / organisation**

Name of Place of Worship / Organisation: St Thomas Church

Address: 75-79 Glasgow Road, Edinburgh, EH12 8LJ

Tel No: 0131 285 8782

General Email address: churchoffice@saintthomas.org.uk

Senior Leader Name: Reverend David McCarthy

Senior Leader Contact Telephone / Email: david@saintthomas.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinators Names: Linda Henderson, Sheila Nicol, Margaret Robertson

Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone/Email: churchoffice@saintthomas.org.uk

Membership of Denomination/Organisation: Independent Anglican Church

Charity Number: SCO49045

Insurance Company: Ecclesiastical

## **Our commitment**

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

## Section 2

### Prevention

#### Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

*1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Police Scotland's definition of child abuse is also helpful:

*"Child Abuse is any action by another person, adult or child, that causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional."*

Finally, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

## **Safer recruitment**

As appropriate to the role the Leadership will ensure all staff will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A PVG disclosure check has been completed where a role involves regulated work within the meaning of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Volunteers working with children and young people or vulnerable adults will have a PVG disclosure check completed. Suitable training will be carried out and they will be given a copy of the safeguarding policy along with a discussion on how to report concerns.

## **Safeguarding training**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

## **Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

## **Section 3**

### **Practice Guidelines**

As an organisation / place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for activities as appropriate.

### **Working in Partnership**

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with regard to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

## Section 4

### Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- Documenting a concern  
The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:
- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

**Name:** (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") Linda Henderson

**Tel:** 07891 059233

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

**Name:** (hereafter the "Deputy") Sheila Nicol and Margaret Robertson

**Tel:** 0131 285 8782

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

**thirtyone:eight** PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

Tel: 0303 003 1111.

Alternatively contact the local police or Social Work Department.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency, or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. In the event of suspected abuse they should contact **Police Scotland tel 101** in the first instance. In the event of neglect or inadequate parenting or similar they should contact **Social Care Direct for both Adults and Children on 0131 200 2324 (daytime) and 0800 731 6969 (out of hours)**.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern
  - Chair of Vestry or Rector may need to liaise with the insurance company or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator to report a serious incident.
  - report to Disclosure Scotland if the allegation concerns a volunteer working with a child or vulnerable adult

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to the Police, Social Work or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or, where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/ Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

#### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

##### **Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.**

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.

- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

### **Allegations of sexual abuse**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Police Child Protection Team direct and the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:**

**Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.**

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Police Scotland 101 and Adult Social Care Team who have legal responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Health and Social Care Partnership procedures will:

- Refer the matter to Children's Social services who will investigate the concerns and pass on information to Disclosure Scotland in relation to the worker
- Make a referral to Disclosure Scotland for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. A referral must be made within 3 months of the organisations disciplinary actions or the organisation will find themselves criminally liable.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs**

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services to discuss concerns and where appropriate with Disclosure Scotland in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the Disclosure Scotland. A referral must be made within 3 months of any disciplinary measures.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Code of Practice April 2014 places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Services to decide not the church.

## **Section 5**

### **Pastoral Care**

#### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care and support, working with the statutory authorities as appropriate, to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

#### **Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk**

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; any appropriate parties who may include the police will be consulted and a risk assessment carried out. The Leadership will then supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep.

#### **Adoption of the policy**

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually on:

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position

Date:

A copy of this policy is also lodged with:

