



# Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Procedure (Messy Church)

The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word “staff” is used for ease of description.

## Definitions of Abuse

**The Overseers and trustees of The King’s Church recognise the following as definitions of abuse:**

### **i. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse causes harm to a child’s person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

### **ii Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

### **iii Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.



#### **iv Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

### **Signs & Symptoms of Abuse**

The signs of abuse aren't always obvious, and a child / young person or vulnerable adult might not tell anyone what's happening to them.

Children might be scared that the abuser will find out, and worried that the abuse will get worse. Or they might think that there's no-one they can tell or that they won't be believed.

Sometimes, they don't even realise that what's happening is abuse.

The effects of abuse may be short term or may last a long time - sometimes into adulthood. Adults who were abused as children may need advice and support.

Children develop and mature at different rates. So what's worrying for a younger child, might be normal behaviour for an older child. If a child looks or acts a lot older or younger than their age, this could be a cause for concern.

#### **All Ages**

- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers
- Poor bond or relationship with parent, also known as attachment
- Acts out excessive violence with other children
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends

#### **Under 5s**

- Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age



- Reaches developmental milestones late, such as learning to speak, with no medical reason
- Significantly underweight but eats well when given food

#### 5-11 Year Olds

- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information
- Reluctant to go home after school, or Messy Church
- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at school or other activities
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.
- Wets or soils themselves

#### 11-16 Year Olds

- Drinks alcohol regularly from an early age
- Is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information
- Talks of running away
- Exhibits challenging / disruptive behaviour
- Is reluctant to get changed for sports etc.

### Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection

1. The Lead person with special responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable people is **Matthew McChlery, Messy Church Core Team Member**  
**Mobile: 07793065442**  
**Email: [mattmcchlery@sky.com](mailto:mattmcchlery@sky.com)**

Or if you are concerned about the Lead Person's conduct please contact

**The King's Church, Wisbech Overseers: [overseers@kingswisbech.org.uk](mailto:overseers@kingswisbech.org.uk)**



2. He/she has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the organisation of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children young people and vulnerable adults.
3. He/she is responsible for ensuring that exempted questions are asked on relevant volunteer and employment application forms.
4. He/she has received appropriate training and should keep up to date with developments in safeguarding and child protection issues. He/she will also have responsibility for making new staff and volunteers aware of the existing Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Policy.
5. He/she will be the main contact point for Child Protection issues and will have contact details for relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers. This list will usually include contact details of relevant individuals and provisions such as the NSPCC Helpline 0800 800 5000 and the local police child protection unit: Cambridgeshire Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) 0345 045 1362.

## Code of Conduct

One of the core values of The King's Church, Wisbech and Christian ministry in general is to be loving towards each other, building relationships in order to help each other to grow and flourish in our relationship with Jesus. It is with the intention that relationships in ministry be experienced at all times as loving and without intention to do harm, or allow harm to occur, that the following Code of Conduct has been adopted. All The King's Church, Wisbech children's, youth and vulnerable adults workers and volunteers are asked to carefully consider each statement in the Code and within our Safeguarding policy before agreeing to adhere to the standards and continue in service with The King's Church, Wisbech.

I will conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the discipline and teachings of Jesus Christ within the course of my ministry.



I will do my utmost to prevent abuse and neglect among children, young people and vulnerable people involved in The King's Church, Wisbech activities and services.

I will not physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

I will accept personal responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse.

I will endeavour to be a source of help to families in which abuse and neglect of a child, young person or vulnerable adult has become a problem.

I will share concerns about inappropriate behaviour or breach of policy with the Lead Person or an Overseer.

I accept that inappropriate behaviour or attitudes will result in disciplinary action being initiated.

## Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns

If a child / young person or vulnerable adult tells a volunteer about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do NOT promise confidentiality, you are probably going to have to tell someone in order to help the person making the disclosure.
- Do not interview them, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what they are telling you.
- Do not put words into their mouth by asking leading questions.
- Reassure them that by telling you, they have done the right thing.



- Inform them that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter.
- Note the main points carefully on the 'Logging a Concern' form.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what they said, did and your questions etc.
- Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Lead Person.

## Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff

1. In rare instances, staff of Christian organisations have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. The King's Church, Wisbech recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.
2. The King's Church, Wisbech recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the organisation will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

It is the duty of all Messy Church volunteers to report any concerns they may have.

In the event of a Messy Church volunteer observing any inappropriate behaviour or breach of the Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Policy on the part of other volunteers or staff, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations.



- Fill out observations on a 'Logging a Concern Form'
- Pass this on to the Lead Person or an Overseer
- Overseers will Refer to Code of Conduct and relevant policies
- First Meeting with the volunteer and an Overseer
- Written Warning
- Release from role
- Documentation

## Creating a Safe Team

When parents allow their children to come to The King's Church, Wisbech we want them to know that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the adults caring for them are spiritually equipped, trustworthy and able to care for them effectively.

The selection procedure are not in place to undermine the integrity of those who want to work with children, but to strengthen and confirm the integrity and value of those who are willing to take on such a responsibility.

The selection procedure is as follows:

- Clear role description given to volunteer
- Application form
- Safeguarding declaration completed
- Interview with member of the Messy Church Core Team and an Overseer
- References taken
- Safeguarding training given
- Acceptance of adherence to Code of Conduct



## Supporting a Safe Team

Every Messy Church volunteer will receive an induction into their role at a training session. There will also be a probationary period of six months. This is a period in which the individual can decide if a ministry with children and / or vulnerable adults is right for them. It also gives the leaders a chance to observe the volunteer and offer constructive and sensitive feedback and support.

When the probationary period is complete a meeting will be held with the volunteer and one member of the Messy Church Core Team to discuss how they think things went, further points for action and to decide if the person can continue in their role.

- Induction Process (including Safeguarding Training)
- Supervision and feedback
- Probationary period
- Safeguarding training renewed every 3 years

## Supporting Team Members Younger Than 18 Years of Age

Messy Church is an all-age event and children younger than 18 are able to take on a volunteering role. They will still be protected by our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and additional steps will be put in place to ensure they are protected at all times whilst undertaking their volunteer role.

- Parental consent will be sought at the initial application stage
- A basic Child Safeguarding Training will be given which will stress the importance of telling their Mentor or another Messy Church adult volunteer if they see or hear anything that is inappropriate, or indeed if anything is happening to them that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.



- A Mentor will be assigned to them. They will be DBS checked and will be part of the Messy Church Core Team. The Mentor will help, encourage and supervise the child volunteer at all times during Messy Church activities at which the child is carrying out their volunteer role.

## Regulated Activity and obtaining Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks

1. Under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, an individual working **unsupervised** with children is considered to be engaged in regulated Activity and must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will involve a check of the children's barred list, in order to perform their duties.
2. However, an individual working in a directly and permanently supervised position is not considered to be engaged in regulated activity but should still have an enhanced DBS disclosure check. However because they are working in a supervised role the enhanced check will not include a check of the children's barred list.
3. Note that applications for a DBS enhanced check can only be submitted where the applicant is aged 16 or over at the time of making the application.
4. Messy Church is not considered to be a regulated activity as:
  - parents / carers are required to be present and maintain parental responsibility for their child / children at all times
  - Messy Church is an all-age event, not specifically or primarily for children or vulnerable adults
  - Messy Church only occurs once a month
  - There will be no times when a member of staff is left alone with a child / young person or vulnerable adult.

As such, Messy Church volunteers will not be required to have a DBS check but will be required to complete a 'Confidential Safeguarding Declaration'. Potential



Volunteers will also undergo an interview with one of the Leadership Team of Messy Church and one of the church Overseers to help to ascertain their suitability for the role.

However, anyone serving on the Messy Church Core Team will be DBS checked as their role carries authority and power and then may also be called upon to act as a Mentor in direct contact with a volunteer who is under the age of 18.

## Duty to refer to the DBS

1. The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 both make it mandatory to refer anyone known to pose a threat of harm to a child or vulnerable people to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This means that the designated member of staff responsible for safeguarding must not knowingly employ anyone who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults, this includes anyone who is believed to have committed a relevant conduct while on the job or who has a record of such conduct.
2. The organisation has a legal duty to refer an employee or volunteer who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to the DBS, failure to do so can result in a fine and/or up to 5 years imprisonment. There must be sufficient and solid evidence that the employee or volunteer poses a risk of harm before they can be referred to the DBS. The DBS will not consider evidence based on rumour or unsubstantiated reports. The employer should also inform the police and other relevant authorities if they believe a relevant conduct has occurred.
3. Referral forms can be downloaded from the DBS's website [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs).

## The DBS's barring process

1. Whenever new relevant information (such as a conviction or caution) becomes known, the information will be sent to the DBS. The DBS will consider this information, together with other information known on the individual, and decide whether it indicates that the individual poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups. If so, the DBS will commence its barring process and the DBS will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant with the barring information.



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2. The applicant should be advised by the designated member of staff to make a representation to the DBS regarding the barring information. The DBS will assess the barring information and representation and decide whether to bar the applicant. If there is sufficient barring evidence, the applicant will be placed on either the **Children's Barred List** or the **Vulnerable Adults Barred List** or both depending on the offence. The applicant must then be removed from regulated activity.
3. The applicant has the right of appeal to a tribunal and must be advised of this right. Serious offences committed against vulnerable people will lead to automatic barring and the applicant will have no right to make representations or to appeal against a barring decision.

## Useful Contacts

### **Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) – Cambridgeshire**

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lscb/](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/lscb/)

Email: [LSCB@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01480 373522

Fax: 01480 376377

Address: Cambridgeshire LSCB, Scott House, 5 George Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3AD

### **LSCB Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) – Cambridgeshire**

(For reporting a safeguarding issue)



Tel: Ph. 0345 045 1362 (Professionals)

Tel: Ph. 0345 045 5203 (Public Number)

Out of Hours Tel: 01733 234724

Referral Forms to be sent to: [MASH.C&F@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH.C&F@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **Wisbech Police Station**

Phone: 101

Address: Nene Parade, Wisbech, PE13 3BT

### **Children's Social Care**

Telephone: 0345 045 5203 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

Email: [ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:ReferralCentre.Children@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) or

[referralcentre.childrens@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:referralcentre.childrens@cambridgeshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

You can also fax your question on 01480 376 748.

If it is outside office hours or at the weekend, call the First Response and Emergency Duty Team on 01733 234 724.

### **Adult Social Care**



Cambridgeshire County Council – Customer Services

8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

9am to 1pm on Saturday

Telephone: 0345 045 5202

Fax: 01480 498 066

Email: [referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:referral.centre-adults@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

If someone is in danger and unable to protect themselves or cannot remain in the community without immediate intervention telephone: 01733 234 724.

If the person is in immediate danger or needs medical treatment contact the police and/or call an ambulance on 999.

### **NSPCC – Advice & Support Line**

0808 800 5000

24 hours a day 7 days a week. For free advice and support on child protection issues.



## Vulnerable Persons Safeguarding Procedure Flowchart Summary

