

Cornerstone St Andrews

(11th Sept 2016)

Child Protection Policy

Section 1

1.0 Policy Aim

Cornerstone St Andrews (CSA) aims to ensure that all children are kept safe from harm while they are with staff/volunteers in this organisation. To achieve this aim CSA will implement procedures, issue guidance and deliver relevant training.

Overall responsibility for policy implementation lies with the CSA Leadership Team and Trustees who will ensure that all those involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full application. It will be the responsibility of the Safeguarding Coordinator to oversee the general delivery of the policy.

The policy takes account of our legal obligations (Section 1) and is delivered through the objectives and applications detailed in Section 2. The appendices provide a further level of detail and additional references are made throughout this document to other sources of information and guidance.

1.1 Legal Obligations

CSA adheres to the law which states that:

- o It is an offence for an individual who is barred to undertake the type of regulated work from which they are barred.
- o It is an offence for an organisation to offer regulated work to someone who is barred or fail to remove a person from regulated work if they have been notified that they are barred.
- o It is an offence for an organisation not to refer an individual to Disclosure Scotland where the grounds for referral have been met.

1.2 Making Referrals to Disclosure Scotland

Where it becomes known that an individual has harmed or may have harmed a child or has placed a child at serious risk of harm, CSA will consider what action should be taken and whether or not a 'referral' should be made to Disclosure Scotland.

A referral is a written report sent to Disclosure Scotland when the 'grounds for referral' have been met. Where these grounds have been met, CSA will meet its legal obligation under the PVG Scotland Act 2007, and refer that individual to Disclosure Scotland who will in turn evaluate the referral and take any appropriate action.

(for full referral procedure including 'grounds for referral' and definition of 'harm' see appendix 1)

1.3 Reporting Child Protection Issues

CSA understands that in addition to making a referral to Disclosure Scotland, Child Protection issues concerning staff/volunteers, children/young people must always be referred to the child protection agencies (i.e. social work and/or police) for appropriate investigation.

1.4 Main Contact Person

The main contact person for reporting or querying child protection matters is the Safeguarding Coordinator*. In their absence matters should be brought to any pastoral staff Assistant or Senior Pastor or a Senior Childrens Work Leader, who will in turn bring the matter to the attention of the Safeguarding Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.

If a person is for any reason uncomfortable directly approaching the Safeguarding Coordinator then they are welcome to take their concern to any Pastoral Staff Assistant or the Senior Pastor.

***Safeguarding Coordinator: Graham McLean (07523 385815)**
Email: grahammcleanranger@gmail.com

Section 2

Objectives & Application

2.1 Screening

CSA will ensure that all staff/volunteers complete a PVG check for undertaking regulated work.

- o A Safeguarding Coordinator will be appointed to oversee this process.
- o A register (PVG Register) will be kept detailing those who have been cleared to work with children. Copies will be kept by the Safeguarding Coordinator and the CSA Board of Trustees Secretary.
- o The register:
 - will be regularly updated as new members of staff/volunteers are enrolled.
 - will include a record of those who have received Safeguarding Training.
 - will be checked annually by Senior Childrens Work Leader and the CSA Trustees to ensure that it is an accurate record of those undertaking regulated work at that time.

2.2 Training

CSA will provide all trustees and staff/volunteers with training appropriate to their role.

- o A Training Needs Assessment will be carried out on an ongoing basis by the Childrens Leadership Team and the Safeguarding Coordinator. This will include:
 - Induction: Overview of organisation; its purpose, values, services, structure.
 - Role/Skills Training: Understanding the role and providing the knowledge/skills necessary to perform the role.
 - Safeguarding Training: Including:
 - Health and Safety procedures (risk assessments, 1st Aid etc)
 - Agreed working practices (See Guidelines for Working with Young People)
 - Identifying and reporting abuse (see appendix 2)
 - Handling sensitive information (see appendix 2)
 - How do I support a child as they disclose something that is or may be serious? (see appendix 3)

2.3 Supervision

CSA will provide an appropriate level of support and supervision for all staff/volunteers.

- o A designated supervisor (Senior Childrens Work Leader) will be appointed to provide feedback and support.
- o Regular support and supervision meetings will be provided where performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed.

2.4 General Health & Safety

CSA will take reasonable measures to look after the general health & safety of young people in its care.

- o A Generic Risk Assessment will be carried out for activities delivered within the premises where work with children takes place, and
- o Volunteers/workers will be aware of 1st aid provision.

2.5 Safeguarding Committee

CSA will appoint a safeguarding committee which will meet as required to address child protection matters that may arise.

- o A Safeguarding Committee will be formed that will include at least three persons; of these one shall be the Safeguarding Coordinator, one the Senior Pastor or an Assistant Pastor, and one a Senior Childrens Work Leader.

2.6 Confidentiality

CSA recognises that although 100% confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, information about child safety matters must be treated with the highest level of discretion.

- o Confidentiality/Handling Sensitive information guidance will be provided.

2.7 Policy & Procedure Awareness

CSA will take action to raise awareness of the Child Protection Policy and its procedures. This will include:

- o The policy and relevant procedures being published on the CSA website
- o Making available through the website and others means the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Coordinator and any others to whom safeguarding concerns may be reported.
- o Consideration of further ways to raise awareness of the policy for trustees, staff/ volunteers and the wider congregation, including via newsletters, emails and announcements at gatherings.

2.8 Monitoring & Review

To maximise the effectiveness of the policy and its application CSA will:

- o Monitor the policy on an ongoing basis.
- o Carry out an annual review and amend the policy as necessary.
- o Welcome feedback from any interested parties.

Other Sources of Information

Disclosure Scotland: www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children: www.nspcc.org.uk

Cornerstone St Andrews: www.cornerstonestandrews.org

Appendix 1

POLICY: Making referrals under the PVG Act

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 aims to provide a robust system by which unsuitable people are prevented from doing regulated work with children or protected adults and by which people who become unsuitable are identified. For it to work effectively, it is necessary for organisations to pass on information regarding such people to Disclosure Scotland so that it can be properly evaluated and appropriate action taken. The process of passing such information to Disclosure Scotland is called making a referral.

Background to the policy

The Protection of Vulnerable groups (Scotland) Act 2007 is in place to make sure unsuitable individuals cannot work or volunteer with children or protected adults (regulated work). A key part to this process working correctly is for organisations to pass on information to Disclosure Scotland when they identify an unsuitable individual within their organisation.

Passing information to Disclosure Scotland is called making a referral.

Organisations have a legal obligation to pass information to Disclosure Scotland (make a referral) about an unsuitable individual when the individual who has been doing regulated work (paid or volunteering) meets both of the following:

- The individual doing regulated work has done something to harm a child or protected adult, and
- The impact is so serious that the individual is removed from the regulated work

What do we mean by harm?

Harm is when an individual who is doing regulated work, does any of the following:

- Harms a child or protected adult
- Places a child or protected adult at risk of harm
- Engages in inappropriate conduct involving pornography
- Engages in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a child or protected adult
- Gives inappropriate medical treatment to a child or protected adult

This may include behaviour which occurs outwith the person's work / volunteering with Cornerstone St Andrews.

What do we mean by removed?

- Dismissed the individual from their paid or volunteering position, or
- Moved the individual to a new paid or volunteering post that is not a regulated work position
- Reached a decision that we would have dismissed or moved someone, had they not already left the organisation

Policy on making referrals

When a volunteer or staff member is removed from their regulated work position by Cornerstone St Andrews, the Safeguarding Committee will consider whether the grounds for making a referral have been met.

In some cases, information about inappropriate behaviour comes to light after someone leaves an organisation. Cornerstone St Andrews will also consider making a referral when such information might have led to a referral being made had it been known while the person concerned was still doing regulated work.

Process of making referrals

When Cornerstone St Andrews is clear that a referral should be made to Disclosure Scotland, we will do so within 3 months. This is a legal obligation and failure to make a referral to Disclosure Scotland will mean that an offence has been committed.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor to make such a referral. The Safeguarding Coordinator or an Assistant Pastor may deputise for the Senior Pastor in fulfilling this responsibility. The Safeguarding Committee is on hand to provide support in this situation. The person making the referral will have the freedom and authority to consult with all relevant people within the organisation in order to obtain the necessary information. A referral will be made at the end of the disciplinary process, once the decision has been reached to remove the individual from regulated work.

The relevant form for making a referral is available on the Disclosure Scotland website. There full Guidance on the PVG Act is also on the website and should be consulted as required. Advice on making a referral can be sought from CRBS.

[We recommend that this policy is included within the disciplinary process of the organisation doing regulated work. Alternatively, the disciplinary process can refer to this policy to ensure that the relevant staff are aware of it.]

[We recommend that the organisation's code of conduct refers to examples of harm in the context of the specific work done]

Appendix 2

Summary Safeguarding Guidance for Volunteers and Staff

Reporting Concerns about Child Safety, Confidentiality and Handling Sensitive Information

Cornerstone St Andrews is committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in its care. This commitment includes being prepared for all eventualities and this must include the sad possibility that harm or abuse of children can happen, or be disclosed, anywhere - even in church communities and services.

Should we have to face this our **key safeguarding message** is clear:

1. If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or supervisor or pastor.

They will then investigate the situation, thoroughly and sensitively, and follow prescribed procedure.

2. What is meant by harm or abuse?

Abuse or harm includes physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm. It can also mean neglect. Children can also be deemed to be at risk of harm or abuse even though no harm or abuse has actually happened.

3. What if i'm not too sure if it is harm or abuse or if a child is in danger?

If it looks, sounds or feels wrong, then it might well be wrong. Trust your gut feeling. This is only the starting point - don't jump to conclusions about the outcome. We'd rather you reported it than didn't. We promise to be very careful about how we handle any sensitive information we are given.

Further information about the 'signs and symptoms' of possible harm or abuse can be found at the following website: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/

4. What if I suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to me?

If serious harm or sexual abuse has happened, a crime has occurred or the person is in immediate physical danger, first contact the police and the Senior Pastor or Safeguarding Coordinator.

For all other types of harm or suspected harm, follow the key safeguarding message. The Safeguarding Coordinator or pastor will then follow procedures to investigate the situation and take any appropriate action.

5. What if harm or abuse has not happened but the person is at risk of harm?

Again follow the Church's key safeguarding message: immediately report your concern to your Safeguarding Coordinator or supervisor or pastor.

6. What if i'm asked not to tell anyone?

We cannot promise 100% confidentiality to anyone. Where harm or abuse has happened or may happen we must follow the key safeguarding message and report it to the Safeguarding Coordinator or supervisor or pastor.

7. Choose well who you tell

We want to encourage both the sharing of any concerns but also discretion. We understand that mishandled information may hurt people. If you have a general concern you must share it only with your supervisor, or pastor, or the Safeguarding Coordinator.

8. How do I support a child who discloses something that is or may be serious?

(See Appendix 3: How do I support a child as they disclose something that is or may be serious?)

9. What do I do if I know, or suspect, that there is a sex offender in the congregation?

Immediately report this information to your Safeguarding Coordinator and pastor. They will then follow procedures for ensuring the safe inclusion of those who may pose a risk.

Contacts for Reporting

Safeguarding Coordinator: Graham McLean

07523 385 815

grahammcleanranger@gmail.com

Senior Pastor: Mark Stirling

07935 985 828

amarkstirling@gmail.com

Assistant Pastor: Xander Cant

07763 834 902

adacant@gmail.com

Assistant Pastor: Jared Michelson

07849 462 262

jm282@st-andrews.ac.uk

Assistant Pastor: Stu Newland

07739 395 859

stuart.newland@navigator.co.uk

Appendix 3

Summary Safeguarding Guidance for Volunteers and Staff

How do I support a child as they disclose something that is or may be serious?

1. Listen Well

Listen carefully and actively to the child. Let the child guide the pace.

2. Do not show shock at what you are hearing.

This may discourage the child from continuing their disclosure.

3. Do not investigate by asking leading questions.

If you need to clarify what is being said and whether the child is at risk, ask open questions such as “*what, when, who, how, where, do you want to tell me anything else?*” Avoid the question “*why?*” as this can imply guilt / responsibility on the child.

4. Never promise to keep a secret or confidentiality.

If a child requests confidentiality, use a ‘prepared’ response, such as:

“I’m really concerned about what you have told me and I have a responsibility to help ensure that you are safe. To help make sure you are safe, I have to tell someone (named person).”*

**This is Graham McLean; Safeguarding Coordinator for Cornerstone”.*

Should the Safeguarding Coordinator be absent, then this would be the Senior Pastor or assistant pastor or your supervisor.

5. Make sure the child understands what will happen next with their information.

6. Record factually what the child has told you / what you have observed ASAP.

Ensure records include the date, time, place of disclosure, behaviour and words used by the child.

7. Choose well who you tell.

Do not gossip to others about what you have heard. The information should remain confidential to those who ‘need to know’.

Those who need to know would be the Safeguarding Coordinator: Graham McLean or should they be absent, then this would be the Senior Pastor or assistant pastor or your supervisor.

8. Ensure that you have support for yourself in managing the information you have received.

Remember our **key safeguarding message**:

If you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you, you must immediately report it to your Safeguarding Coordinator or supervisor or pastor.

They will then investigate the situation, thoroughly and sensitively, and follow prescribed procedure.