

Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

Churches Together in Kington is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults who may be at risk. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity, respect and care and to live free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

As a volunteer-led organisation, we recognise our responsibility to respond appropriately to any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of people who use our services, volunteers, staff or visitors.

All volunteers and trustees are expected to follow this policy and act in the best interests of those we support.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children, young people and adults who come into contact with our organisation
- Provide individuals acting on behalf of Churches Together in Kington (CTiK) guidance on recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns
- Ensure concerns are reported promptly and appropriately
- Promote a culture of safety, respect and wellbeing

Scope

This policy applies to anyone acting on behalf of the organisation. It applies during all activities undertaken by CTiK including Kington Foodbank

Safeguarding Principles

CTiK will:

- Put the welfare and safety of people first
- Listen to concerns and take them seriously
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Promote equal opportunities and inclusion
- Share information appropriately where there is a concern about safety
- Work in partnership with statutory agencies and other organisations
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between volunteers and service users

Recognising Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, including:

- Physical
- Domestic
- Neglect (in adults this includes neglect by omission and self-neglect)
- Organisational abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Exploitation in children (sexual and criminal)
- Financial (adults)
- Modern slavery
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Discrimination and bullying
- Bullying, cyber-bullying and online abuse
- Female Genital Mutualisation
- Emotional abuse (children)
- Psychological abuse (adults)

These categories are recognised within safeguarding legislation.

Definitions can be found here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-children-young-people-and-vulnerable-adults/section-2-definitions>

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for CTiK will be the Chair of CTiK.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Receiving safeguarding concerns
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Seeking advice when required
- Making referrals to the appropriate agencies
- Ensuring this policy is reviewed regularly
- Providing guidance to volunteers

If the Chair is unavailable, then members of the local clergy can act on their behalf.

What Volunteers Should Do

If a person:

- Discloses abuse or neglect
- Appears frightened, distressed or unsafe
- Shows signs of harm, exploitation or neglect
- Raises concerns about another person

Volunteers should:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully
- Take what they say seriously
- Reassure them they have done the right thing by speaking up
- Record facts accurately
- Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Volunteers should Not:

- Promise confidentiality
- Investigate the matter yourself
- Ask leading questions
- Discuss the concern with others unless necessary to protect the person
- Delay reporting

Recording Concerns

The following information should be recorded wherever possible:

- Date and time
- Name of person raising the concern
- Name of person at risk
- What was seen, heard or disclosed
- Actions taken
- Name of person completing the record

Records should be signed, dated and stored securely.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Immediate Danger:

If someone is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical help:
Call 999 immediately.

Concerns About a Child:

If a child may be suffering harm or neglect, a referral should be made to the Herefordshire Integrated Front Door (formerly MASH).

Telephone: 01432 260800

Concerns About an Adult:

If an adult may be experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation contact Herefordshire Adult Safeguarding Team.

Telephone: 01432 260101 (Monday to Friday) Out of hours: 0330 123 9309

Email: safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk

Advice line: 01432 260942

Police:

If a crime has been committed or is suspected:

- Emergency: 999
- Non-emergency: 101

West Mercia Police may also be contacted regarding safeguarding concerns.

Information Sharing

The organisation recognises that safeguarding concerns may require confidential information to be shared without consent when there is a risk of significant harm or a legal obligation to do so. Information will only be shared with those who need to know and in accordance with data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance.

Safer Recruitment and Volunteers

Where appropriate, the organisation will:

- Obtain references for key volunteer roles.
- Carry out DBS checks where volunteers undertake regulated activity which involves working with unsupervised children and vulnerable adults
- Provide an induction covering safeguarding
- Ensure volunteers understand this policy
- Address safeguarding concerns about volunteers promptly

Code of Conduct

Volunteers should:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Work openly and transparently
- Avoid favouritism
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Not give personal loans, gifts or financial assistance
- Not share personal contact details except where agreed operationally
- Report any concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes, local safeguarding arrangements change or a safeguarding incident indicates a review is necessary.