

# Aid to the Church in Need (UK) Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Statement and Scope

Aid to the Church in Need United Kingdom (ACN (UK)) is committed to protecting all children and vulnerable adults and this document states ACN (UK)'s policy on preventing and reducing harm to children and vulnerable adults when they are in contact with employees, trustees, workers and volunteers ("staff") of ACN (UK).

This Safeguarding Policy applies to employees, trustees, workers and volunteers.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with ACN International's Safeguarding Policy which is available on the ACN International website: <https://acninternational.org/safeguarding/>.

### 1.1 Policy Aims

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with the necessary information, training and support on safeguarding matters;
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults;
- Provide assurance to parents, carers and other parties that ACN (UK) takes reasonable steps to manage risks and keep children and vulnerable adults safe;
- Prevent the employment of individuals in work with children and / or vulnerable adults where they have been barred by the DBS or are deemed by ACN (UK) to pose an unacceptable risk to vulnerable groups;
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of any allegations or suspicions regarding harm to children or vulnerable adults arising from contact with staff, whether the harm has taken place on ACN (UK)'s premises or elsewhere.

### 1.2 Relevant Legislation

This policy has been drawn up with reference to the legislation and guidance given under the relevant legislation as follows:

- Children Act 1989
- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Relevant Government guidance on safeguarding children

### 1.3 Equality

ACN (UK) is committed to ensuring that no job applicant, volunteer, staff member or service user is discriminated against directly, indirectly, by association or perception because of disability, gender (including transgender / gender reassignment), race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, marital status or civil partnership, responsibility for dependents, sexuality, pregnancy or maternity, age, trade union activity, political or religious, and (unrelated to the post) criminal conviction.

### 1.4 Contents of Policy

#### A. Information and Training

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- B. Risk Management and Screening
- C. Procedure for dealing with the reported suspicions or allegations

## 1.5 Other relevant policies

- Equality & Diversity Statement and Policy
- Information Management Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy (Currently being drafted)
- Recruitment Policy (Currently being drafted)
- ACN Values (Currently being drafted)

## A. Information and Training

All staff must be provided with a copy of this policy within their induction, it must be distributed to all staff, and published and accessible on the intranet within the Staff Handbook.

All staff must receive safeguarding training as part of their induction and must understand the principals of this policy.

### What is Safeguarding?

In its simplest form, safeguarding can be defined as 'keeping children, young people and adults at risk, safe from harm'. More widely it is:

- Protecting children / vulnerable people from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children / vulnerable people's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children / vulnerable people to have the best outcomes.

According to the Department for Education<sup>1</sup>, abuse and neglect are defined as follows:

### Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child / vulnerable person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A child or vulnerable person may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent

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<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/592101/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children\\_20170213.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf) Glossary of Terms page 93

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adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### Sexual exploitation and abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable person in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children / vulnerable person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child / vulnerable person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and / or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

### Financial abuse

Financial abuse may involve the following:

- Theft, i.e. money or possessions stolen, borrowed or withheld without permission.
- Wrongfully controlling access to money or benefits.
- Preventing someone from buying goods, services or leisure activities.
- Money being absorbed into a care home or household budget without the person's consent.
- Being deliberately overcharged for goods or services, or being asked to part with money under false pretences.
- Postal, telephone and internet scams where the person has interacted with someone and has lost money.
- Unlicensed money lending (loan sharks), i.e. being offered a loan on very bad terms.
- Misuse of a person's assets by professionals.
- Altering ownership of property without consent.
- Exerting undue influence to give away assets.
- Pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance, possessions or benefits.
- Putting undue pressure on the person to accept lower-cost / lower quality services in order to preserve more financial resources to be passed to beneficiaries on death.
- Misuse of powers of attorney.

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### Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child / vulnerable person's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child / vulnerable person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment;
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **B. Risk Management and screening**

Existing and new roles within ACN (UK) are assessed and the roles that regularly present the work of the charity in Schools are subject to Enhanced DBS checks.

ACN (UK) ensures that all roles and jobs are subject to our Recruitment Policy that ensures that the candidates have the necessary skills and experience to undertake their role. They have been appointed through an application and interview process. Personal references are obtained for all successful candidates, and all offers of employment are subject to references.

In the day to day running of the organisation, ACN (UK) staff are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with ACN (UK) values.

ACN (UK) has undertaken an assessment of various activities undertaken by ACN (UK) staff and are recorded in the Risk Management Register.

- Work experience placements
- Fundraising
- Visits to Churches
- Visits to Schools
- Field Trips, Project Trips or Pilgrimages overseas

For any new activity or organised trip or event, a safeguarding risk assessment must be undertaken by the organiser of the event with discussion and signed off from the Designated Safeguarding Officer, in this case the Head of HR and Office Manager, in the form attached, Annex 1.

### **C. Procedure for dealing with the reported suspicions or allegations**

Concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults could arise in a variety of ways and in a range of situations. For example, a child / vulnerable adult may report or show signs of abuse, someone may hint that a child / vulnerable adult is at risk, report that a colleague is an abuser, or someone may witness abuse.

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has taken place and it is appreciated that staff are not experts. As such, it is important that each person understands that they have a responsibility to act by taking appropriate action if they have any concerns about someone's behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult.

It is imperative that the recipient of any complaint or accusation that a child or vulnerable adult has been or is being abused listens carefully without making or implying any judgment as to the

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truth of the complaint or accusation. To ensure that all of the details of an allegation are captured for any future investigation, a detailed record (Annex 2) should always be made at the time of the matter being raised.

It is impossible to promise complete confidentiality when a concern is raised or an accusation is made. This is because ACN (UK) owes a duty of care which cannot be fulfilled unless we take action on the basis of information that may have been provided in confidence.

The duty of confidentiality must be weighed against the duty of care in case of potential or actual harm of an individual. This can be maintained by ensuring that only those people who need to be made aware of an incident or concern, whether internal or external, ACN (UK), are informed.

Where an individual suspects or is informed that a child or vulnerable adult has been, is being or could be harmed as a result of taking part in a ACN (UK) activity, event or through contact with ACN (UK) staff or volunteers, whether in the office, at an event or in the field abroad, it is not the responsibility of that person to decide whether abuse has taken place. Instead, the individual aware of these suspicions or allegations must contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately for guidance and assistance on the action that must be taken.

If circumstances make this impossible, the National Director and / or the Chair of Trustees must be contacted.

Staff who are worried about sharing concerns about abuse are encouraged to speak with an appropriate agency for further advice (for example, the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111).

Where a complaint of abuse is reported, the Designated Safeguarding Officer must carefully consider the information available and decide on the appropriate course of action.

Such situations may require contact with the relevant external agencies (including Social Services, the Police and the Charity Commission) for them to investigate the matter and determine any necessary action. Consideration will also be given to whether further action will be taken through the relevant internal procedures. This may result in invoking ACN (UK)'s disciplinary procedures.

ACN (UK) reserves the right to revise and change a member of staff or volunteer's role as a result of any transgressions, or consider disciplinary procedures.

In emergency circumstances (for example, where there is certain immediate and significant danger to an individual or a criminal act has been witnessed), staff should make referrals to the police / social services without delay. The Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed as soon as practicable.

In cases where a criminal investigation follows, ACN (UK) has a legal duty to refer an individual to the DBS and the Charity Commission if they have been removed from working in a regulated activity with children and / or adults because they have caused harm to children / adults or posed a risk of causing harm. The duty to refer is absolute and overrides any responsibilities regarding data protection.

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years and amended as necessary, or earlier if required due to a change in legislation or guidance.

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## Annex 1: Safeguarding Risk Assessment

A safeguarding risk assessment should be carried out for any new activity, organised trip or event. This should be completed by the senior project manager and signed off by the Designated Safeguarding Officer. **Forms to be completed shown at the end of this policy are available in Word in the Staff Handbook separately and can be completed electronically.**

The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify the safeguarding risk factors inherent in any new activity and ensure that risk factors are identified and control measures are implemented to prevent risk of harm.

### Definitions:

**Risk factors:** To be considered when assessing the level of child/vulnerable adult safeguarding risk.

**Likelihood:** Used has a description of probability or frequency.

**Impact/Severity:** The consequences if a risk leads to an incident.

**Risk:** The likelihood of harm occurring from the risk factors, weighted according to the severity of impact. The risk, once assessed, will be either, high, medium or low.

**Control measures:** These are actions that have already been taken or that could be taken to reduce risk to the lowest possible level.

### Risk Assessment Steps

**Stage 1** – identify who is at risk. Are there child/vulnerable adults involved in the event?

**Stage 2** – identify the factors that might put them at risk.

**Stage 3** – identify how they are at risk

**Stage 4** – identify what is currently in place to reduce the risk, e.g.: Volunteers have enhanced DBS certificate

**Stage 5** – calculate the level of risk. This is crucial to the assessment of risk and should a process where both the likelihood of the risk is occurring and its impact should be assessed:

- Impact: High/Medium/Low of the impact of the risk if it occurs
- Likelihood : certain or near certain to occur, reasonably likely to occur, unlikely or never to occur;
- Risk Measure: High/Medium/Low based on impact analysis

**Stage 6** – Consider additional actions needed to reduce the level of risk.

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## Annex 1 – (Continued)

<b>Name of Event:</b>						<b>Date/s:</b>	
<b>Location (address):</b>							
<b>Organiser (name and job title):</b>							
<b>State 1</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Stage 3</b>	<b>Stage 4</b>	<b>Stage 5</b>			<b>Stage 6</b>
<b>Who is at risk</b>	<b>What are the risk factors</b>	<b>How are they at risk</b>	<b>what control measures are in place</b>	<b>Impact Analysis Impact x Likelihood = Risk Measure</b>			<b>Additional actions to reduce the level of risk</b>
				<b>Impact (1 to 5)</b>	<b>Likelihood (1 to 5)</b>	<b>Risk Measure</b>	
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
<b>Notes / additional information:</b>							

Signature of Member of Staff		Date	Reviewed	Date of Review
Signature of Designated Safeguarding Officer		Date	Reviewed	Date of Review

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## Annex 2 – Safeguarding Reporting Form

This form should be used to record safeguarding concerns relating to a child and / or vulnerable adult.

In an emergency please do not delay in informing the police or social services. All the information must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer within one working day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

1. Name of ACN Member of Staff or ACN Volunteer making the report:

FULL NAME	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL / TELEPHONE NUMBER	

2. Details of Child or Vulnerable Adult affected:

FULL NAME	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL / TELEPHONE NUMBER	

3. Details of the incident (please describe in detail, setting out the facts clearly):

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## Annex 2 – (Continued)

4. Details of any witnesses:

FULL NAME	
ADDRESS	
EMAIL/TELEPHONE NUMBER	

5. Additional relevant information:

SIGNED	DATED

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	
REPORTED TO	DATE
ACTION TAKEN	DATE