

## Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

### Introduction

Church Army recognises the importance of its ministry to children, young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care.

As part of its mission, Church Army is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their welfare and protection
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all its children's/youth workers and those working with vulnerable adults
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers
- Supporting those affected by abuse
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

Church Army has arranged for the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service ("CCPAS") both to provide advice regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults and to act on its behalf in dealing with the statutory authorities. **The CCPAS Helpline 0845-120-4550 is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.**

The CCPAS 'Safe and Secure Manual' is available online via <http://www.ccpas.co.uk/members>, using the username "membersarea" and the password "orange" – there are different versions for each of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This guidance is constructive and detailed, covering a wide variety of different circumstances and providing a large number of pro forma documents to reduce the difficulty of compliance.

### Theological foundation

This policy upholds Church Army's Equal Opportunities Policy, which states:

*"We believe it is a fundamental Christian understanding to hold that all human beings are created in the image of God [Genesis 1:27], that all are valued equally by God and share equally in God's creative love. We believe that God longs for our well-being and fulfilment, and that we are equally responsible to God for the way we treat each other."*

### Policy

- Church Army affirms that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. This means that all our work with such people will maintain the highest professional standards to ensure that their welfare is maintained.
- Church Army will uphold good practice in order to develop sound relationships of integrity, truthfulness and trust with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Where there are disclosures or allegations of abuse, Church Army will take them seriously and will co-operate with statutory agencies and will not investigate on its own.
- All Church Army Evangelists, Evangelists-in-Training, employees and volunteers working for Church Army with children, young people or vulnerable adults must:
  - have a criminal records check on first appointment and each time they change post or every three years, whichever is the sooner
  - have references taken up prior to first appointment
  - read and understand this document (training will be made available)
  - follow the code of conduct below
  - attend regular safeguarding training

Criminal records checks will be with the Disclosure and Barring Service which merged the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Checks for England and Wales may be carried out either through Church Army or by dioceses or other appropriate bodies; for other jurisdictions, they will be carried out through the Church or other appropriate bodies. Church Army has separate policy statements and procedures in respect of its DBS checks.

## **Scope**

This policy and the procedures set out in it apply in full to all work for which Church Army is legally responsible, including building-based projects, field projects, training, research, offices and work being carried out by or under the auspices of employees or trainees of Church Army.

All Church Army Evangelists, employees and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults, regardless of the extent of their links with Church Army, are expected as a minimum to follow the principles set out in this policy and to know what to do if there are suspicions or allegations of abuse. The CCPAS Helpline is available as support to all.

Where Church Army Evangelists work in partnership with or under the auspices of third parties such as local churches which are legally responsible for the work, there would normally be a local child protection policy and support, for instance through the diocese, and it would normally be more appropriate to use that. However, where such policies or support are unclear, inadequate or ineffective, Church Army Evangelists are encouraged to obtain the support that they need through the CCPAS Helpline whilst ensuring that they comply with local policies, unless this would be illegal.

Some Church Army projects, notably the homeless projects at Marylebone and Cardiff, have local policies which are consistent with the principles of this policy but which have fuller explanations or slightly different procedures which are specific to them and their regulatory requirements, which they need follow in the case of allegations or suspicions.

## Code of conduct

### Do:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Respect people's right to personal privacy
- Set appropriate professional boundaries
- Provide access for people to talk to others about any concerns they have
- Encourage people to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- Avoid one-to-one situations, or at least be within sight or hearing of others
- Obtain written parental consent before taking children anywhere
- Follow minimum staffing ratios – see the relevant chapter in CCPAS guidance.
- Keep registers including emergency contact numbers of all children present
- Carry out health and safety risk assessments, have appropriate first aid available, and check that what you propose to do is covered by insurance
- Ensure that all volunteers have had criminal records checks and references
- Act on any concerns you may have about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- If in doubt, seek guidance.

### Do not:

- Rely on your good name to protect you
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums or crushes
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- Believe "it could never happen to me"
- Ignore suspicions, allegations or disclosures
- Investigate disclosures or allegations of child abuse.

## What happens if....

### ...you suspect a child is being abused

1. Record the facts
2. You may pass the matter on to a senior person to deal with further if they are not in any way involved. You must not talk to anyone else about it, investigate or do anything which could alert the suspected perpetrator to the suspicions.
3. Refer the matter immediately to the CCPAS helpline 0845 120 4550, quoting Church Army's membership of CCPAS No 5175. They will follow up as appropriate, advise you how to proceed, support you through the process and be part of the liaison with the statutory authorities.
4. Please inform Faye Popham in Sheffield [f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk](mailto:f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk) ; 0114 2521637 that you have referred a matter to CCPAS – you do not need to provide details.

### **...you receive a disclosure of abuse**

1. Keep calm, allow child or adult to speak, do not ask any leading questions.
2. Let the individual know you will have to pass this information on.
3. If there is immediate danger to the child, report to Social Services or Police.
4. Make a detailed written record of what was said.
5. You may pass the matter on to a senior person to deal with further if they are not in any way involved. You must not talk to anyone else about it, investigate or do anything which could alert the alleged perpetrator to the allegations.
6. Refer the matter immediately to the CCPAS helpline 0845 120 4550, quoting Church Army's membership of CCPAS No 5175. They will follow up as appropriate, advise you how to proceed, support you through the process and be part of the liaison with the statutory authorities.
7. Please inform Faye Popham in Sheffield on [f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk](mailto:f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk); 0114 252 1665 that you have referred a matter to CCPAS – you do not need to provide details.

### ***Remember: you must refer – do not investigate yourself.***

Allegations of abuse are likely mainly to be received in the following ways:

- By Evangelists in the field, Evangelists-in-Training or hostel workers
- By the Chief or Deputy Chief Executive, members of the Operations team, a member of Management Group or other church officials;
- By office staff who have no connection with those involved, by post, e-mail or telephone, probably from alleged victims or those close to them – these should be passed immediately without any discussion to Faye Popham in the Sheffield office [f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk](mailto:f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk); 0114 252 1637. The responsibility of the person receiving the communication ceases as soon as they have spoken to Faye so that they know that the matter is being followed up immediately.

#### *Allegations by post or e-mail*

If allegations are received by post or e-mail, you should not reply to them, but should pass them on immediately to Faye for her to pass to CCPAS. You should ensure that any hard copies of the allegations are kept in a secure place.

#### *Allegations by telephone*

If allegations are made by telephone, you may need to handle someone who is very upset. You should be aware that you are likely to find the call distressing. If appropriate, you may wish to contact the Organisation's Counsellor afterwards.

Our ideal is that the allegations are made directly to CCPAS without any filtering by you and with a minimum of conversation with you. You should say that you will contact the Organisation's Child Protection consultants and ask them to ring the caller as soon as possible, and should take the caller's contact details.

If the caller refuses to allow their phone number to be passed on to them or to end the call:

- just listen to what they say
- make notes
- do not ask questions unless you think you misheard something
- do not make any promises
- do not agree not to tell anyone or to act on what you have been told – if necessary you can explain that, if they reveal information of a likely criminal offence by someone who is still alive, we are required to pass the information on to the police
- you may reveal your name so that they know who they are speaking to.

Once the call is over, you should contact CCPAS in exactly the same way as for allegations made by post or e-mail. Even if the caller has not been prepared to provide contact details, you should contact CCPAS.

## **What happens next?**

### ***Contact the person making the allegations***

CCPAS will contact the person making the allegations as soon as possible in an appropriate way. If the allegations have come to light via someone who is familiar with the people involved, for instance a local Evangelist, their contact may be via that person.

### ***Gather basic information***

CCPAS, without in any way carrying out an investigation, will seek to obtain the following information purely to help to consider the appropriate way forward:

- Is it clear:
  - Who the allegation is against?
  - Where the alleged offences took place?
  - When the alleged offences took place?
- Is the alleged offender still alive?
- Is the alleged offender currently a Church Army Evangelist, Evangelist in Training, employee or volunteer?
- Is the alleged offender still in active ministry? If yes, what is their role and who is their employer?
- Was the alleged offender employed by Church Army at the time of the alleged offences?
- Was the project at which the alleged offences took place owned by Church Army at the time?
- Any other information which might corroborate or undermine the allegations eg the young age of the alleged offender at the time, information on relationships detailed in the allegation?
- Has Church Army got records of:
  - Other allegations against the alleged offender?
  - Previous allegations by the person making the allegations?

If CCPAS need to obtain factual information from Church Army's records, Faye Popham [f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk](mailto:f.popham@churcharmy.org.uk) on 0114 252 1637 should be the first point of contact.

***Inform Church Army***

CCPAS will inform Church Army via Faye Popham, giving an outline of the allegations so that a minimal number of appropriate people can be made aware of the issue. Except in exceptional circumstances this will only be relevant members of the Leadership Team, the relevant Management Team member and Bishop, and the Communications Manager to handle media relations.

***Support local people involved***

CCPAS will advise those who contact them about what they should and should not do, including thinking through how those involved and potentially traumatised can be supported without breaking the law.