



Sawston Free Church

United Reformed - Methodist

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Sawston Free Church: Reviewed July 2016

This policy was agreed at a Church Meeting held on

Sawston Free Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Sawston Free Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

Sawston Free Church recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity, and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy, supporting the Church's endeavour to be a safe supportive and caring community for all people with particular awareness of the special care needed for children, young people, vulnerable adults and survivors of abuse.

Sawston Free Church is concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all people connected to the church community.

Sawston Free Church desires to prevent all abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects abuse may have on people, including their spiritual development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

Sawston Free Church commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a person may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

Sawston Free Church commits itself to ensuring the implementation of United Reformed and Methodist Safeguarding Policies; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in all of its activities and connected organisations, including those who have use of the buildings through our lettings and hiring.

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Sawston Free Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults.

Sawston Free Church affirms and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding all who are on our premises.

Sawston Free Church appoints **Margaret Badcock** as its Safe Church Contact Person and supports her in her role which is to be an accessible and competent person to hear of any concerns regarding feeling safe. Sawston Free Church appoints **Maggie Jones** as Church Safeguarding Officer and supports her in her role which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister, elders and other office bearers in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with URC and Methodist Safeguarding Coordinators
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church

a) Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities to children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010) and the URC Good Practice Handbook (Fourth Edition 2014)

b) Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept, noting date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the elders in council in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The church meeting will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
- iv) Any church-organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked by the event organiser to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate in accordance with the church's policies.
- v) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The church meeting will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

These things are also in place to safeguard those working with children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

c) Appointment and training of workers

Workers who have regular and/or unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure and elders meeting approval. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first year of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.) and each worker will have an annual review conducted by a named member of the church and another worker within the organisation.

d) Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, pastoral visitors and elders will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

e) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

A leaflet will be produced and reviewed annually to be given to each person working with vulnerable adults and children, outlining good practice and systems. The leaflet will be reviewed annually with this policy

f) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of the church meeting

g) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to Church Secretary.

h) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement which should include Safeguarding Code of Practice, will be given a copy of this policy and the leaflet. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings.

i) Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisations. However, a complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the church meeting and who is currently Margaret Badcock. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to Margaret Badcock or the Minister, who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of either the United Reformed or Methodist Church, which will involve initially speaking with one of the Local Complaints Officers who are Nicola Grieves or Richard Elcock, respectively.

j) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the elders in council.

k) Key concepts and definitions

- i) Vulnerable Adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability or situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.
- ii) Safeguarding is protecting people from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- iii) Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- iv) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated

Signed Church Secretary