

Chapter 5—Safeguarding in practice

Safeguarding in Practice has been specifically designed to assist volunteers and paid staff in their day-to-day work with children and protected adults. The guidance is designed to facilitate the development of safe and caring practice.

Code of Conduct for Volunteers and Paid Workers

The Church of Scotland has a deep concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each individual and seeks to safeguard the welfare of all individuals who come into contact with the Church and its services.

A Church of Scotland worker has a responsibility to create and maintain a safe environment for children and protected adults at all times.

The code of conduct for volunteers and paid workers will aim to set out appropriate and inappropriate conduct for workers to follow to ensure a safe church for all.

The Church's key Safeguarding message is:

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

The role of volunteers and paid workers

The Church of Scotland's Safeguarding system seeks to adopt a preventive approach through safe recruitment practices, policies and procedures, training and awareness raising and ensuring good Safeguarding practices: see the [Safeguarding Act](#) and the Code of Good Safeguarding Practice (Appendix 1).

Appropriate conduct

As a worker you should:

- Follow your role/job description
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during church activities
- Ensure your contact with children and protected adults is appropriate to your role and the church activity
- Create relationships with children, protected adults and other workers that are based on honesty, trust and respect
- Understand that children and protected adults are individuals with their own needs and rights
- Respect differences in gender, culture, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and religious beliefs
- Create an environment where children and protected adults feel able to share any concerns
- Complete a risk assessment before activities with children, young people, or protected adults are carried out to ensure that every reasonable step has been taken to protect participants from harm

- When unanticipated risks do occur, note on the risk assessment ensuring that any necessary action is taken to reduce or eliminate potential reoccurrence
- Inform a child or protected adult as soon as possible if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child/adult protection procedures
- Where possible, involve children and protected adults in decisions
- Immediately report Safeguarding concerns
- Attend the relevant Safeguarding training within the timescale in the Safeguarding training pathway
- Follow the Safeguarding policies and procedures in the Safeguarding Handbook which includes the social media guidelines and photography and video guidelines
- Receive and follow the Safeguarding pocket card
- Have knowledge of and report unacceptable behaviour or poor practice as per the whistleblowing policy

Inappropriate conduct

As a worker you should not:

- Undertake regulated work/regulated activity with a workforce that you do not have PVG/DBS clearance through the Church of Scotland to work with
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children or protected adults
- Accept/give money or gifts of monetary value from/to children or protected adults
- Have any sexual contact with children or protected adults
- Share your personal contact details with children or protected adults
- Contact children or protected adults via your personal phone, email address or social media account
- Use inappropriate language
- Make derogatory or sexually suggestive comments
- Bully or intimidate or permit any form of bullying to take place by other children, protected adults or workers
- Act in a threatening or harmful manner
- Act unlawfully
- Smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances when working
- Allow concerns of suspected harm or abuse to go unreported
- Arrange social occasions with children or protected adults or invite them to your home outside of organised group occasions (other than with the consent of parent, carers or guardians and where at least one other adult is present)
- Allow unknown adults access to children

Upholding this code of conduct

As a Church of Scotland worker, you must follow this code of conduct.

If you fail to uphold this code of conduct, you may be subject to investigation, a risk assessment and disciplinary procedures.

This may result in your PVG Scheme membership with the Church of Scotland being terminated and a referral made to Disclosure Scotland.

Depending on the seriousness of the situation, we may also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or Social Work Department.