



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

April 2026

This policy must be read by everyone in a regulated role and the Safeguarding Team.

Person Responsible for this Policy – Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding

Next review Jan 2028

CALLING
OUR CITY TO LIFE

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CHURCH DETAILS

Name: Queen's Park Baptist Church

Address: 180 Queen's Drive
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Glasgow
G42 8QD

Tel No: 0141 423 3962

Email address: office@qpbcb.org

Denomination: Baptist Union of Scotland

INTRODUCTION

The Trustees of Queen's Park Baptist Church (now referred to as the Trustees) recognise the importance of its ministry to children, young people and adults. They also acknowledge their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable people, including adults at risk, children and young people who are in contact with the church.

As part of its mission, Queen's Park Baptist Church (now referred to as QPBC) is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting vulnerable people, including children, young people and adults at risk, as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the voluntary, management, pastoral and contracted staff workers within the church.
- 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 and adult protection authorities and other organisations.
- Providing procedures and training to ensure information privacy and safety for everyone in the church, including children, young people and adults at risk.

The Trustees are committed to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk from all forms of abuse, and all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to implement this policy.

Definition of 'adults at risk'.

Under the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, an adult means an individual aged 18 or over. Under this Act 'adults at risk' are adults who:

- (a) are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests,
- (b) are at risk of harm, and
- (c) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

An adult is at risk of harm if:

- (a) another person's conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed, or
- (b) the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.'

The Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. The Trustees will act in accordance with: National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 (updated 2023) and Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

The Trustees acknowledge their role as outlined in “National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021”:

Faith Organisations:

“Religious leaders, practitioners and volunteers within faith organisations have a unifying priority in relation to the protection of children. They may provide regulated care as well as a wide range of voluntary support services. Faith organisations including churches provide carefully planned activities for children, supporting families under stress and caring for those hurt by abuse in the past, as well as ministering to and managing those who have caused harm.

All reasonable steps must be taken to provide a safe environment that promotes and supports the wellbeing of children and young people. This includes careful selection and appointment of those who work with children. It also means ensuring practitioners and volunteers are confident about how to respond promptly, in line with agreed protocols, when concerns arise about risk of harm to a child from abuse or neglect. Child protection coordinators and safeguarding advisers should be available for consultation within faith organisations. They will work with social workers and police officers as and when required. Practitioners and volunteers with church and faith organisations must report concerns about harm to a child to their line manager or safeguarding/child protection coordinator. The safety of the child or adult at risk is the priority.

The best protection is prevention. For faith communities and organisations, clear, written and well-shared child protection and vulnerable adult policies and procedures are a first step to creating awareness and safety within the organisation/community. Volunteers, employees and those in positions of authority and pastoral responsibility need support in how they can recognise abuse; how they should respond to allegations or concerns about abuse; how they should record concerns and make appropriate referrals; and what behaviour towards children is acceptable and unacceptable within their role.”

RECRUITMENT POLICY

Everyone undertaking a regulated role requires to be a member of the PVG scheme and to have satisfactorily completed the QPBC application process.

A new volunteer or staff member cannot begin a regulated role until the PVG process is complete.

If someone steps down from their volunteering role and they do not return within 12 months then the church, through the safeguarding administrators, would inform Disclosure Scotland that QPBC is no longer an interested party. If after 12 months they wish to return to volunteering, a new application for membership of the PVG scheme would require to be submitted in relation to their role within QPBC.

All prospective volunteers must be recommended by a member of Ministry Staff before the start of the safeguarding process.

DEFINITION OF ABUSE and NEGLECT

1. The Trustees accept the working definitions of abuse detailed within The Scottish Government Guidance "National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021" "Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, harm to the child."
2. Categories of abuse are defined as follows:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a person's emotional development. 'Persistent' means there is a continuous or intermittent pattern which has caused, or is likely to cause, significant harm.

Emotional abuse is present to some extent in all types of ill treatment of a child, but it can also occur independently of other forms of abuse. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person
- exploitation or corruption of a child, or imposition of demands inappropriate for their age or stage of development
- repeated silencing, ridiculing or intimidation
- demands that so exceed a child's capability that they may be harmful
- extreme overprotection, such that a child is harmed by prevention of learning, exploration and social development
- seeing or hearing the abuse of another (in accordance with the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018)

Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an act that involves a child under 16 in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

For those who may be victims of sexual offences aged 16-17, safeguarding procedures should be considered. These procedures must be applied when there is a concern about the sexual exploitation or trafficking of a child.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of *indecent images*, in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a person under 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or 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. Children who are trafficked across borders or within the UK may be at particular risk of sexual abuse.

Criminal exploitation

Criminal exploitation refers to the action of an individual or group using an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator. Violence or the threat of violence may feature. The victim may have been criminally exploited, even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation may involve physical contact and may also occur through the use of technology. It may involve gangs and organised criminal networks. Sale of illegal drugs may be a feature. Children and vulnerable adults may be exploited to move and store drugs and money. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons may be involved.

Child trafficking

Child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt, exchange or transfer of control of a child under the age of 18 years for the purposes of exploitation. Transfer or movement can be within an area and does not have to be across borders. Examples of and reasons for trafficking can include sexual, criminal and financial exploitation, forced labour, removal of organs, illegal adoption, and forced or illegal marriage.

Neglect

Neglect consists in persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. There can also be single instances of neglectful behaviour that cause significant harm. Neglect can arise in the context of systemic stresses such as poverty, and is an indicator of both support and protection needs.

'Persistent' means there is a pattern which may be continuous or intermittent which has caused, or is likely to cause significant harm. However, single instances of neglectful behaviour by a person in a position of responsibility can be significantly harmful. Early signs of neglect indicate the need for support to prevent harm.

The GIRFEC SHANARRI (Getting It Right For Every Child – safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible, included) wellbeing indicators set out the essential wellbeing needs. Neglect of any or all of these can impact on healthy development. 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); to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); to seek consistent access to appropriate medical care or treatment; to ensure the child receives education; or to respond to a child's essential emotional needs.

Faltering growth refers to an inability to reach normal weight and growth or development milestones in the absence of medically discernible physical and genetic reasons. This condition requires further assessment and may be associated with chronic neglect.

Malnutrition, lack of nurturing and lack of stimulation can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. For very young children the impact could quickly become life-threatening. Chronic physical and emotional neglect may also have a significant impact on teenagers.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a form of violence, committed predominantly by men, predominantly towards women. It is any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and takes place within the context of a relationship between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise), or ex-partners. Abuse may include controlling, isolating, degrading, threatening and humiliating behaviour. It may be committed in the home or elsewhere; and may include online activity. The offence of abusive behaviour towards a partner or ex-partner is defined in section 1 of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

Financial Abuse

Age UK have multiple definitions of financial abuse listed such as: "Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits".

RACE, CULTURE & RELIGION (not included in National Guidance for Child Protection 2021)

Crucial to any assessment is a knowledge and sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious aspects. Remember also that differences exist not only between ethnic groups but also within the same ethnic group and between different neighbourhoods and social classes. While different practices must be taken into account, it is also important to remember basic human rights. Different approaches to care do not justify abuse of children or adults.

Spiritual Abuse (not included in National Guidance for Child Protection 2021)

Spiritual Abuse is defined as "coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include : manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or using the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context." (Oakley, 2013 in Oakley & Kinmond, 2013 p21).

Scripture - when used out of context to pressurise individuals to behave in a particular way or to make a particular decision can be considered abusive. If passages are used to control or manipulate behaviour this can be very difficult to argue against and may be very damaging in the long term. A warning sign of spiritual abuse is when scripture is used to support an individual's personal agenda. Instead, it should focus on the needs of others and should encourage people to consider and choose their responses for themselves.

Prioritising the Abused

In most cases, child abuse will be as the result of deliberate or avoidable behaviour. However, in exceptional cases through disabling causes (such as substance abuse or mental health problems) a parent or carer may not be in control of their behaviour and child abuse may still occur. However, the cause of the abuse may be of little consequence to the abused child. It is therefore important that even where abusive behaviour was not deliberate; such cases should nevertheless be dealt with under QPBC safeguarding procedures to ensure the provision of an appropriate considered response.

Human Trafficking and Exploitation

The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 defines a child as a person under 18 years. When s38 of this Act is implemented there will be a statutory duty on certain public

bodies to notify Police Scotland about possible victims of human trafficking. The sexual abuse of trust offence applies to persons over 18 who are in a defined position of trust (such as teachers, care workers and health professionals) intentionally engaging in sexual activity towards a person under 18 years (Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009, s42). The Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005 also defines a child as a person under 18 years in relation to sexual exploitation of children under the age of 18 through prostitution or pornography.

POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE (please note that this is not a definitive list)

Neglect	Emotional	Physical	Sexual
• Tired/listless • Unkempt • Poor hygiene • Untreated medical conditions • Medical appointments missed • Constantly hungry or stealing food • Overeats when food is available • Poor growth • Poor/late attendance • Being regularly left alone or unsupervised • Dressed inappropriately for the weather condition • Having few friends and/or being withdrawn • Ill equipped for school	• Failure to thrive • Attention seeking • Over ready to relate to others • Low self esteem • Apathy • Depression/self-harm • Drink/ drug/ solvent abuse • Persistently being over-protective • Constantly shouting at, threatening or demeaning a child • Withholding love and affection • Regularly humiliating a child	• Unexplained injuries • Injuries on certain parts of the body • Injuries in various stages of healing • Injuries that reflect an article used • Flinching when approached • Reluctant to change • Crying/ instability • Afraid of home • Behavioural extremes • Apathy or depression • Wanting arms and legs covered even in very hot weather	• Age inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge/ promiscuity • Wary of adults/ running away from home • Eating disorders/depression/ self-harm • Unexplained gifts/ money • Stomach pains when walking or sitting • Bedwetting • Recurrent genital discharge • Sexually transmitted diseases

The possible indicators of abuse will be covered in the regular training provided by the QPBC Safeguarding Team.

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS

Under no circumstances should a staff member or volunteer carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse is required to do the following:

- It is vital not to promise to keep information 'secret' but assure the person talking to you that their information will be treated in confidence and only shared with those who need to know. Those listening to a disclosure should be careful not to investigate or ask questions.
- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to the Ministry leader of the group concerned (Mairi Greenshields for Children; Josh Silver for Youth and Brodie McGregor for Pastoral Visiting) or to the Trustee who sits as chair (Ali Meek) or another member of the Safeguarding Team (Janice Aitken, Ali Smithers, Christine Murison, Josh Silver, Raquel Ram or Lindsay Marshall). The contact details of these people can be found on Church Suite. If an individual cannot access Church Suite, contact details will be made available via the church office. Posters reminding volunteers of who to contact are placed around all of the QPBC buildings.
- All concerns or disclosures should be recorded and signed, where possible, using the Safeguarding Concern Report form (see Appendix 4) and passed to the ministry leader or safeguarding team at the first possible opportunity (ideally within 24 hours ensuring there is verbal or written receipt of the concern).
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.
- These notes will be kept in a secure place for possible future reference as they may be used in any legal or police follow-up.
- Concerns may be emailed to safeguarding@qpb.org
- In the absence of any member of the Safeguarding Team/Ministry Leader then the report should be made to Social Care Direct (0141 287 0555). If you consider the child/young person or adult at risk is at immediate risk of significant harm, call the police on 999.
- If the suspicions in any way involve a member of the Safeguarding Team/Ministry Leader then the report should be made to another member of the Safeguarding Team.
- **Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the medical responder of any suspicions.**
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the adult or child at risk of injury.
- It is the right of any individual to make a direct referral to the children or adult protection agencies or seek advice from other agencies such as [thirtynine:eight](#). If the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Team/Ministry Leader has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with its members or others as to the appropriateness of any action or lack of action, they may contact an outside agency directly.

The role of the Safeguarding Team is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Social Work Department where necessary. It is the Social Work Department's responsibility to consider and if necessary, to investigate the

matter under the appropriate legislation and regulations. **It is not the role of any person in the church to carry out investigations themselves.**

APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The Trustees will ensure all staff and volunteers are appointed, vetted, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles of protection set out in our policies and in government regulations (see RELEVANT LEGISLATION below).

SHARING INFORMATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Information recorded may require to be shared with Disclosure Scotland or other agencies in accordance with current regulations.

SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The Trustees are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate and providing support to any person attending the church who is affected by abuse.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years unless there is a major change in legislation.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Child Protection (Scotland) Act 2003

Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007

General Data Protection Regulations May 2018

Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

LIFE AND SOUL COUNSELLING

The Life and Soul Counselling Service is a ministry of QPBC. It offers a safe and confidential service following the ethics and code of practice of COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland). Counsellors within the service are trained to national standards and are given regular professional supervision. Any safeguarding concerns should be reported as detailed in this Policy.

APPENDIX 1

How to respond to a disclosure

GENERAL POINTS

- Above everything else listen, listen, listen
- Show acceptance of what the child/adult says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child/adult directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child/adult you will need to let someone else know - don't promise to keep the information a 'secret' but reassure that you won't share widely.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child/adult may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child/adult decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- As soon as possible write down what has been shared (See RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS, in main document)

HELPFUL RESPONSES

- You have done the right thing in telling
- That must have been really hard
- I am glad you have told me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you
- Have you told anyone else?

DON'T SAY

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"
- Ask closed questions or probe for additional details.

CONCLUDING

Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

APPENDIX 2

List of local contacts for reporting:

- Health and Social Care Connect (0141 287 0555)
- Out of Hours Social Work (0300 343 1505)

APPENDIX 3

QPBC SAFEGUARDING FLOW CHART



This form is to record any safeguarding concerns about children/young person or adults at risk. This may be either observations or disclosures. This form should be written as soon as possible and passed to your ministry leader / a member of the safeguarding team as soon as possible.

Person Reporting:	
Date concern noted/date of incident:	Time of concern note/time of incident:
Name of child / YP / adult at risk:	

[illegible]

Safeguarding Concern Form – Part B

Action taken by reporting person:			
Sign:		Date:	

Action taken by ministry leader / QPBC staff:			
Sign:		Date:	

Referred to external agency (i.e. police/social work)	Y / N
If Yes give detail:	

Conclusion / outcome:			
Name:			
Sign:		Date:	