

Safeguarding Policy

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General Policy

Policy Statement and Principles

St Nicholas Cole Abbey Centre for Workplace Ministry Limited (“SNCA”) is a company limited by guarantee with company number 07780681 and a registered charity with charity number 1147429.

This policy should be read alongside the **House of Bishops’ Policy Statements ‘Promoting a Safer Church’ (2017)** (the “House of Bishops’ Policy”) and **‘Protecting All God’s Children’ (2010)** and the **Diocesan Safeguarding Policy ‘Promoting a Safer Diocese’ (2018)** (the “Diocesan Policy”) which, amongst other things, defines safeguarding as the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture and ensure that those who work, volunteer and worship in or visit our churches are kept safe.

The SNCA safeguarding policy applies the Diocesan Policy and House of Bishops’ Policy to the particular situation of SNCA and its various ministries. There are seven parts to the SNCA Safeguarding Policy:

1. The General Policy
2. The Children’s Policy – for those working with children (0-11),
3. The Young People’s Policy – for those working with young people (11-18),
4. The Vulnerable Adults Policy
5. The Record Keeping Policy
6. The Domestic Abuse Response Policy
7. The Safeguarding for Small Group Leaders Policy

The full SNCA policy can be found here: <https://www.stnickschurch.org.uk/safeguarding/>

In line with the Diocesan Policy and House of Bishops’ Policy, SNCA is committed to:

- a. promoting a safer environment and culture;
- b. safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church;
- c. responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation;
- d. caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons;
- e. caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons; and
- f. responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

SNCA will:

- a. create a safe and caring place for all;
- b. have a named Church Safeguarding Officer (“CSO”) to work with the Minister in Charge (a.k.a the incumbent) and the Directors/Trustees to implement policy and procedures;
- c. safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse;
- d. ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish;
- e. display in church premises and on the parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs;
- f. listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse;
- g. take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (“DSA”) and statutory agencies immediately;
- h. offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred;

- i. care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties;
- j. ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually;
- k. review the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures and practices at least annually; and
- l. ensure that each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by SNCA.

Overview of safeguarding responsibilities

The names and contact details of individuals with responsibility for safeguarding within the various SNCA ministries are set out at the end of this document.

- (1) **The Directors and Trustees** of SNCA have overall responsibility for safeguarding within all the various ministries undertaken under the SNCA umbrella. This policy is maintained, reviewed, and sanctioned by the Directors and Trustees.
- (2) **The Church Safeguarding Committee** is a source of advice and guidance on safeguarding issues. They will advise the Directors and Trustees on any matters relating to safeguarding, make recommendations for changes in policy and procedure and hold the Minister in Charge accountable for policy implementation.
- (3) **The Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO)**
 - a. is the individual member of the Church Safeguarding Committee given responsibility for Safeguarding within SNCA and all its various ministries;
 - b. may delegate some of their responsibilities to ministry leaders but will assist and advise ministry leaders if a safeguarding issue or risk arises and needs to be addressed;
 - c. will also be included in decisions about whether to permit someone to be involved in ministry with children where their DBS check is blemished, or information is provided about them under the DBS scheme; and
 - d. is held accountable in his or her safeguarding role, by the SNCA Directors and Trustees.
- (4) **The Ministry Leaders**
 - a. are, where responsibilities have been delegated, responsible for safeguarding in their respective ministry areas on a day to day basis. This includes:
 - i. ensuring all caregivers within their area are recruited in accordance with this safeguarding policy and,
 - ii. acting as safeguarding officers for any disclosures of abuse within the relevant ministry.
 - b. are held accountable for their safeguarding role by the SNCA Directors and Trustees.
- (5) **The Children's Champion** is tasked with ensuring that the needs of the children and young people in the church are recognised and addressed.
- (6) **The Vulnerable Adults Champion** is tasked with ensuring that the needs of vulnerable adults attending any of our meetings are recognised and addressed.

- (7) **Caregiver** refers to anyone serving in any role within church which involves any oversight of children, young people or vulnerable adults. All caregivers share a particular responsibility for:
- loving the person as Christ loves them
 - setting an example of proper Christian conduct
 - praying for those in their care and pointing them to God's word

Important:

- All caregivers must read **Section A** of the relevant policy.
- They must then read any additional information from **Section B** of that policy that is relevant to the area of ministry they are serving in.
- A list of key contact details can be found on the last two pages of each policy.

Serious Incidents

The Charity Commission's guidance states that charity trustees must report any "Serious Incidents" occurring within their charity to the Charity Commission. This must be done as soon as is reasonably possible after it happens, or immediately after it comes to light.

What is a 'Serious Incident'?

A Serious Incident is an event of abuse or mistreatment, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to the charity's beneficiaries, employees, office holders, volunteers or to others who come into contact with the charity through its work, loss of the charity's money or assets, damage to the charity's property or harm to the charity's work or reputation.

What is considered to be "significant" is a matter for the trustees to determine, as it will depend on the context of the charity, taking into account its operations, staff, finances and reputation.

Examples are if someone were to allege:

- that they were abused by anyone while at a service/gathering held by SNCA, or
- that they were abused by a SNCA member of staff, trustee, small group leader, or Sunday school leader
- a failure to report safeguarding concerns to statutory agencies or to carry out relevant vetting checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified in law, under safeguarding legislation, from working with children, young people or adults.
- anything where the likely damage to the reputation of or public trust of SNCA is particularly high e.g. a widespread culture of bullying, abuse or sexual harassment.

Who should make the Serious Incident Report?

The Charity Commission must be informed of 'serious incidents'. Although the responsibility for making a Serious Incident report in a timely manner rests with the charity's trustees, this responsibility can be delegated. It is important that this delegation sets out clearly what the parameters of the delegated responsibility are. The SNCA trustees delegate this responsibility to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, and the Diocesan Secretary.

We will report all serious incidents to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and will also report general safeguarding concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser where advice and assistance is required.

What should you do if a safeguarding Serious Incident is identified?

If a safeguarding Serious Incident is identified, immediate action is required:

1. Prevent or minimise any further harm, loss or damage, if safe to do so.
2. In an emergency situation, where there is an immediate risk, report the Serious Incident to the police and then to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, who will take over the management of the Serious Incident.
3. In a non-emergency situation, report the Serious Incident to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser within 24 hours of becoming aware of a safeguarding concern or allegation. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will respond to the concerns and report and liaise with the statutory agencies including the police and social services as required and will take over the management of the Serious Incident.
4. Request a report from the Diocese to the trustees on any safeguarding Serious Incidents reported, as well as those where a decision was taken not to report as the incident was considered to be a borderline case.
The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will prepare the Serious Incident report for the Diocesan Secretary to submit to the SNCA trustees as well as to the Charity Commission at rsi@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk.
5. At the end of all investigations a Lessons Learnt Case Review should be undertaken to ascertain what happened and how it can be prevented from (or the chances reduced of it) happening again.

Further details, including what exactly will be reported are found here:

<https://www.parishresources.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Safeguarding-SIR-Guidance-FINAL-1-Jan-2019.pdf>

Pandemics

Steps will be taken in line with any relevant government guidelines to avoid neglect of care for people's health during a pandemic.

In the case of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, a Risk Assessment was created to ensure safety during the infrequent use of St Nick's while physical meetings were suspended, and to plan for the safe resumption of physical gatherings. Steps were taken to inform all regular attendees of the need for social distancing (including the effect this will have on children's groups), hand-washing, using hand sanitizer etc.

SNCA's Ministries

The ministries undertaken by SNCA include:

1. **St Nicks Church Services** (mainly Sunday morning);
2. **Church Small Groups** (Wednesday evening);
3. **London Bridge Talks** (Tuesday lunchtime);
4. **Fleet Street Talks** (Wednesday lunchtime);
5. **Victoria Talks** (Wednesday lunchtime);
6. **St Nick's Talks** (Thursday lunchtime);
7. **One-to-one Bible reading**
8. **City Partnership Groups** (mainly Tuesday morning);
9. **Women in the Word on Friday (WWF)** (Friday Morning);
10. **Training sessions** e.g. SLOBS (Study Leaders Own Bible Studies), WMT (Word Ministry Training), evangelism training
11. **Occasional events** e.g. Christianity Explored, guest events, church weekends away, socials.

Ministry with provision for children and young people

The only ministry that makes formal provision for children and young people is **St Nick's Church**. This primarily involves Sunday church with provision for crèche, Sunday school, and youth meetings, but also includes weekends away and occasional seminars. This ministry must comply with the SNCA Safeguarding policies in their entirety.

Ministries with no provision for children and young people

The remaining ministries undertaken by SNCA do not make formal provision for children and young people. The parts of SNCA Safeguarding policies relating to children and youth are not relevant to these ministries. However, where families make informal arrangements for the care of children and young people, they must take full responsibility for assessing the suitability of any volunteer.

Vulnerable adults – all ministries

For the purposes of this document, we have opted to use the term 'vulnerable adult' in place of 'adult at risk' due to this being a more familiar term.

None of the ministry areas make formal provision for vulnerable adults. However, the Vulnerable Adults Policy outlines considerations relevant to all ministries where vulnerable adults may be in attendance (which is all ministries). This supplement must be read by anyone providing formal care for vulnerable adults.

Guidance for the Staff Team

The Staff Team

The church Staff Team refers to all who are employed as staff of SNCA, including Associates, Student Ministry Apprentices, Cornhill Apprentices, and other named volunteers, whether or not they are in the employ of the church.

The following guidance covers staff in their work outside SNCA's specific ministries.

1. Day to day working on site

In the course of a working day children and vulnerable adults might be present in the SNCA church building as a result of the operation of the Wren Café or otherwise.

Staff members are free to interact with any such children within the church buildings as long as they are in public and there is no way their actions could be misconstrued by a third party.

2. Events in the buildings involving children or vulnerable adults

When a building is in use for an event involving children or vulnerable adults, staff are free to enter the building if they have good reason to do so. Such a staff member need not be screened, but must remain in the background of the activity and must not be in a situation where they are alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

Staff members are free to use the toilets in a building in use for an event involving children or vulnerable adults.

3. Starting any ministry involving children or vulnerable adults

From time to time church staff might be involved with organising ministry which includes provision for children or vulnerable adults (for example a one off event for adults which requires a crèche, or a weekend away for small groups that has children signed up to it).

Any such ministry must not commence without assessing its safeguarding implications, and acting accordingly. At an early stage of planning advice must be sought from members of the Church Safeguarding Committee and their directions followed.

Staff members must be aware that the process for screening a caregiver can take about 6 weeks. No caregiver can commence their role until the Safeguarding Evidence Checker has confirmed the screening as complete.

4. Visiting speakers

Church staff may from time to time wish to invite visiting speakers to speak and/or lead an event hosted by SNCA and its various ministries. As to this:-

- (1) Those who are ordained within the Church of England must have a Permission to Officiate or a Licence from the Bishop from their diocese to speak and/or lead, and must be of good life and standing. As such, if a church staff member intends to invite a person who is ordained within the Church of England to speak and/or lead, then he or she will need to ensure that these requirements are fulfilled. This is done by asking the relevant Church of England official to check with the Bishop from the proposed visiting speaker's diocese that the proposed visiting speaker has a Permission to Officiate or a Licence, and is of good life and standing.
- (2) Whatever action is taken for each visiting speaker should be documented.

Screening procedure for caregivers

Every applicant who wishes to serve in any ministry area involving children or young people must complete a screening process prior to serving, and anyone providing formal care (as defined by the Diocesan Policy) for vulnerable adults must also complete this process. To ensure safe and quality care, all caregivers must meet the following criteria in order to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

1. Recruitment

- a. All caregivers must be people in good standing with the church.
- b. All caregivers must be 18 years of age or older. However, with the prior approval and direction of the Children's Co-ordinator, young people who are aged 14+ can assist with children's work. Such volunteers contribute towards the number of children not the number of adults when it comes to required ratios.

2. Assessment

- a. All caregivers should have a conversation with two people - the Children's Co-ordinator and one other church member - to confirm their suitability for the role. They should be asked questions, made aware of the role description and have the opportunity to ask any follow-up questions needed.
- b. All caregivers must complete a Diocese of London Confidential Declaration Form, requiring the honest declaration of any criminal convictions.
- c. All caregivers must complete a volunteer application and agreement form requiring a Christian testimony and a signed declaration of having read the relevant policy.
- d. All caregivers must provide the names of two people to act as personal referees, which will be followed up. Referees must not be relatives/partners, current parish clergy, or church staff.
- e. All caregivers must have a completed DBS form for the applicable Enhanced level Disclosure. Details of how to do so will be sent to the caregiver via email. DBS checks will be updated as needed in line with the requirements set by the Diocese (every 3 years as of the end of 2023).

3. Appointment

A caregiver can begin their role **only when** the following have been completed:

- a. The Diocese of London Confidential Declaration Form and the Volunteer Agreement form have been filed as complete;
- b. the personal references have been sent for, received, and reviewed as being acceptable; and
- c. a satisfactory DBS Disclosure outcome has been received from thirtyone:eight.

4. Data Protection

All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely and indefinitely. SNCA will have record of the following:

- a. the Diocese of London Confidential Declaration Form;
- b. two personal references (which will be available to the Diocese of London Safeguarding Team (DST) should they request it);
- c. Volunteer Application and Agreement form;
- d. DBS disclosure certificate reference number; and
- e. Any additional notes pertaining to the above.

5. Training

All volunteers are asked to complete the online Church of England safeguarding training upon recruitment.

As for ongoing training, the following is in place:

- a. Each time rotas are sent by email the leaders are reminded about safeguarding.
- b. Leaders are encouraged to give each other feedback after each session.
- c. Each group has a document containing a specific brief for the leaders to refer to which reminds leaders about safeguarding and safety.
- d. There is an annual safeguarding push during which all leaders are given key safeguarding reminders, are set a safeguarding quiz, and are sent the updated policies and risk assessments. All Sunday School and Youth leaders are also encouraged to attend a children's work training day run by a larger partner church where possible.
- e. We ask all leaders to refresh their online safeguarding training every three years.

Contact Names and Details

Safeguarding Committee

Frank Owusu-Sekyere (Chair)
Church Safeguarding Officer
safeguarding@snca.co.uk

Mikey Williams
Assistant Minister; Children's Co-ordinator, Children and Vulnerable Adults Champion
mikey@snca.co.uk

Tricia Owusu-Sekyere
triciahemans@outlook.com

SNCA Staff

Chris Fishlock
Minister in Charge (Ministry Leader for all Ministries save London Bridge Talks)
chris@snca.co.uk

Alyssa Williams
Women's Minister
alyssa@snca.co.uk

Marie-Christine Wenz
Women's Minister
mariechristine@snca.co.uk

Tom Wright
Assistant Minister (Ministry Leader for London Bridge Talks)
tom.wright@snca.co.uk

Mikey Williams
Assistant Minister; Children's Co-ordinator; Children and Vulnerable Adults Champion
mikey@snca.co.uk

Tom Barnardo
Assistant Minister
tom.barnardo@snca.co.uk

Suzie Normanton
Church Manager
office@snca.co.uk

National Contacts

Thirtyone:Eight

Helpline: 0303 003 11 11

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>

City of London Corporation Children and Families Team

020 7332 3621 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

020 8356 2710 (weekdays after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)

City of London Social Care Services

020 7332 1224 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm)

020 8356 2300 (weekdays after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)

Child Line NSPCC

Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR Child Protection Helpline,

Tel. 0800 1111 0808 800 5000

(full number is just these 8 digits)

Family Lives (previously Parentline) 0808 800 222

Domestic Violence Helpline (for females) 0808 2000 247

Mankind (for males) 01823 334244

Police non-emergency phone line 101

Further resources

'Protecting all God's children: The Child Protection Policy of the Church of England', 2010

'Policy for Safeguarding in the Diocese of London', 2015

'The Church of England, House of Bishops, Parish safeguarding handbook' – promoting a safer church, October 2018

'The Care Act 2014, and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016' (Chapter 14)

London Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures 2015

www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding