



THE SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL UNION

Safeguarding Policy
& Procedure 2025

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Safeguarding Policy

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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Contents

This SNU Safeguarding Statement and Procedure is produced in two parts.

Part A includes our Policy and Guidelines

Part B includes our Procedures for workers and volunteers to make referrals and get advice

Part A

Section 1 – Our Commitment and Safeguarding Statement

Section 2 – Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Section 3 – Prevention

Section 4 – Pastoral Care

Section 5 – Working with Offenders

Section 6 – Practice Guidelines

Section 7 – Working in Partnership

Part B

Referral Procedures

Appendices

Appendix A – Statutory definitions

Appendix B – Responding to a child wishing to disclose abuse

Appendix C – Cause for concern forms

Appendix D – SNU’s Safeguarding Curriculum

Appendix E - Behaviour Risk Assessment

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Document

PART A – POLICY and GUIDELINES

Introduction

The Spiritualists' National Union ("the SNU") Safeguarding Policy has been introduced for use at Head Office, Arthur Findlay College, all charity subsidiaries, National, District and Church levels in all its activities across the United Kingdom and overseas.

The SNU takes seriously its duty to keep members, volunteers and the public safe. It is important that appropriate measures are in place to provide for the rights of all individuals.

This policy sets out the framework for how the SNU will go about this.

Section 1 - Our Commitment and Safeguarding Statement

Our Commitment

The SNU is committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all those it is in contact with. We acknowledge the additional needs which children, young people and vulnerable adults who are at risk may have. We are aware that anyone can be the victim of abuse and neglect of many kinds including physical, sexual, emotional, financial, power imbalance and neglect.

We accept the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

We agree with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation."

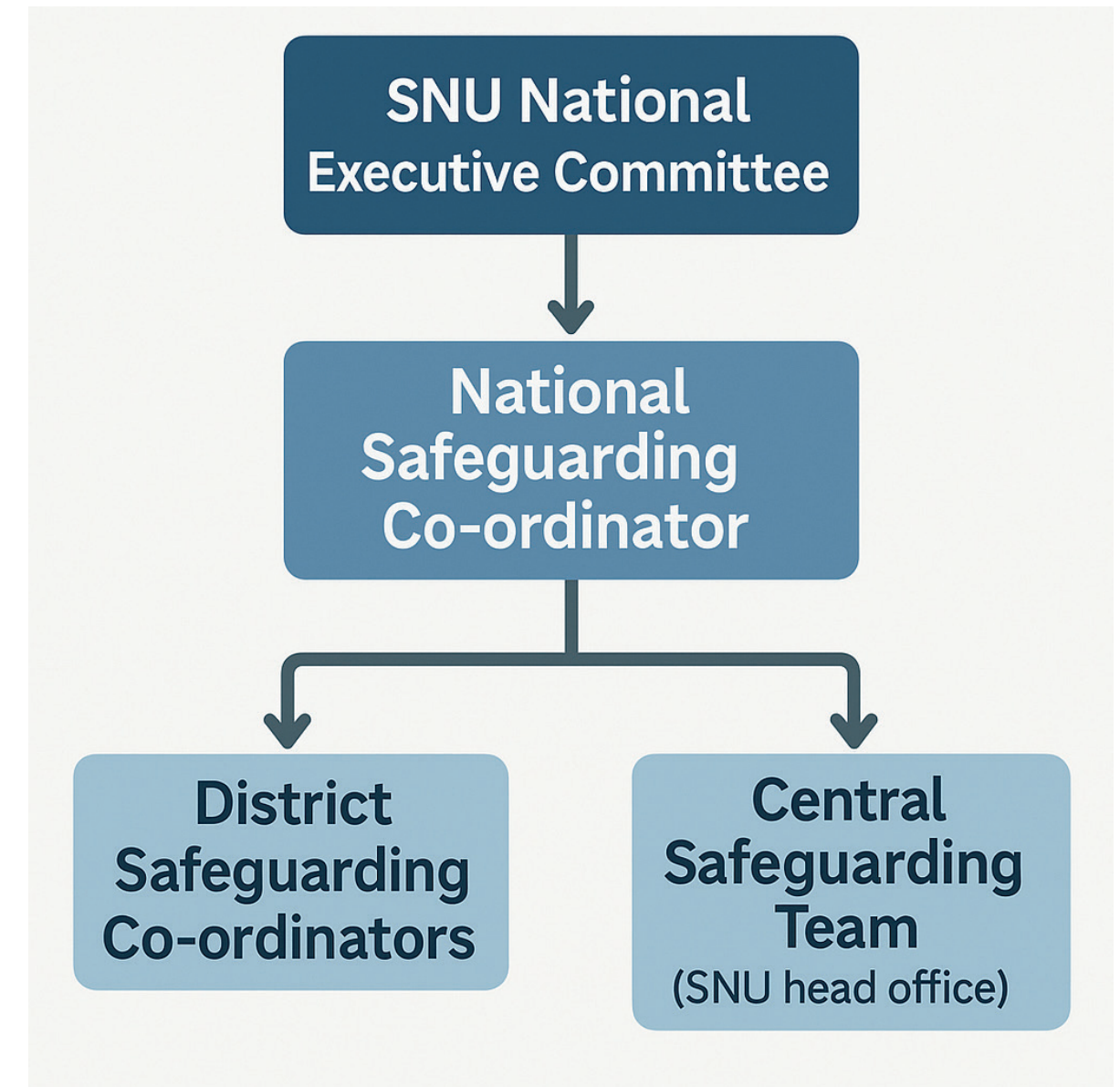
The SNU has adopted the procedures set out in this Safeguarding Policy in accordance with statutory guidance to keep our places and our activities safe for all. We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Policy and attached practical guides are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** Safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight and on statutory and best practice guidelines.

The SNU National Executive Committee are responsible for the appointment of its National Safeguarding Coordinator. The National Safeguarding Coordinator will appoint District Safeguarding

Coordinators, in collaboration with the SNU's Chief Operating Officer, who will appoint the Central Safeguarding Team at SNU head office to co-ordinate the response across the charity.

The Spiritualists' Lyceum Union ("SLU") Central Committee will appoint SLU Safeguarding Coordinators.



What is safeguarding?

The concept of safeguarding, and the promotion of a safeguarding culture, is about being pro-active to risks and not just responding when things go wrong. It is important that safeguarding is seen in broad terms that extend beyond abuse-related concerns. As such, safeguarding can be understood as ‘acting in ways that mitigate any risk of harm’. There may be concerns about the safety and wellbeing of an individual which are not linked to abuse by another but are still part of our safeguarding duty. This might be to do with personal conditions or contextual circumstances. It is important to remember that safeguarding is as much about prevention as reaction, and so also covers advice and guidance, risk assessment of environments and activities, anything that will help contribute to keeping people safe.

Safeguarding children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is anyone under the age of 18 (age of 16 – Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 (ASP Act 2007)).

Safeguarding adults means:

Under the Care Act 2014, “adult safeguarding” is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. All statutory organisations have a duty to ensure that the welfare of all adults is ensured. Safeguarding duties apply to an “adult at risk”, defined as one who:

- “has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it”.

Safeguarding Statement

- We all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, emotional and discriminatory abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 (Scotland 16) years of age) who are at risk and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All people have the right to be treated with respect and to be listened to.
- We all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and emotional and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.

- We believe all vulnerable adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the places of our organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

We will:

- Follow the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults who may be at risk and good practice recommendations.
- Respect the rights of children set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Follow legislation regarding people and places to be welcoming and inclusive.
- Follow the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keep up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Support Safeguarding Coordinators in their work and in any actions necessary.
- Nurture, protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Support, train and provide supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Support people in the organisation affected by abuse.
- Co-operate fully with police, and Social Services, Health and Social Care Partners and all relevant agencies with respect to any investigations.
- Be proactive in establishing a culture of vigilance and safeguarding for all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

We recognise that:

- **Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.**
- Agencies such as police and Social Services, Health and Social Care Partners may take a lead role in investigating allegations.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our Central Safeguarding Team at SNU head office.
- We must maintain records of all reports and referrals made detailing any actions taken. All record keeping and processing is to be in line with legislation and any SNU data handling and protection policies.

Section 2 – Recognising and responding to an allegation or concern about abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue.

A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and vulnerable adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Types of abuse can range from the physical and sexual to emotional, financial, power imbalance and bullying.

In order to safeguard those whom the SNU comes into contact with, we will follow the relevant legislation and guidance covering the different geographical areas of our work.

Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Further guidance is set out at Appendix A

Reporting a safeguarding concern, no matter how big or small, is important. If you're not sure if something is a concern, raise it with your District Coordinator, with the Central Safeguarding Team or our safeguarding partners Thirtyone:eight.

Statutory Definition of an Adult at risk or with care and support needs

The following definition of an adult at risk or with care and support needs as outlined in the Care Act 2014. The Care Act 2014 applies to an adult who needs care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

For Scotland, The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an adult at risk as:

- a. Unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests,
- b. At risk of harm, and
- c. Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more at risk of harm 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.

Be aware that an adult may be at risk all the time, or it may be a temporary issue which could be related to particular circumstances such as illness, bereavement, loss of income/job etc. We need to look out for those who are in difficult circumstances now and be aware that they may need our additional safeguarding concern.

Definitions of Abuse (Adults)

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. Abuse can occur in any relations and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the person subjected to it

Further guidance is set out at Appendix A

Reporting a safeguarding concern, no matter how big or small, is important. If you're not sure if something is a concern, raise it with your District Coordinator, with the Central Safeguarding Team or our safeguarding partners Thirtyone:eight.

Safeguarding Awareness

The SNU is committed to ongoing safeguarding training and development opportunities for its workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

Our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training regularly. Workers with additional responsibilities for safeguarding will be provided with more detailed training and support.

The SNU will look to sign post individuals to alternative support services where appropriate.

A Safeguarding Curriculum is outlined in Appendix D

Section 3 – Prevention & Positive Practice

Safer Recruitment

Within the SNU there are unpaid elected positions, volunteer positions and appointments as per the SNU Articles of Association, Bye-laws, Rules for Churches and Constitution for Kindred Bodies, as well as employed staff, and the considerations listed below will be applied to all such positions.

The SNU will ensure that all workers, whether paid or voluntary, will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment where their work will involve contact with children and adults who may be at risk. This includes ensuring that:

- there is a written job description / person specification for the post
- those elected or to be appointed have completed a self-declaration form.
- those short-listed have been interviewed and safeguarding has been discussed.
- where the person's position will involve work with children and/or adults who may be at risk, an appropriate DBS certificate will be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service and Independent Safeguarding Authority Disclosure (For Scotland PVG Check and Northern Ireland Access NI) and is found to be satisfactory for the position. We will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of personnel and the handling of information.
- Where issues are disclosed on the DBS Certificate a risk assessment will be carried out to ascertain whether an individual will be allowed to work in activities specifically for children and regulated activities with adults within the SNU
- qualifications, where relevant, and identity have been verified.
- a suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant. Advice can be obtained from the SNU safeguarding team.
- the person will have access to read a copy of this Safeguarding Policy and knows how to report concerns
- All new staff will have a robust induction which will include safeguarding training.

Training

Our tutors, workers, ministry, volunteers will be required to attend and read appropriate training from.

A matrix on training requirements is available on the website and from [Safeguarding - The Spiritualists' National Union](#)

Advice and Guidance

Our National and District Safeguarding Coordinators, Central Safeguarding Team and Safeguarding partner Thurtynone:eight, play a vital role in ensuring that individuals across the SNU and wider community have access to clear, consistent, and expert safeguarding guidance. Our responsibility is to provide advice and support to employees, members, volunteers, and stakeholders when concerns arise about the safety or wellbeing of children, young people, or vulnerable adults. By acting as a central point

of contact, the team ensures that safeguarding practices are aligned with statutory requirements, organisational policies, and best practice standards. This helps create a safer environment where risks are identified early and appropriate action is taken swiftly.

The Central Safeguarding Team can provide or direct you to suitable advice, helps interpret safeguarding policies, and guides individuals through reporting procedures when issues are raised. We coordinate training, share updates on legislation, and provide reassurance to those handling sensitive cases. Importantly, the team serves as a hub of expertise—ensuring that safeguarding decisions are not made in isolation but are informed by professional knowledge and experience. Whether it's clarifying thresholds for referrals, advising on risk assessments, or simply offering reassurance, the team's role is to empower others to act confidently and responsibly in safeguarding matters.

- Call your District Safeguarding Coordinator.
- If you cannot reach your District Safeguarding Coordinator, call the Central Safeguarding Team at SNU Head Office during working hours on 01279 816363. Out of working hours or if you don't reach anybody to speak with then call our safeguarding partners Thirtyone:eight on this number 0303 003 1111, for support.

Section 4 – Pastoral Care - Supporting those affected by abuse

The SNU is committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse and who have contact with, or are part of, the organisation, working with statutory agencies as appropriate.

Pastoral care involves the compassionate support of individuals, helping them navigate life's challenges in a way that promotes emotional, spiritual, and relational wellbeing.

Pastoral care is:

- Relational (built on trust, attentiveness, and empathy).
- Non-coercive (respecting personal autonomy and belief).
- Accompanied by boundaries (the role is supportive, not controlling or therapeutic unless qualified).

Please contact the Central Safeguarding Team, should you require support.

Section 5 - Working with Offenders

As a religious organisation, we welcome a diverse range of people to our movement. We recognise our responsibility and duty to safely and responsibly welcome and support individuals with criminal convictions, while protecting children, adults at risk, and the wider congregation. Our approach seeks to balance compassion, justice, safeguarding, and accountability.

We therefore recognise:

- Every person has innate dignity and potential for transformation.
- The safety and wellbeing of others is paramount.
- Clear boundaries are essential for safe inclusion.

An individual's conviction can become known in several ways:

- The individual may offer this information willingly.
- The individual may have an allegation raised against them which the Church, Individual Members or SNU Head Office knows about already, either because it arose locally or because statutory authorities informed us of it.
- When an individual is convicted or receives a caution, the offence may be disclosed under the police's public protection arrangements.

Where information becomes known locally, this must be reported to District Coordinator and the Central Safeguarding Team.

The District Coordinator and/or Central Safeguarding Team will assess each case and offer supportive dialogue with those involved. The following steps or points may be required:

- risk assessment
- liaison with probation services and other agencies
- agreement/contract with individual putting in place specific requirements as a result of the risk assessment, circumstances or any recommendations received
- individual to accept that access to SNU premises is for worship only, not for social activities or positions of responsibility, committee work or educational activities
- supervision of the individual concerned and pastoral care requirements

Any situation will be kept under ongoing review.

Registered Sex Offenders and those convicted of the abuse of children and adults, regardless of age, who want to attend a religious service in an SNU church or Centre must comply with these additional requirements. Attendance at the SNU's educational establishments will require sufficient risk management, see Appendix E Risk Assessment Template. Please note if the risk is deemed to high that it may be appropriate to restrict or prevent attendance.

Section 6 – Other Practice Guidelines

The SNU strives to achieve the best safe working practices. This helps workers to keep people safe, run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimises the risk of false accusation.

Other good practice guidelines can be found:

- SNU Staff Handbook
- AFC Staff Handbook
- Award Holders code of conduct
- Accreditation Code of conduct
- Healing Code of Conduct
- Tutor Code of Conduct

Copies of the above can be obtained from SNU Head Office.

Management of Workers – Code of Conduct

The SNU is committed to supporting all workers and ensuring that they receive support and guidance. The SNU undertakes to follow the principles found within guidance issued by the Government at any time.

The SNU considers that it is unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour with any person which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 ([Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)) makes it an offence for those in positions of trust to engage in certain relationships with 16–18-year-olds and the SNU requires that its members and workers always operate with the utmost integrity with this age group.

Whistle-blowing policy

Everyone within the SNU should feel confident to voice concerns about the actions or attitude of colleagues and others involved in our activities. If a member of staff sees or hears of inappropriate behaviour of a colleague, worker or volunteer or believes that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately when raised with their line manager or locally, they should report the matter to the SNU under our whistle-blowing policy where appropriate.

Section 7 - Working in Partnership

It is our expectation that any organisation working with us or using our premises will have their own policy which is of sufficient standard. If they do not, or where their policy conflicts with our own, the SNU will expect this Safeguarding Policy to prevail.

Good communication is essential in promoting Safeguarding with all those working in partnership with the SNU. We will aim to discuss our Safeguarding attitudes with all third parties in our facilities and will advertise our Policy widely.

Section 8 - Overseas Churches

Overseas churches will conform to the national and local laws and other legislation and regulations of their own country which provide for the protection of children and adults. Where such provisions are not in place or are not appropriate, UK regulations can be used as a guide, such as.

- Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2023)
- The Care Act (2014)
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

As well as seeking guidance from the National Safeguarding Coordinator and Central Safeguarding Team, at Head Office.

The SNU expects adherence to the principles established in the following key documents:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UNUDHR)
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNRPD)
- The European Convention on Human Rights

The referrals process set out in the Section above headed **Responding to Allegations of Abuse** should be followed with overseas churches getting in touch with the SNU Safeguarding Lead to confirm and agree any locally necessary variations to the principles set down

PART TWO

Referral Procedures

Responding to allegations of abuse.

Individuals within the SNU should not carry out their own investigations where there has been an allegation or where there may be signs suggestive of abuse.

You are not alone, and to support you the SNU has District Safeguarding Coordinators, a National Safeguarding Coordinator and the Central Safeguarding Team based at Head Office. The National Safeguarding Coordinator oversees all this work and reports to NEC.

You may see something, or someone may want to talk to you. Letting people disclose safely can be sensitive. You should make sure you are in a welcoming place, giving opportunity for the person to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

Allow time and space for the person to talk. A brief guide on effective listening and support can be found at Appendix B.

Above everything else, listen.

Individuals within the SNU, i.e. employees, members and volunteers must follow this procedure if they have a concern:

- If you receive allegations or a disclosure, or have concerns about serious abuse, report this as soon as possible to Social Service, Health and Social Care Partners or the Police via emergency numbers. You should do this where there is cause for serious concern for the immediate wellbeing of any person. **Do not delay.**
- Immediately after raising the concern, and once you have made any emergency phone calls (if necessary), you should write brief notes of what you have seen, heard or been told, dates and times. Where possible please use Appendix C, Form 1, if you do not have access to it at the time, make notes in the best way you can.
- Call your District Safeguarding Coordinator.
- If you cannot reach your District Safeguarding Coordinator, call the Central Safeguarding Team at SNU Head Office during working hours on 01279 816363. Out of working hours or if you don't reach anybody to speak with then call our safeguarding partners Thirtyone:eight on this number 0303 003 1111, for support.
- Complete and return the Appendix C Form 1 to safeguarding@snu.org.uk within 24 hours.
- Your District Safeguarding Coordinator should complete Appendix C Form 2 and send it to the Central Safeguarding Team and co-operate with them on any next steps necessary.
- Do not tell any other people and keep any notes safely in a secure place. Keep your District Safeguarding Coordinator informed, unless it is about them.

You can find up to date telephone numbers including emergency and out of hours number on the internet for:

- The Children’s and Adults social services office within the local area.
- The Health and Social Care Partners (Scotland)
- The Police Child Protection Team within the local area by calling 999 in an emergency or 101 for non-urgent.

Remember:

- You must not discuss the matter with anyone else.
- Anyone can act to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight. We ask that you use this procedure for clarity, but it doesn’t restrict you taking any other lawful actions.

District Safeguarding Coordinators will act with the Central Safeguarding Team at Head Office to collate the details and record them. They will act where appropriate to refer the matter to the police or social services where this has not already happened and will assist with those referrals as requested.

The role of the SNU National Safeguarding Coordinator is to liaise with the Central Safeguarding Team to produce the annual report to the trustees. They are an NEC Board Member and ensure that the NEC is kept informed of issues and make recommendations for changes in policy, or practice where appropriate, which should be put in place as soon as possible.

A confidential database of reported events will be maintained at Head Office by the Central Safeguarding Team.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Statutory definitions
- Appendix B – How to respond to a person wishing to disclose abuse
- Appendix C – Cause for concern forms
- Appendix D – Safeguarding Curriculum

APPENDIX A

Statutory Definitions of Abuse

CHILDREN

The four definitions of abuse below are based on government guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2023).

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s development capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. 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);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

ADULTS

The Care Act (2014) defines the following:

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a Vulnerable adult by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Physical abuse

Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual abuse

Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which an adult or vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure In connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefit.

Discriminatory abuse

Including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar.

Neglect and acts of omission

Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating, and treatment.

Spiritual Abuse

Linked with emotional abuse, spiritual abuse could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

In 2013 spiritual abuse was defined as “Spiritual abuse is 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 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 & Kinmond, 2013)

Domestic Violence

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines abusive behaviour to consist of any of the following behaviours between persons A and B who are personally connected; (a) physical or sexual abuse; (b)violent or threatening behaviour; (c)controlling or coercive behaviour; (d)economic abuse; (e)psychological, emotional or other abuse; and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

"Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependant by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour."

"Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assaults, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim."

Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

APPENDIX B

How to respond to a person wishing to disclose abuse

Effective Listening

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above everything else listen without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality.
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age-appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille, etc.
- Do not ask leading questions. "Did they hit you?" is a leading question, "Can you describe what happened?" is not.

Helpful responses

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you.
- Tell me/describe to me/explain

Don't Say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else.
- I will keep this secret.

Appendix C

Form 1: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare

(For use by individuals within the SNU (i.e. employees, members, volunteers). This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible.) **Please send to the Central Safeguarding Team without delay** safeguarding@snu.org.uk.

Child/Adult's name (subject of concern):	Date of birth/age: Child/Adult:	Address:
Date & time of incident:	Date & time (of writing):	
Your Name (print): ____ Role/Job title: Signature: ____		
Other members of the household ⁴ :		
Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>		
How did the concern come to light?		
What is the child/adult saying about what has happened ⁴ ?		
Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc.		
Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Coordinator ⁵ : _____		

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your District Safeguarding Coordinator.

Guidance notes for Form 1 (volunteers/workers only):

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form:

1. The SNU is required to ensure that its duty of care is carried out in line with the principles in its Safeguarding Policy.
2. Essential principles of recording the information received/disclosed/observed:
 - a. Remember: do not investigate or ask any leading questions
 - b. make notes within the first one hour of receiving the disclosure or observing the incident, make a note of the time you had any conversations and the time of making this report
 - c. be clear and factual in your recording of the incident or disclosure
 - d. avoid giving your opinion or feelings on the matter
 - e. aim to record using the 5 W's and 1 H: Who When, Where, What, Why and How
 - f. do not share this information with anyone else except your safeguarding Coordinator in the first instance and they will advise on who else will need to be informed, how and when.
 - g. make use of the additional information section to add any other relevant information regarding the child/adult/ family that you may be aware of. This can include any historic concerns or observations.
3. **What constitutes a safeguarding concern?** – any incident that has caused or likely to cause significant harm to a child or vulnerable adult can be classed as a safeguarding concern. Abuse is classified under four different categories (with regards to children) as already stated within the safeguarding policy (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). With regards to adults there are 6 further categorisations. Whilst it may be helpful to record a specific category in the above form, if possible, this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is important to seek advice from your safeguarding Coordinator or thirtyone:eight at this stage.
4. **Why do you need information regarding ‘other household members’?** – It has been demonstrated as important to include information about significant adults in the household especially when concerns relate to children as this has been a recurrent risk factor in several serious case reviews.
5. **Why is the view of the child/adult significant?** It is important to give whatever detail is available of the child or adult’s explanation (or verbatim) of the matter to help ascertain if it is plausible and to help offer a context to the concern identified.
6. **Passing information to the Safeguarding Coordinator** – Your safeguarding Coordinator holds ultimate responsibility in responding to any safeguarding concerns within the church/organisation and therefore it is important that they have oversight of the actions being taken and make relevant and appropriate contact with statutory agencies if required. They will remain the most appropriate link between the organisation and external agencies.

Form 2: Record of concern about a child/adult’s safety and welfare

(For use by individuals within the SNU (i.e. employees, members, volunteers). This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible.) **Please send to the Central Safeguarding Team without delay** safeguarding@snu.org.uk.

Information received by RSC:	Date:	Time completed:		From whom:	
Any advice sought , if applicable	Date:	Time completed:		Source of advice: name/organisation:	
	Advice received: Advice received about informing parents or in the case of adults, seeking consent/capacity ¹ :				
Initial Assessment of concern following advice ²					
Action taken with reasons recorded <i>(e.g. Referral completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, etc)</i>	Date:	Time completed:		By whom:	
	Referral			To whom	
	Signposting to other community resources				
	Pastoral Care and other support				
Parent/carers informed?	Ongoing Monitoring				
	Y	Who spoken to:	Date:	Time:	By whom:
	N	Detail reason:			
Any other relevant information					
Name of Safeguarding Coordinator:				Signature:	

OVERVIEW OF ACTIONS:

S.No.	Date	Outcome (if known)	Service currently involved	Ongoing support offered (this can include monitoring)- include dates
1.				

Guidance notes for Form 2:

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form(s)

1. **Importance of consent from parents/carer or adults (in the light of mental capacity)** – With regards to children, consent of the parents is considered important before a referral is made to external agencies, unless of course doing so will place the child(ren) at greater risk of harm. With regards to adults, it is important to be aware that their consent is crucial before reporting concerns onto statutory agencies. The individual's mental capacity will also be a significant factor to consider at this stage. You can always seek the advice of local authority social services. Where a child discloses a concern about a parent, consent is not required and a referral should be made.
2. **Initial assessment**- Based on the advice you may have received from relevant individuals/agencies (i.e. this could be the individual church, the national safeguarding team/thirtyone:eight/Social Services, Police etc), what are the concerns categorised as?
3. **Overview of actions** - Includes a summary of the actions taken so far and who holds responsibility for it. You can use this section to add on information gathered when monitoring the situation, time frames or offering pastoral care.
4. **Pass a copy of this form to the Central Safeguarding Team at Safeguarding@snu.org.uk**

Appendix D:**Safeguarding Curriculum**

Basic Awareness	
Delivery	Online
Outcomes	- Understand safeguarding and the definitions. - Understand the SNU's approach to safeguarding.
Required Attendees	

Safeguarding in Church Context	
Delivery	Online
Outcomes	- Understand safeguarding and the definitions. - Understand the SNU's approach to safeguarding. - Apply the knowledge to specific SNU Church Scenarios including Lyceums.
Required Attendees	

Intermediate Safeguarding	
Delivery	Online
Outcomes	- Understand safeguarding and the definitions. - Understand the SNU's approach to safeguarding. - Application of the policy and definitions to District Coordinator case studies.
Required Attendees	

Advanced Safeguarding; governance and leadership	
Delivery	In person
Outcomes	- Understand safeguarding and the definitions. - Understand the SNU's approach to safeguarding. - Application of the policy and definitions to national Coordinator case studies.
Required Attendees	

Safeguarding in the Ministry	
Delivery	Online / In person
Outcomes	- Understand safeguarding and the definitions. - Understand the SNU's approach to safeguarding. - Application of the policy and definitions to pastoral care and ministry specific case studies. - Preparation for hospital and prison visits.
Required Attendees	All members of the Ministry.

Guidance notes

- 1. This document will primarily be overseen (and possibly even completed) by the District Safeguarding Coordinator or Central Safeguarding Team. It may be filled-in, in conjunction with Individuals within the SNU, i.e. employees, members and volunteers who knows the situation or individual (adult/child) well.
- 2. It is important to remember that a tool like this will be useful for dealing with:
 - a. risks that are known and substantiated or
 - b. those that are unsubstantiated but still warranting some form of safeguarding arrangements or

We encourage Individuals within the SNU, i.e. employees, members and volunteers to raise/share concerns appropriately so you can make an informed decision about the nature and detail of the risk assessment.

- 3. Information about risks an individual may pose maybe received from anyone of these following services: Social Services or Police or Probation or Health services. Seek to contact them to clarify information and where possible seek to gather their view on your risk assessment. Other organisations such as schools, churches or voluntary organisations may be able to indicate the presence of a safeguarding concern in relation to a child or adult though not the details of the relevant concerns.
- 4. Possible measures (as stated in Column 3) could range from a stringent contract/covenant of care to informal supervision/monitoring arrangements. Depending on the nature of the risk and the potential groups that may be vulnerable through coming into contact with the individual, consider realistic ways of managing and supporting the individual concerned.
- 5. If your risk assessment indicates that your church/organisation is unable to manage the risk the individual poses (either due to the scale of your work with vulnerable groups or lack of resources to offer accountability arrangements and/or pastoral support), you are able to advise the individual that your church/organisation may not be the appropriate place for them to attend. You can support them to seek to explore an alternate church/organisation and encourage them to share the concerns with the relevant safeguarding lead and/or minister.
- 6. It is important to remember that when working with individuals and vulnerable groups, risk cannot be completely eliminated but can definitely be mitigated and managed safely.

Appendix E

Behaviour Risk Assessment

Church / Organisation					
Subject of Risk Assessment (if child, include age)		Location			
Date of Risk Assessment		Date for Review			
Responsible Leader		Review Frequency			
Professionals/others involved (if applicable)					
Reason for risk assessment (including a view on the individual's awareness and acknowledgement of the concerns)					
What are the concerns?	Given this, what are the possible risks? Who is at risk?	Can the risk be managed? What measures can be adopted to safeguard in this situation?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Date Completed

If you have any concerns regarding the safety
or welfare of a child or adult you can contact:

SNU National Safeguarding Team at:
Safeguarding@snu.org.uk or **01279 816363**

Thirtyone:eight has been appointed by the Spirit-
ualists' National Union to support
Safeguarding concerns.
Their number is: **0303 003 1111**

Spiritualists National Union
The Coach House, Stansted Hall Estate,
Stansted Mountfitchet,
Essex CM24 8UD

01279 816363 | www.snu.org.uk | snu@snu.org.uk