



# **SCRIPTURE UNION POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR SAFE GUARDING**

Scripture Union  
Trinity House  
Opal Court  
Opal Drive  
Milton Keynes  
MK15 0DF  
Refer to: Mission Development Director

This documentation is developed in conjunction with Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as CCPAS)

Revised and approved: 24 January 2019 (First approval July 1998)

Further more detailed practice guidance is provided within Scripture Union's Leaders Manual.

## A. Policy Statement

Scripture Union is a movement made up of volunteers and paid staff. We believe that all human beings are of equal worth in the sight of God and aim to follow Biblical principles in all that we do.

Therefore:

- We commit ourselves to the nurture, protection, and general welfare of all, especially children and adults at risk of harm. In so doing, we will work, in partnership, as appropriate, with parents, carers, statutory agencies and other organisations.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to protect children and adults at risk of harm from all forms of abuse and to report any disclosures of abuse in addition to suspicions or concerns.
- In order to achieve this, we are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and adults at risk of harm. We will provide appropriate supervision, recognise mutual accountability and commit to an annual review of our safeguarding policy, procedures and practices.

Scripture Union has adopted the above principles; all volunteers and staff are presented with a copy and expected to follow the procedures and guidelines as set out in this document.

## B. Statutory Compliance for Scripture Union

The standards in this policy build on and incorporate legislation and government expectations for children and adults at risk of harm. This includes HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and new safeguarding duties under the Care Act 2014. The guidance is for statutory agencies and voluntary organisations alike and covers all the expectations of government in relation to safeguarding children in England.

**1) Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children and young adults at risk of harm.**

The policy statement included in this document has been adopted following approval by the Board of Scripture Union. It is reviewed annually, and is available on request for public scrutiny.

NOTE: In most instances, Scripture Union's activities which are covered by this policy relate to work conducted with children and young people (under 18 years of age). In some instances this work includes young adults at risk of harm. Throughout this document, unless otherwise stated, all statements referring to children and those working with children are applied to young adults at risk of harm when young adults at risk of harm are participating in activities provided by Scripture Union.

**2) Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur**

We have established and will maintain and review clear procedures to fulfil this policy. They are set out in detail in this document and are under constant review, with any updates necessary given in writing at least annually.

**3) Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.**

Our procedures discourage the formation of exclusive relationships, and our activities are organised in such a way that children have access to a number of people. We are, though, committed to listening to children and giving them the opportunity to talk about any worries or concerns that they may have. We publicise relevant contact numbers of independent organisations. *See Appendix D*

**4) Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.**

We have established minimum procedures for all workers and training and comprehensive procedures for workers in direct contact with children. All workers receive a copy of the policy statement.

**5) Give all staff and volunteers clear roles.**

All paid staff have a written job description and all volunteers are given a clear written role profile

**6) Use supervision as a means of creating a safeguarding culture across the organisation.**

All workers plan and review their work with the person to whom they are accountable.

**7) Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.**

We have comprehensive application and selection procedures for all workers.

**8) Gain at least two references from people who have experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.**

We require a reference from at least two people (church leaders or equivalent) for each applicant, seeking information which includes character and relationship assessment. This includes applicants who work with children annually for short periods. We inform referees if work involves direct contact with children. We appreciate that some of our volunteers are young adults wanting to begin work with children, and therefore it may not be possible to gain references which relate to relevant experience. However, young leaders may be able to get a good character reference from a teacher etc.

**9) Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.**

All staff, and volunteers for leadership positions, are interviewed prior to appointment.

General team members on short-term placements are not normally interviewed but see (11) below.

**10) Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.**

All workers are required to sign a declaration disclosing a criminal conviction or caution. Annual short-term volunteers with children are required to do so annually. This includes, subject to certain exceptions, disclosing convictions which for other purposes are 'spent', as posts involving direct work with children are exempt from the provision of section 4(ii) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975). Under DBS filtering rules there are some exceptions to this legislation and we will provide applicants with access to the filtering guide so that they can determine whether a conviction, caution, reprimand or warning should be disclosed.

Applicants for roles involving regulated activity (children's and/or adults' workforces) are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure with barring list check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Applicants for roles that do not bring them into regulated activity, but which are face to face with children are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure without barring list check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**11) Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.**

While the short term nature of much of our volunteer work makes probationary periods inappropriate, we are aware that many volunteers will have limited experience. Appropriate support is provided for each circumstance. In practice, this may mean sharing of responsibility, rather than having unsupervised responsibility, for children.

Team leaders have the authority to ask team members to leave an event if it is in the best interest of the children.

We have a system of specific and general induction for staff, leading into an initial six-month work review, and an on-going review process. The on-going review process applies to all workers with children and adults at risk of harm.

**12) Issue guidelines on how to deal with a disclosure and/or concern of abuse.**

Comprehensive guidelines are established and reviewed annually. They are held by the Mission Events Team. Responsibility for ensuring they are implemented and reviewed lies with the Leadership Team lead member for safeguarding.

**13) Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers.**

We ensure that training is provided regarding the safe care of children, including increasing understanding of the prevalence of abuse, along with the signs, symptoms and indicators of abuse

## C. Safer Recruitment

Note: Throughout this section Enhanced Disclosures are only undertaken in respect of the adults at risk of harm (vulnerable adults) workforce, when it is known that individuals will be entering into Regulated Activity with such adults.

- All those who seek employment with Scripture Union as paid staff or volunteers and whose work is likely to involve face to face activity with children are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). For those who are expected to engage in regulated activity, a barring list check is also made.
- Potential Trustees of Scripture Union are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure before their appointment is confirmed. On appointment Trustees DBS checks will be carried out every three years thereafter.
- Some staff in key managerial positions (where there is a responsibility for the selection or supervision of those working with children) are also required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure.
- Those with criminal convictions, cautions, cases pending, reprimands or bindovers are not necessarily unable to take up positions with Scripture Union, which abides by its policy on 'Employing People with a Criminal Record'.
- Scripture Union has a contracted agreement with a Registered Body (currently Atlantic Data) for all its DBS checks and to act on behalf of its mission partners.
- Scripture Union has an authorised DBS Processing Team (DPT) who process all DBS checks through the online system provided by the contracted Registered Body.
- Scripture Union abides by the Code of Practice established by the DBS
- Verification of identity and processing of applications by prospective trustees is carried out by a specifically assigned member of the DPT.
- All field staff are required to apply for Enhanced Disclosures with barring list check on appointment and every three years thereafter.
- Other members of staff who are not normally working with children as part of their duties but who subsequently join a short-term team are at that point asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure.
- Other staff whose work involves contact with children or in supervisory or selection roles of those working with children are also required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure at the time of appointment.
- Job applicants are advised of the need for an Enhanced Disclosure before an application is submitted.
- A specifically assigned member of the DPT carries out verification of identity of prospective staff and processing of staff applications for Enhanced Disclosures.

### Partners

- Mission Partner staff and volunteers who have regulated or other face to face activity with children are also required to apply for Enhanced Disclosures (with Barring check regarding regulated activity), on appointment and every three years thereafter
- Scripture Union recommends that Local Mission Trustees should apply for an Enhanced Disclosure on appointment and every three years thereafter.
- Each mission partner body is required to sign a Statement of Intent to work according to Scripture Union's policies and procedures, including those concerning safe care of children and employing people with a criminal record. This is signed on formation (before mission partner status is agreed) and again every three years.
- One trustee has responsibility for child protection on behalf of their mission body and as such is responsible for verification of the identity and the online processing of DBS checks for Mission Partner Staff Workers and volunteers for that body.

### Volunteers

- All volunteers who are expected to undertake face to face activity with children are required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure on appointment and every three years thereafter. For those who are expected to engage in regulated activity, a barring list check is also made.

### **Update Service**

- Those requiring Disclosures for work with Scripture Union or its mission partners are required to apply to the DBS via Scripture Union.
- Where an individual has registered a disclosure certificate with the DBS update service, Scripture Union will accept registered disclosure certificates that comply with the following criteria:
  - The disclosure is for the 'Child Workforce' category and
  - It is an 'Enhanced Disclosure' and
  - There is a barred list check if the individual is expected to be in regulated activity
- Where the online disclosure check contains information about cautions, convictions, reprimands or warnings or other relevant information the procedure below on handling disclosure information will be followed.

### **Handling Disclosure Information**

- If a Disclosure contains information about cautions, convictions, reprimands or warnings or other relevant information, advice on how to proceed is sought by the DPT member from one of two named managers (currently Jo Morley and Keren Mallinson)
- Information recorded on the Disclosure may be shared by the DPT only with those directly involved in the particular employment decision.
- Information recorded on the Disclosure is only shared if it is likely to affect the employment decision, which is then made in accordance with Scripture Union's policy on Employing People with a Criminal Record.
- If additional information is received from a police force, action follows the procedure outlined in the letter and is not shared with the applicant or anyone other than those making the employment decision, and only with those people if the police letter received does not forbid it.
- The date and disclosure number of all checks are recorded in Scripture Union's DBS system.
- In extreme circumstances, when a disclosure check has not been successfully completed prior to the start of an event, and the individual is not registered with the update service, a risk assessment must be completed to determine what role, if any, that individual may take in the event. That risk assessment must be signed off by the Leadership Team's operational lead for safeguarding.

### **Renewal of Disclosures**

- Disclosures are normally renewed on a rolling three-year basis.
- For disclosures that are registered with the update service these will also be checked on a rolling 3 year basis.
- If, in the intervening years, declarations completed by those working with children suggest changed circumstances, a new Enhanced Disclosure is requested.

## **D. Events Run By Scripture Union**

### **1. Team Application Procedures**

- Scripture Union will undergo careful recruitment and selection procedures as stated in this policy. Applicants are appointed (or excluded from service) at the discretion of the Person Responsible and, where appropriate, in communication with other parts of the Movement.
- A new applicant is one who has not worked on an event before. Team members who have had a break in service of more than one year will be treated as new applicants unless the event leader indicates that they have remained in sufficiently close contact to be assured that their personal circumstances remain unchanged. A break of two years would mean they would be treated as new applicants without exception.
- All new leaders and team members must complete an application form, which will include questions on the following:
  - details of any criminal record
  - mental and physical state of health of the applicant
  - details of driving offences, and
  - details of two referees.

The application form will also contain two statements:

- an explanation that applicants will be required to request an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- the fact that Scripture Union has a policy on Employing People with a Criminal Record and that the existence of a criminal conviction does not necessarily rule out acceptance of an applicant.
- New team member applicants may be required to participate in a safer recruitment interview with a member of the National Events Operations Team.
- Two references will be required for each new applicant. If there are concerns about either or both of the references, a third reference will also be taken up. Communication with referees will include a statement about the significance of the information being requested, the importance of the role of the team member and the paramount importance of the safety of children and adults at risk of harm.
- Once an application form has been received and the person deemed suitable for placing on a team, a Disclosure will be requested from the DBS. Once the Disclosure has been processed and deemed satisfactory, the applicant's place on a team is confirmed.
- Individual cases will be considered on merit, but as general guidance convictions or cautions in the categories listed below exclude an applicant from appointment:
  - any form of abuse involving children and adults at risk of harm
  - sexual offence involving children and adults at risk of harm
  - any types of serious violence, and
  - recent offences involving misuse of substances such as drugs or alcohol.
- Some forms of physical, emotional or mental illness may make an applicant unsuitable for service.
- Applicants from overseas or those living in England and Wales for a short time may not be eligible for a Disclosure from the DBS. Every effort will be made to take whatever measures are available according to the comparative methods in their own country, but where there is any doubt as to the availability of a thorough check the application will be refused.
- Returning members of short-term teams will confirm online whether or not their circumstances have changed since their original application. If changes have occurred, the application may be reconsidered.
- It is acknowledged that some team members may have little or no experience of working with children and adults at risk of harm, while others may have plenty. An agreed set of safety guidelines and expectations of team behaviour will be communicated by the leader prior to the event.
- Each event will designate an individual, who is appropriately trained to be the safeguarding lead person for the event. Scripture Union's safeguarding policy will be outlined to all team members by that Designated Safeguarding Lead or the overall team leader.

#### **Support team**

- On some events, a few people provide key supporting roles such as catering for the team. If these people are participating in the event on a residential basis they are engaged in regulated activity and, as such, will require an Enhanced Disclosure with barring list check for the Child Workforce. If they are not participating in the event on a residential basis they will not require an Enhanced Disclosure check unless it is anticipated that to enable the smooth running of the event they will become engaged in face to face activity with children.

#### **Junior team**

- Young people under 18 and who help on an event are 'junior team members.' If an event runs a junior team scheme, training will be provided to this group.
- Junior team members must complete a junior team application form online which includes any health issues and parental consent.
- Those under 18 are not permitted to have unsupervised responsibility for the care of children on an event.

## **Missions**

- On a non-residential event, team members may require accommodation. If junior team stay with someone who is not on the team, the host is not required to fill in any Scripture Union application forms, except the DBS Disclosure application.

## **Visitors**

- At no time is an ad-hoc volunteer (e.g. parent, visitor) to be given unsupervised responsibility for a group of children. They are asked to sign a visitors' register.
- Any volunteers or visitors staying on site more than 24 hours or staying overnight will be required to complete a support team form online and complete a DBS check as per DBS regulations. Leaders are responsible for the safety and well-being of visitors (including SU staff)

## **E. Code of Conduct**

### **Event leaders and team members**

- All those working with children and adults at risk of harm on behalf of Scripture Union will treat them with respect and dignity, which should be reflected in attitude, behaviour and speech.
- Scripture Union acknowledges that it has a duty of care for a child or adult at risk of harm booking onto a Scripture Union event.
- Teams of event workers (volunteers and/or staff) on mixed gender events will include male and female members, and organisation of activities within the events will reflect this balance wherever possible.
- Teams will aim to work in groups and in public areas so that contact between participants and team is in sight of others.
- Teams will avoid forming exclusive relationships or those which could be seen as showing favouritism to individual participants.
- Wherever a team member finds themselves involved in a potentially lengthy counselling situation, they should seek to involve another member of the team at an early stage. Promises of confidentiality will be avoided and items shared with leaders or adults with relevant experience.
- It is normally inappropriate for adults to initiate physical contact with participants, and team members should be cautious of contact initiated by participants, except in exceptional circumstances such as the need for medical attention or to prevent harm.
- The use of any corporal punishment is strictly prohibited i.e. any form of physical discipline is not acceptable
- Any physical contact with children in the area of incident management will be purely in terms of an intervention which prevents the child exercising violent, or other inappropriate, behaviour and/or from hurting themselves or others. Minimal force will be used, for the minimum time necessary, and witnessed by another team member
- If it is necessary to send a child or adult at risk of harm home from an event early, they will either be collected by a parent/guardian/carer or accompanied home so that the responsibility for their welfare is clearly transferred, unless other arrangements are agreed with the child's parents/carers ideally in writing e.g. email.
- On residential events, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for establishing and recording the detailed protocol regarding any access required to children's sleeping accommodation by team members. They will take into consideration the commitment to the protection and general welfare of children, the specific features of the event's setting and the whole of this Code of Conduct.
- Team leaders and members are in a 'relationship of trust' with participants and must take care that an abuse of that trust does not occur. Any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop between a person in a position of trust and the individual(s) in their care must be avoided.
- This relationship of trust is also in place outside the actual event in any communication between team and participants, whether in person, by letter, email, telephone, text messaging, social media apps or any other

means. Any communication or direct contact with a child will therefore be characterised by transparency and integrity and must operate within Scripture Union's policy on safeguarding children.

- Team members will not normally be expected to communicate outside of the event with participants other than as directed by the event leader; this would be occasional postal contact, such as a post card/ Christmas card and would never take the form of spiritual mentoring.

#### **Guests**

- All guests are expected to comply with the event's behaviour policy. These expectations must be clearly communicated to all guests at the outset of the event
- The behaviour policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all guests and team members and should be set by the event leaders, in consultation with the designated safeguarding lead, having considered this policy and the leaders' handbook and having undertaken a risk assessment for their event.

## **F: Reporting Concerns**

Whilst working on Scripture Union events, team members may be told about various personal situations which the participants they work with have experienced. In the majority of situations, being prepared to give the time to listen and care without being judgmental will be of great value and assistance. In some cases it may be possible and appropriate to offer advice and prayer. However, workers and volunteers must understand the importance of safeguarding and understand that it is possible that the nature of our work may increase the likelihood of participants disclosing an issue which puts them 'at risk' or suggest that they have been or are being abused. Disclosures may cover a range of potentially harmful situations including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, spiritual abuse, bullying and peer-to-peer abuse. Definitions of these terms are covered in Appendix C. Such disclosures require more than a caring response and a sympathetic ear, and the following procedure must be followed by the team member:

- Give the person time to talk freely but without fear of being overheard. Treat them with respect and acceptance. Always accept what is being said at this stage. Do not ask questions other than to clarify what is being said. Never put words into the person's mouth and be careful with your tone of voice so as not to appear shocked or angry or to show disbelief.
- Do not promise to keep the disclosure 'secret'. Explain that you must share this information with the leader of the event who may in turn call upon other people who will be able to help.
- Stay with the person until you feel they have said all they want to say. Try to avoid leaving them in a distressed state.
- Inform the event's Designated Safeguarding Lead of the disclosure as soon as possible.
- Make a written report of what happened on the safeguarding concern form provided as soon as possible (not in the participant's presence). Do not interpret, only record what was said as verbatim as possible.
- Designated Safeguarding Leads and overall event leaders will be aware that members of the team involved in handling these situations may also need appropriate help throughout the process and afterwards. Counselling support may be appropriate; the Scripture Union national office should be contacted regarding this (Appendix A)

Once a disclosure or allegation of abuse is made, Scripture Union is required to take action.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must follow the process laid out in Appendix A, and report the concern.

It is not their role (or that of any team member) to determine if a threshold of abuse has been reached in relation to a disclosure or allegation. That will be considered by our contracted safeguarding advisors (currentlyThirtyone:eight).

Our advisers will consider concerns about a child's welfare consistently and proportionately and will not dismiss concerns about the child solely on the grounds of parental accounts of the child and his or her situation.

The advice given by the advisor must be followed in all cases which require action to be taken immediately. In all other cases, the advice of the safeguarding advisor must be followed unless explicit authorisation not to do so has been given by the Head of Mission Event Operations (currently Jo Morley), or the operational lead for safeguarding

matters (currently Keren Mallinson), or the National Director (currently Myles MacBean). In such circumstances, the advice that they give must be followed.

If contact with the person making the disclosure continues during the event, try to ensure that this is as 'normal' as possible, and avoid drawing attention to the situation or repeatedly referring to it unless the person initiates further discussion.

If an allegation is made against any member of the event team or its leader, the same process must be followed and our contracted safeguarding advisors must be contacted consistent with Appendix A.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead must ask the advisor if the team member or leader must leave the event immediately in order to safeguard children on the holiday. The advice of the advisor must be followed in all cases which require action to be taken immediately. In all other cases, the advice of the safeguarding advisor must be followed unless explicit authorisation not to do so has been given by the Head of Mission Event Operations (currently Jo Morley), or the operational lead for safeguarding matters (currently Keren Mallinson), or the National Director (currently Myles MacBean). In such circumstances, the advice that they give must be followed.

Any team member who is concerned about the way an allegation or disclosure has been handled will contact the Leadership Team member who is the operational lead for safeguarding

At every stage, procedures will show respect for people and will involve careful consultation, not hasty reaction.

Any concerns or allegations of non-recent abuse will be processed consistent with the process flowchart if the matter is disclosed on a current Scripture Union event. In all other instances, the (national) operational lead for safeguarding should be notified. She will contact our contracted safeguarding advisers for advice in the first instance. Referrals to the relevant statutory agencies will be made when the advice given is to do so.

Concerns about an adult at risk of harm (see appendix for definition) should also be referred to the Thirtyone:eight hotline for advice.

## **G. Processing of personal data**

Information and personal data relating to safeguarding matters will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 2018, and Scripture Union's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/privacy-notice-and-cookies>

## **H. Responsibilities**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the approval of Scripture Unions' safeguarding policy.

A named trustee (currently Clive Beard) is the designated lead person for safeguarding. This trustee chairs a Safeguarding Advisory Group, the aim of which is to consider and support Scripture Union on all matters relating to safeguarding policy and practice.

A named member of the Leadership Team (currently Keren Mallinson) is the operational lead for safeguarding matters and for reporting, as necessary, individuals to the DBS. Day to day delegation of tasks may be delegated to the Head of Mission Event Operations (currently Jo Morley) who has responsibility for the running of the national office events helpline.

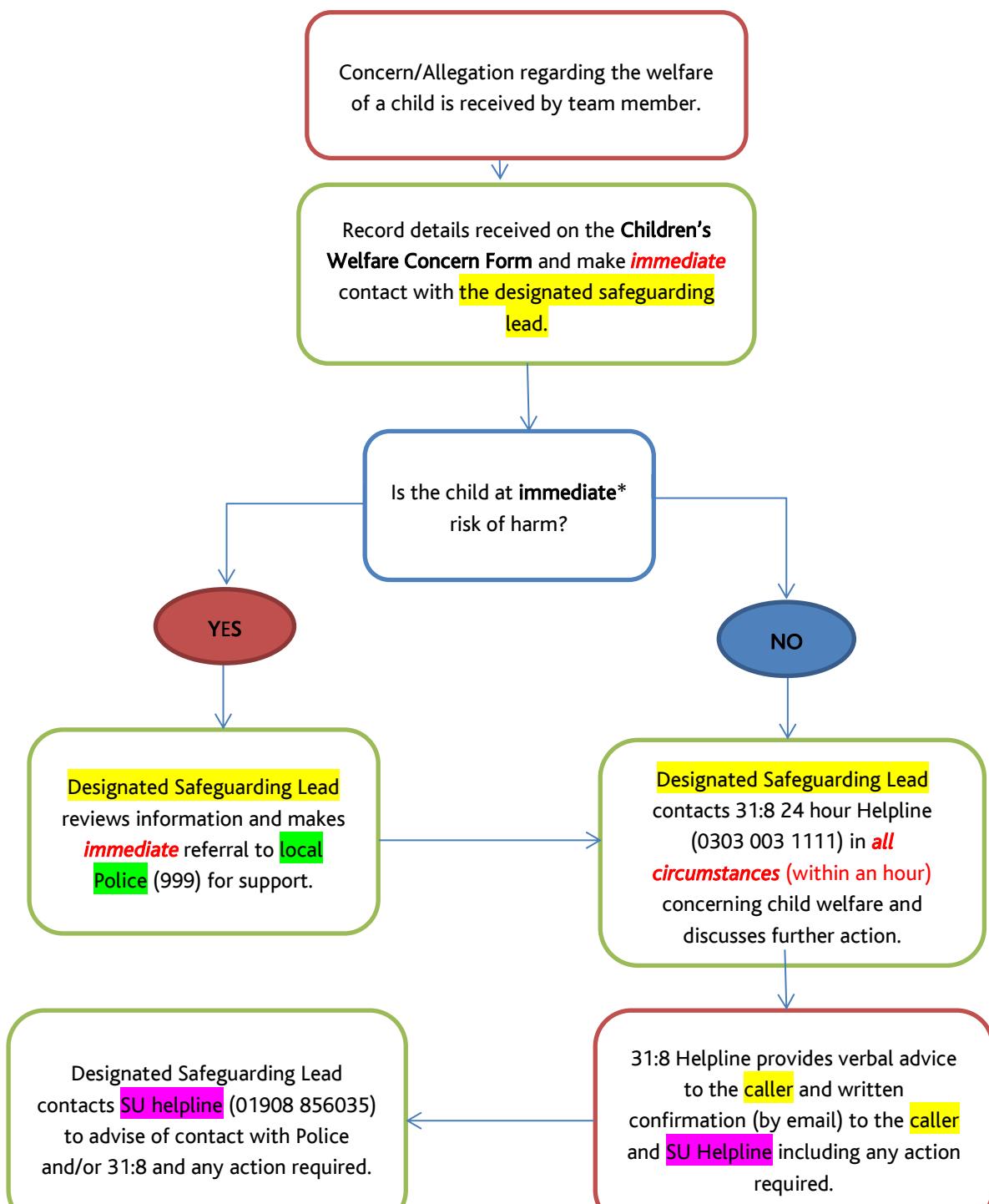
Each Scripture Union event will have a named and appropriately trained safeguarding lead. A list of Designated Leads will be maintained each year and be held by the Head of Mission Event Operations

The Scripture Union Company Secretary (currently Sue Winning) is responsible for reporting notifiable cases to the Charity Commission.

## APPENDIX A: Reporting Information Concerning the Welfare and Protection of a Child

### FLOWCHART FOR REPORTING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WELFARE AND PROTECTION OF A CHILD

Note: This may relate to a welfare concern occurring at an event, including the actions of children or adults or a concern regarding the welfare of a child outside of an event.



\***Immediate** is used to describe any situation where if the child were to remain in their current environment there would be an ongoing risk of harm (i.e. posed by another person with whom they have contact). This also applies if a child were to leave or be taken from the environment by a person who may cause them harm.

## Appendix B

### Glossary

<b>Adult at risk of harm</b>	A person who is aged 18 or over and who has care and support needs a defined by the Care Act 2014
<b>Child</b>	Anyone under the age of 18
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure and Banning Service
<b>DBS Processing Team (DPT)</b>	Scripture Union staff authorised to process online DBS applications.
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	The appropriately trained person who is the designated lead for safeguarding on an event.
<b>Event</b>	Any event where Scripture Union takes responsibility for participants who are under the age of 18 years.
<b>First Aider</b>	Person with current, appropriate qualification to administer first aid.
<b>Junior Team</b>	Those younger than 18 who may assist on an event but who will not have unsupervised responsibility for, or undertake regulated activity with, anyone under the age of 18 years.
<b>Leaders</b>	People who have been given overall responsibility for an event through an appointment procedure.
<b>Participants</b>	Those who attend an event.
<b>Person Designated for Emergencies</b>	The person on duty for emergency cover (including out of hours), who will usually be someone in a senior management role in the organisation
<b>Person Responsible</b>	Normally this will be one of the following, the nature and leadership of the event determining which:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Head of Mission Event Operations</li><li>• Regional Team Leader</li></ul>
<b>Regulated Activity</b>	‘Regulated Activity’ (as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act, 2012) involving a substantial degree of contact with children including unsupervised activities such as teaching, supervising, training or providing advice/guidance on well-being (this applies to most people working with, or responsible for, children in a church situation, including the Church Leader, Pastor, Minister, Vicar).
<b>Team</b>	Event leaders, team members, support team and junior team members.
<b>Team members</b>	Others over the age of 18 who are involved in the event.
<b>Junior team</b>	Team members on an event who are involved in the event
<b>Workers</b>	Anyone engaged in Scripture Union’s ministries, either as employees or volunteers.

## APPENDIX C

### Definitions of abuse

#### Children

##### 1. Abuse and neglect

#### ENGLAND

##### Abuse and Neglect (Children)

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)'.

##### 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

##### 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 developmental 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 cyberbullying), 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 to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a 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 in 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.

## **WALES**

The following definitions of child abuse are recommended as criteria throughout Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together Under the Children Act 2004.

### **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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is commonly described using terms such as 'factitious illness by proxy' or 'Munchausen Syndrome by proxy'.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and continuous adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

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. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **2. Spiritual abuse**

There is no formal, agreed definition of spiritual abuse and understanding of this area is still evolving.

Thirtyone:eight describe the key characteristics of spiritual abuse as coercion and control, manipulation and pressuring of individuals, control through the misuse of religious texts and scripture and providing a 'divine' rationale for behaviour

## **3. Peer-on-peer abuse and bullying**

Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and coercive control between children. It is an issue of serious concern throughout England and Wales and is a significant risk facing children.

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.

## **Adults**

**Adult at risk of harm** A person who is aged 18 or over and who has care and support needs as defined by the Care Act 2014

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who;

- has need for 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.

Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professional and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and the different circumstances in which they may take place. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented 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, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

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.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an Institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more

## APPENDIX D: USEFUL CONTACTS

## SCRIPTURE UNION OFFICES

Thirtyone:eight helpline: Tel: 03030031111 option 2 or 01322 517817  
E:mail: [info@thirtyoneeight.co.uk](mailto:info@thirtyoneeight.co.uk)

Childline Tel: 0800 1111  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

National Whistleblowing Advice Line Tel: 0800 028 0285

Non-Emergency NHS Tel: 111