

Safeguarding Policy Guidance: For Southwark Mothers' Union Leaders 2022

The Mothers' Union has always been committed to strengthening relationships, providing high standards of care and supporting our members in their roles as volunteers. We have a responsibility to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care are protected from harm as far as possible. This means providing them with a safe environment in which they are nurtured, protected and enabled to grow spiritually, socially and emotionally. Safeguarding helps us to do this more effectively.

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is about promoting the welfare of

- children (those under the age of 18) those between 14 and 18 are referred to as young people
- adults who may be vulnerable, (those deemed not to be able to care for themselves or to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation either permanently or for the time being through age, illness, disability or other adverse situations)
- those affected by domestic violence

and in doing so keeping them safe from harm, such as illness, abuse or injury.

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in activities involving the Mothers' Union across Southwark is the responsibility of all participants.

It is therefore important that leaders of any Branch or Diocesan activity/ event are familiar with their either their own local Parish or Diocesan Safeguarding practices and policies. Copies of theses should be in your parish office, church vestry or posted within the church as well as on the Diocesan Web site (link: www.southwark.anglican.org under 'What we do: Safeguarding People').

All of these policies are built on the Church of England Parish Safeguarding Handbook which can be found through this link. <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/Parish%20Safeguarding%20Handbook%20March%202019.pdf>

ACCESSING SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

All officers within the MU in Southwark are asked to make use of safeguarding training on offer from the Church of England or Diocese. As a minimum this should include access to the online C0 Basic training available from the Church of England website and C1 for any in a leadership role. Other training is available from the Diocese for anyone involved in activities where they are more specifically responsible for young people or vulnerable adults.

Detail of free on line or face to face training can be found by contacting your Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Diocesan officer, on either of these websites.

- <http://southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-training-events/>
- <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding/training>

ARRANGING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

The most important part of safeguarding is making sure that everyone who volunteers to be involved in activities with children and vulnerable adults at risk does so through a safer recruitment procedure and receives an appropriate level of training. When arranging events or activities which involve children and or vulnerable adults it is important that any leader within the MU ensures that safeguarding is considered a priority in the planning any activities or events. In doing so we ask all members:

- Review the attached **check list** to help in planning the event (attached)
- Ensure all relevant leaders have been recruited and appropriately vetted through the **DBS checking process** and participate in **safeguarding training** (see below).
- Undertake a **risk assessment** to assess the wider safeguarding responsibilities including the physical environment. Guidance attached

Mothers' Union activities involving children and adults at risk fall into one of three categories.

The activity is managed and delivered in conjunction with the local church or the diocese	Mothers' Union will follow the safeguarding policy of the local church Volunteers will be recruited, have the relevant criminal records checks and be trained in line with the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Anglican church and will respond to safeguarding concerns through the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Diocesan/Provincial Safeguarding Adviser
The activity is In partnership with an external organisation, such as a prison, hospital, contact centre, school, etc	The partner organisation takes responsibility for safeguarding Mothers' Union volunteers will be recruited according to the safeguarding procedures of the organisation involved, who will also be responsible for undertaking appropriate criminal record checks if required. Members will be made aware of the organisation's safeguarding policy and how to respond to safeguarding concerns.
If the activity is solely the responsibility of Mothers' Union	Mothers' Union Safer Recruitment and Training Procedures will apply The procedures can be found in the Mothers' Union Safer Recruitment and Training document.

Insurance cover for activities where members come into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults whilst representing Mothers' Union is provided on the basis that safeguarding policies, procedures and practices are in place and being followed. Failing to meet this requirement could invalidate the terms of our insurance and result in dioceses being liable for any claim made against them.

If uncertain whether your strategy is in line with good practice, please contact either Susan Gibbin the MU Diocesan Safeguarding Contact or if easier your local Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for advice and support.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

DBS checks of the leaders of any parish activity can be done through the local Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or if not appropriate, then through the diocesan MU safeguarding contact.

Where a DBS check is required, it will be at Enhanced level and include a check against the Police Database. The check itself is free for volunteers and it is recommended that DBS checks are renewed every 5 years, if the person is in the same role. Members can register with the DBS update service to allow for portability of their DBS checks: <https://www.gov.uk/db-update-service> This service is free to volunteers.

Please remember however that a DBS is only as good as the records held by the police it is not failsafe. The key message is therefore to make sure that we develop an environment where we can be vigilant in recognising any inappropriate behaviours of any individuals involved in MU activities.

Risk Assessment

The Risk assessment of any event arranged and promoted as a MU event (e.g.: meetings, social events, services, outreach projects) should consider any safeguarding risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults. An example / template of a risk assessment tool is provided for your use and should be used to ensure that we create and maintain an environment which is safe for all and promotes well-being, prevents abuse and creates nurturing, caring conditions. In completing the risk assessment please consider:

- The number, age and abilities, vulnerability of those attending
- Physical Hazards (e.g., access, security)
- How the event will operate (e.g.: transporting participants, lone working, availability of leaders who are DBS checked, rules of engagement safeguarding awareness)
- The protection of personal information (i.e., data security, integrity and confidentiality - in line with GDPR regulations)

Securing parental consent

NO CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON WILL BE PERMITTED TO TAKE PART IN AN EVENT UNLESS THIS CONSENT HAS BEEN RECEIVED OR UNLESS A PARENT IS IN ATTENDANCE. Parents of under 18's attending without parental supervision, attending a Southwark or local MU event must complete a PARENTAL CONSENT & EMERGENCY PERMISSION FORM.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or who presents a risk to others please seek advice from a safeguarding officer. If you believe someone is at immediate risk of harm please contact the Police on 999 without delay.

If you are in a situation where you do not have immediate access to a policy remember:

1. Listen sympathetically
2. Do not question or investigate anything yourself
3. Record all conversations and observations as soon as possible after the event.
4. Inform the MU safeguarding contact or your Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and tell no-one else. If you are not able to do this within 24 hours, contact your clergy or the diocesan safeguarding officer.
5. The Southwark Diocesan Safeguarding contact will then discuss with the Diocesan Safeguarding advisor.

Contact points include:

1. Your local Parish Safeguarding Officer or incumbent. (see local Parish web site / church notices for more information)
2. Susan Gibbin the Diocesan Safeguarding Contact at: MU Office, Trinity House.
3. Southwark Diocesan Safeguarding Team:
Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
In hours: 020 7939 9423
Out of hours: 07982 279713.

Finding support

We understand reporting abuse may be very difficult and distressing to you and it may add to your hurt by our not being able to immediately assist you. Therefore, here are the contact details of other agencies that are available to assist either on a 24-hour basis or through specialist helplines and services:

- **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:** 0808 800 5000 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are worried about a child. Or email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Child-line:** 0800 1111 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are a child or young person and are worried about anything.
- **National Domestic Violence Helpline:** 0808 2000 247 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are experiencing domestic abuse.
- **Samaritans Helpline:** 116 123 (open 24 hours). Phone if you feel you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to.
- **Action on Elder Abuse Helpline:** 080 8808 8141 (free phone Monday to Friday 9-5pm).
- **National Rape Crisis Helpline:** 0808 802 9999 and is open every day from 12-2.30pm and 7-9.30pm.
- **The National Safeguarding Team:** safeguarding@churchofengland.org

TEMPLATES

A number of documents / templates have been attached in support of this guidance and advice.

- A. Check list for planning events
- B. Risk assessment
- C. Registration and consent form: Children
- D. Registration and consent form: Adults
- E. Consent for Photographs.
- F. Consent form for Transport

Annex I: Code of Safer Working Practice