



## **POLICY FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **Introduction**

The Trustees are mindful of the teaching in Holy Scripture regarding nurture of the young and the care that should be extended to those in our midst, who may be vulnerable in any way. Jesus himself reminds us in Matthew 19: 14 that, ". . .the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion is committed to the nurture, protection and safeguarding of all, especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

We accept these people as part of Christ's Kingdom. We rejoice in their presence and recognise the gifts they bring. Each Church in the Connexion, and gathering held under its name, has a duty of care towards them.

Our primary concern is for the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to our care, and also that those working with them be protected in turn, from any unjust accusation or placed in a position where this protection might be undermined.

Accordingly, the Trustees require each member Church in the Connexion to:

1. Adopt a policy on safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. Plan the work of the church so as to minimise situations where abuse may occur.
3. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all members working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
4. Give everyone working with these groups clear role descriptions and guidelines, and training and support.
5. Use active oversight as a means of protection.
6. Appoint anyone working with these groups, with protection in mind.
7. Treat all would-be workers with these groups as job applicants, as for any position involving contact with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
8. Gain at least one reference from a person (written preferred), who has first-hand knowledge of the volunteer's work with the type of group with which he or she may be working, or only use as workers people who are church members or known to the church for at least one year.



9. Ask in writing whether the volunteer has any conviction for a criminal offence. If there is any criminal offence involving children or vulnerable adults, the applicant must not be allowed to work in this field in the future.
10. Require all those over the age of 18 working with children and vulnerable adults to undergo a DBS check.
11. Make continuance of the volunteer conditional on a subsequent review.
12. Agree and issue guidelines for procedures to be adopted in the event of suspicion or an allegation of abuse or improper behaviour.
13. Review the safeguarding provision on an annual basis and provide appropriate training with all in leadership and youth/vulnerable adult work so they are aware of protection issues and know the procedures to follow.

Within the Connexion network of churches are those who operate as a CIO with their own constitution and Trustees. These congregations are responsible for their own governance and to meet the nationally accepted safeguarding criteria as outlined by the Charities Commission and best practise guidelines. The Connexion Trustees are available for support, encouragement and procedural advice.

The congregations of the Connexion which fall under the Trustees responsibility are contacted regularly and each year an audit of safeguarding measures is taken.

The Trustees recognise that for small churches with few members or children, it may be very difficult to find people to work with children or young people, and that suggested guidelines may seem unnecessary or overcautious. It is not our intention to discourage. Our aim is to encourage safer work and churches to take their responsibility seriously in these matters. For this purpose the Trustees provide a package of templates of policies and procedures that may be used for all The Connexion congregations.

The Trustees have agreed to use the services of ThirtyOne:Eight for guidance, changes to the legal requirements, advice, and processing DBS checks for use within the whole of the Connexion.

Further information on the requirements on 'Safeguarding' can be obtained on their website:  
<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>

It should also be noted that the legal and guidance notes within this document regarding 'Safeguarding' are only part of the process for protecting the young and vulnerable. Each church should consider the whole environment that the young and vulnerable are subjected to. This will include other areas which should also be looked at, identifying potential risks and documenting processes that are intended to control such risks.