SPRING MOUNT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Safe from harm policy

Westmorland & Furness Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub –0333 373 2724
Email – Safeguarding.hub@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 0300 3033 892
Email – lado@cumbria.gov.uk

Cumbria Constabulary – Emergency 999
Queries – 101

Issued: February 2023
Next Review: February 2024

SAFE FROM HARM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- Spring Mount Church is an entirely independent fellowship that is totally self-governing under God's guidance.
- Its aim is to reach, teach, grow and send for Christ.
- Volunteer workers are accountable to the Leadership Team and therefore come under this policy.
- This policy is in place to protect the safety particularly of the young people the workers come into contact with and the interests of the workers themselves.
- By young people this policy means all individuals, including children, under 18 years of age in line with the 1989 Children Act.

IT IS THE POLICY OF SPRING MOUNT CHURCH TO SAFEGUARD THE WELFARE OF ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BY PROTECTING THEM FROM ALL FORMS OF ABUSE INCLUDING PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT

THE SAFE FROM HARM POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE LEADERSHIP TEAM (and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)) IN FEBRUARY OF EACH YEAR.

PRINCIPLES

- Treat all young people with respect and dignity, as befitting their age, and promote their well-being in every way.
- Avoid any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a young person, inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form, and making any sexually suggestive comments (even in fun).
- Learn to control and discipline without using physical force or punishment
- Take seriously all allegations of abuse, whether from an adult or another young person. All children and young people without exception have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately, and all Spring Mount Church volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns.
- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.

Safeguarding Officers:
For reasons of confidentiality the only person(s) who need to know information of a sensitive nature are the following designated Safeguarding Officers:

Designated Safeguarding Leaders –

Mr Philip Last, who can be contacted on 07711 229886
Mrs Marie Last, who can be contacted on 07760 166251

Safeguarding Deputies –

Mr Tim Baalham, who can be contacted on 07377 396444
Mrs Isabela Baalham, who can be contacted on 07951 714946

Or alternatively email **safeguarding@springmount.church**

The Safeguarding Officers will inform any relevant outside organisations they deem necessary

The broad areas of responsibility for the DSL are:

(i) Managing referrals
(ii) Training
(iii) Raising awareness

(i) Managing referrals

The DSL should:

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.

- Refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member).

- Refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child) and/or Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.

(ii) Training

The DSL should receive appropriate training every 2 year, in order to:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments.

- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need including those children with special educational needs and young carers.

- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

(iii) Raising Awareness

The DSL should:

- Ensure the Safeguarding policy is known and used appropriately.

- Ensure the Safeguarding policy is reviewed each year.

- Ensure the Safeguarding policy is available publicly.

GOOD PRACTICE WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

DO treat everyone with respect.

DO provide an example you wish others to follow.

DO ensure that the ratio of adult leaders/workers to young people is appropriate to the activity.

DO respect a young person's right to personal privacy.

DO provide opportunity for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have.

DO encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they find unacceptable.

DO remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

DO recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

DO NOT work alone unless absolutely unavoidable.

DO NOT permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. racism, bullying, etc.)

DO NOT engage in any inappropriate physical or verbal contact.

DO NOT make derogatory or suggestive remarks or gestures.

DO NOT jump to conclusions about others. Always check the facts.

DO NOT exaggerate or trivialise child protection issues.

DO NOT allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as crushes.

DO NOT show favouritism to any individual.

DO NOT rely on just your good name to protect you.

DO NOT believe that, "it could never happen to me."

DO NOT take a chance.

POLICY

Recruitment

All leaders/helpers/volunteers working with children's activities **MUST** have a recent DBS check.
All must have relevant experience and/or training/qualifications and suitability checks made which include, application form, understanding of Spring Mount Church safeguarding policy and mission statement, offer up 2 references, have a declaration of any criminal record and will undergo a probation period of the session/task/project undertaking. They must also read and understand and practice the procedures laid down in any policy.

Meetings in houses (where the worker is the house owner)

- The latest time that you should have young people at your house is 11.00 p.m. If you expect a later time seek approval from parents/guardians.
- Do not let a young person into your house during school time. If they are distressed get as quickly as you can to the bottom of the problem and take appropriate action as deemed necessary. Young people are required by law to attend school during normal school hours.
- You are responsible for the behaviour of young people whilst they are in your house. Be considerate to neighbours and others sharing/using your house.
- Have a set of rules of behaviour which each person in the house will agree to and uphold, do not be afraid of asking young people to leave for breaking these rules.
- No young person should ever go into your bedroom for any reason.
- No young person should ever stay the night in your home unless in exceptional circumstances, and always with approval from parents/guardians.
- Have appropriate sleeping accommodation for separate genders and adults and young people.

Conversations

- Even if you are extremely confident of your friendship with a young person, always seek to avoid having a one on one conversation with them in isolation, but instead meet in a public place, or in a room with the door open where another adult can hear if called.
- Never enter into a conversation that addresses a young person's personal life or problems if the young person is of the opposite sex. Also be careful if they are of the same sex as you.
- Be extremely careful in offering physical contact to a young person in the course of a conversation.
- Always be ready to refer to a Child Safety Co-ordinator when a young person gives information to you of a sensitive nature. Inform the young person of your action.
- If a young person tells you a piece of information of a sensitive nature then you should write down basic details of the information on the sheet provided and give it to a Child Safety Co-ordinator, who will then decide on the course of action to follow. More details on this follows. You will also be kept informed during this process of what is taking place.
- If a young person comes to you to discuss a specific problem, then limit the conversation to at the maximum 1 hour. If during light conversation a young person starts to talk about a specific problem then talk through that issue and move the conversation on as quickly as possible, not dwelling on that issue. You may feel it appropriate to arrange another time to further discuss the issue. Always refer to a Child Safety Co-ordinator if you feel out of your depth or want support in this process. Do not engage in private messages over social media with young people.

Supervision of young people

- Ratio of leaders/workers to young people – we **recommend** 1:12 (age 8+), 1:5 (age 7 and below) and in mixed groups, where possible, at least one leader of each sex.
- Ensure that the level of personal care, e.g. toileting, is appropriate and relates to the age of the young person, whilst also accepting that some may have special needs.
- As far as is practicable ensure that young people can reach home safely – with lifts or appropriate company. This is particularly important after dark.
- If you are driving please remember to drive within the law, particularly with regard to seat belts and speed.
- Wherever possible ensure that another young person or worker is present when giving lifts in a car or mini-bus. The leader/worker should ensure that the young person is able to enter the home before leaving.

General:

1. At any event you attend where you have taken young people in the name of Spring Mount Church you and your group will come under the safe from harm policy of that event where such a policy exists and has been shown to you. Where such a policy does not exist you and your group will continue to come under this policy.
2. Never take young people on an outing without permission of their parents, and with a relevant consent form filled out by their parent/guardian.
3. Never administer any kind of medication to a young person without the written permission of their parent/guardian.
4. Any injury should be reported to the group leader of the activity who should assess the situation and take necessary action:
    - Ensure any necessary basic First Aid is administered.
    - Make reasonable effort to inform parents/guardian of any injury.
    - **ALWAYS** inform parents/guardian of any bumped head injuries (by direct contact, phone, or text).
    - For any serious injury parents/guardian should be informed immediately and the child taken to hospital.
    - Record any significant injury in the record book, which is situated in the kitchen.

Abuse Allegations

If a young person makes a disclosure about any allegations of any kind of abuse pass it on as soon as possible to the Child Safety Co-ordinators who will assess the situation, contact the appropriate bodies and relevant agencies and keep you informed of this process.

Do not ask leading questions and avoid reacting to the disclosure in an overtly negative or dramatic manner.

The following notes will help when responding to the young person who is confiding in you about abuse:

DO

- Believe what you are being told and acknowledge this.
- Explain who you may have to tell and why.
- Recognise how difficult this situation may be for the child and say so.
- Reassure the young person that what has happened is not their fault and that you are pleased they shared it with you.
- Explain that abuse happens to many other people – not to minimise, but to reassure.
- Remember the abuser is responsible.
- Any body language of yours that expresses distaste may have to be explained to the young person.
- Involve a witness if possible.

DO NOT

- Agree to keep secrets.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Interrogate the young person with lots of questions – obtain the facts, which should be observable and not include speculation, interpretations or recommendations.
- Doubt what is being said – it has probably taken a great deal of courage to speak out.
- Make the young person feel responsible by inappropriate verbal and non-verbal responses.
- Panic – listen to the child, and then contact a Child Safety Co-ordinator.
- Make an individual decision not to refer.

General points:

- Listen to the young person carefully.
- Take seriously what they say (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Look at them directly.
- Be honest.
- Let them know that you may need to tell someone else – don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a young person has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that they may have been threatened.

Helpful things to say or show:

- Show acceptance of what the young person says:
  "I'm glad you have told me", "It's not your fault."

Avoid saying:

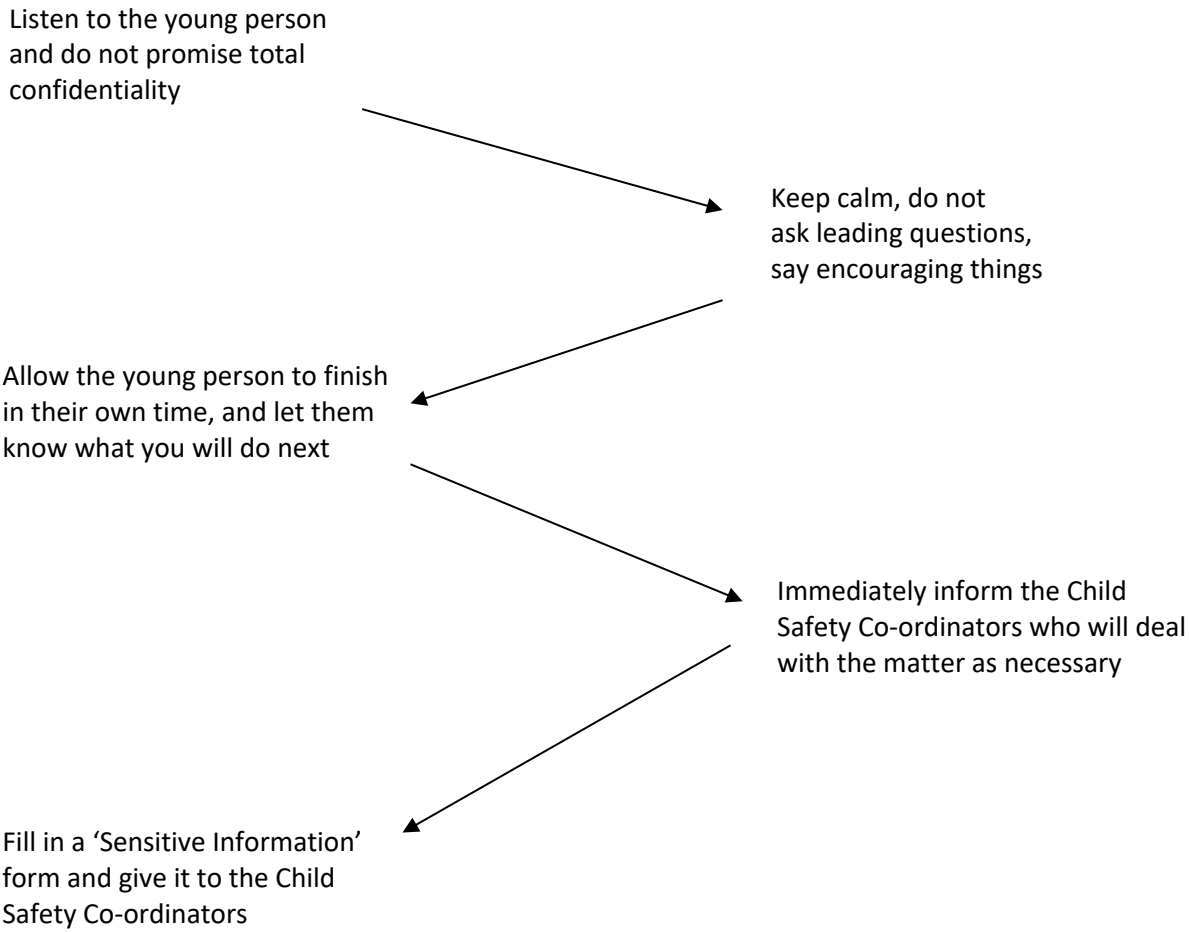
- "Why didn't you tell anyone before?"
- "I can't believe it!"
- "Why?", "How?", "When?", "Who?", "Where?"
- Never make false promises. Never make statements such as, "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else."

Concluding:

- Again, reassure the young person that they were right to tell you and that you take seriously what they say.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Immediately refer to the Child Safety Co-ordinators.

Complete a Sensitive Report form as soon as possible (preferably within an hour), writing down <u>exactly what the young person said</u>, when they said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity).

ACTION FLOW CHART FOR DISCLOSURES



The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed by the Leadership of Spring Mount Church in February of every year.

Annex A: **Spring Mount Church Sensitive Report**

This form should be filled in as soon as possible after a piece of sensitive information has been disclosed to you. Give it to a Child Safety Co-ordinator in a **sealed** envelope marked 'Private and Confidential'.

Young Person's Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Age: _____

Location where disclosure made: _____

Date of disclosure: _____

Time of disclosure: _____ am / pm

Brief content of information given (continue on other side if necessary)

Is this young person at immediate risk from significant harm? Yes / No

Name or Worker: _____

Signature:

Date Form handed to Child Safety Co-ordinator: _____

Time Form handed to Child Safety Co-ordinator: _____

Annex B: **Spring Mount Church Volunteer Declaration Form**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

_____

TEL. NO. _____

I declare that

- I have read the Spring Mount Christian Fellowship Safe From Harm Policy and, to the best of my ability, I will work to it.
- I understand the standards to which I should work
- I am aware of the procedures, which need to be followed if I have suspicions about the welfare of a young person, or if they make a disclosure to me.
- I have never been involved in the abuse of young people and my actions have never given any concern to others.
- I give permission to the Leadership Team to have sight of any current DBS check I already hold, or to have one carried out should that be deemed to be necessary.

SIGNED: _____ **DATE:** _____

Volunteer

SIGNED: _____ **DATE:** _____

DSL