

## 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out Durham Christian Partnership (DCP)'s approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. It applies to all of DCP's activities and projects and to everyone working with DCP including volunteers, staff and trustees.

## 2. Abuse, neglect and safeguarding children and adults at risk

[Based on statutory guidance: [Working together to safeguard children](#); [Care and support statutory guidance](#)]

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The threats to children include: sexual, physical and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Safeguarding children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's 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.

An adult at risk:

- is aged 18 years or over;
- may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The Care Act 2014 identifies the categories of abuse and neglect of adults at risk as: physical abuse; domestic violence; sexual abuse; psychological abuse, financial or material abuse; modern slavery; discriminatory abuse; organizational abuse, neglect and acts of omission; self-neglect.

Safeguarding adults at risk means:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action

- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances

### **3. Policy Statement**

DCP aims to restore dignity and revive hope to people from all walks of life. We are concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive environment throughout all our projects.

We aim to provide a safe environment. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to prevent the abuse or neglect of children and adults at risk and to report any concerns that arise.

We will carry out appropriate checks during recruitment and seek to ensure that our staff and volunteers are aware of what is required from them under the safeguarding policy and make sure that it is practised at all times.

We commit ourselves to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services to promote wellbeing, enhance care and support and in any investigation into concerns about abuse or neglect.

DCP will review this policy annually or when legislation changes.

### **4. Expectations of staff and volunteers**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Everyone working with DCP has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this policy and related procedures. They must consider the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk in all aspects of their work.

Anyone working with DCP must inform the designated person (section 7) if they or any adult living in their household become(s) the subject of an allegation involving a safeguarding concern or abuse against a child or adult at risk.

### **5. Designated person and their role**

DCP has a designated person who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of adults at risk or children. The designated person for DCP is Glenn Jones (Deputy - Lindsey Brown).

Email: [glenn@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:glenn@durhamcp.org.uk) and [lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk)

Telephone: 0191 303 8623 / 07746 125875

The designated person:

- is responsible for ensuring that they have correct and up to date training;
- will be available for adults at risk and children to speak with should they feel the need to talk with someone about an incident which has happened whilst

- working for or receiving assistance from DCP, particularly if they feel they have been abused or neglected;
- will maintain secure records of any safeguarding disclosures or concerns and is responsible for reporting to statutory services, when appropriate.

## **6. Planning activities**

Project co-ordinators should assess and manage risks to beneficiaries and others and complete a risk register (see also DCP's Risk Management Policy).

Anyone running an activity or event should plan the work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of adults at risk or children might occur.

For instance:

- Ensure there is adequate supervision for all adults at risk and children;
- A group of children should be supervised by a minimum of 2 adults who are preferably unrelated and one of each sex. Maintain an appropriate ratio of adults to children:
  - 0-2 Years old 1 adult to 3 children
  - 3-7 Years old 1 adult to 8 children
  - 8-11 Years old 1 Adult to 13 children
  - 12-18 years old 1 adult to 15 children
- When a child joins a group for the first time, obtain written consent from the parent/carer (covering participation and use of personal data), together with contact information, details of any additional needs and medical information for use in emergency. These details should be stored securely and available to the person in charge at every meeting of the group.
- Ensure that the staff and/or volunteers providing the supervision are suitably trained;
- Ensure that staff and/or volunteers are aware of any risks and their responsibilities towards mitigating these risks, including fire procedures, recording of accidents and notifying the person in charge of any concerns;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers know where the nearest telephone is in case of emergencies and that phones are clearly labelled with directions for how to make external calls;
- Arrange that, as far as possible, an adult is not left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child;
- Ensure that any adult at risk or child with DCP is aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns;
- Display the name of the designated person. Ensure that staff and volunteers know the name of the designated person and how they might be contacted.

Team members should respect boundaries:

- Team members should show respect in their attitude, language used and actions to maintain the dignity of all beneficiaries;
- Children's' privacy should be respected and activities such as rough/sexually provocative games or comments are not permitted; The children themselves should also be discouraged from initiating such activities;

- Appropriate physical contact in a public place can be healthy, for example to comfort an upset or hurt child. However, physical contact may be inappropriate due to the age, ability or wishes of the individual. Team members must ensure that their actions cannot be misunderstood;
- In any identified cases of child grooming, the person in question must be suspended from all contact with children within the DCP setting, while advice is sought from appropriate authorities such as the Police and implemented to mitigate any risk to children in our care. Child grooming is deliberate action by an adult to form a trusting relationship with a child with the intent of later having an inappropriate relationship or sexual contact.

It is possible to be lulled into a false sense of security, believing that those who work alongside adults at risk and children in DCP will never be guilty of abuse because they are part of a Christian organisation. However, it is not safe to assume that anyone is automatically safe to be with adults at risk or children.

For this reason, all procedures set in place to protect adults at risk and children should apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to adults at risk and children as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect adults at risk and children, which are then observed by everyone. This will involve thought and planning within each group to minimise the risk.

If any member of staff or supervising volunteer has concerns, please raise them with the designated person. If it is brought to the attention of the designated person and not adequately dealt with the next step is to seek advice from DCP trustees or contact Social Services or the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.

## **7. Vehicles and transport**

A DCP volunteer or member of staff may not give a lift to a beneficiary unless another DCP volunteer or member of staff is also present. Any exception is subject to written permission from the Chief Executive.

All workers driving any vehicle which transports adults at risk and/or children must hold a valid driver's licence for the type/class of vehicle they are driving.

All vehicles used in the transportation of adults at risk and/or children must have a valid road fund licence, be appropriately insured, have a valid MOT certificate and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. Seat sharing is not permitted and seat belts must be worn.

## **8. Use of electronic communication**

E-Safety (electronic safety) is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of mobile (cell) phones, computers (laptops, notebooks, desktops and tablets) and other electronic devices including games consoles, to communicate and access the internet, emails, text messages (SMS), instant messaging (IM) social networking sites and other social media platforms.

A communication or conversation in this context can be an exchange of emails, text messages or communication through a social media platform. These E-safety procedures have been put in place to reflect all communications between DCP staff/volunteers and beneficiaries.

With the world of electronic communication changing so rapidly, it is not possible to issue guidance that covers all eventualities. DCP would not expect staff/volunteers to communicate electronically with beneficiaries unless this is an essential part of their role.

The following general principles should be adhered to:

- Everyone involved in using media to communicate with beneficiaries will have read and understood the safeguarding information contained within this policy.
- Staff/volunteers should not have 'friended' or otherwise connected with beneficiaries that they are working with through social media sites. If a beneficiary joins the staff/volunteer team they should declare any social media connections with other beneficiaries to the person in charge who will determine whether this presents a conflict, taking advice as necessary.
- Under no circumstances are personal details to be exchanged with beneficiaries in a public forum. If someone posts personal details in a public forum, then the post must be deleted or modified to remove the details;
- No private meetings are to be arranged.
- If at all possible, a record of any SMS, MMS or email conversations should be kept and archived.
- Staff/volunteers should use their real names for any communication purposes.
- Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided.
- Parents or carers and children themselves have the right to decide if a team member is to have contact details of children.
- Team members should only use electronic means of communication with those beneficiaries from whom appropriate consent has been given.
- Team members should not put any pressure on children to reveal their contact details.
- Team members should not share any personal information with beneficiaries and should not request or respond to any personal information from beneficiaries other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role.
- Team members should be careful in their communications with beneficiaries so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives.
- Clear, unambiguous language should be used, avoiding the use of unnecessary abbreviations.
- Lower age limits of social networking sites are to be adhered to.
- Photos and videos should not be posted without the written consent of beneficiaries.
- Staff/volunteers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

## **Photography**

Photographs and video of beneficiaries cannot be taken or used by DCP for any reason without written consent. For children, the consent of parents/carers is required.

Further to this, under current welfare guidelines no photographic equipment including mobile phones and electronic tablets is allowed to be used whilst working with children under 5. Staff/volunteers should ensure that any parents/carers attending also conform to this policy.

## **9. Managing staff and volunteers**

### **9.1 Job Descriptions**

Abuse of adults at risk and children is most easily concealed where there is confusion among adults about roles and responsibilities. All job descriptions for employees and supervising volunteers will therefore include a statement laying down the behaviour and values expected from all who work as part of the team.

### **9.2 Recruitment and selection**

DCP will carry out pre-appointment checks for staff and volunteers such as a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, a check of social media and taking references, as appropriate to the role. A DBS check may be carried out where the role is eligible and the check is deemed desirable. An enhanced DBS check will be carried out if the role includes the regular supervision or pastoral care of children or adults at risk: this includes one-to-one meetings. Anyone who has previously abused a child or those with a record of violent/sexual behaviour will not be appointed to such a role. Anyone seeking a post working with children who is on the barred list is breaking the law and DCP will report this to the police.

Anyone interviewed for a staff role with DCP will need to show an understanding of safeguarding that is relevant to that role.

In all recruitment decisions concerning volunteers:

- a) A detailed application form should be completed;
- b) 2 references should be taken about the suitability of the applicant for the post being considered
- c) An informal interview conducted by the appropriate team leader must be held to explore in more detail the applicant's experience and motivation for volunteering.

### **9.3 Induction and training**

DCP is committed to ensuring that everyone who works with us understands their safeguarding responsibilities and keeps their knowledge up to date. The expected behaviour towards children and adults at risk will be explained when new staff and volunteers join DCP. This policy is to be brought to the attention of all staff and

volunteers, as part of their induction programme. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all team members.

Everyone who works with us should refer to the free guidelines on safeguarding policy provided by Durham County Council and attend appropriate training.

#### **9.4 Supervision as a means of protection**

Regular team meetings should be held to raise and discuss issues about the work, including safeguarding. Attention should be paid to any situation or suggestion that a adult at risk or child is being either highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

At DCP our main area of concern about protecting people lies with the welfare of any adult at risk supported volunteers. Line managers should take any opportunities to observe any adults at risk or children for whom they are responsible.

#### **9.5 Criminal convictions**

Where required by DCP, initial appointment as a member of staff or supervising volunteer is conditional upon the provision of a satisfactory DBS check at a level appropriate to the post. Staff and supervising volunteers will be required to consent to initial and subsequent DBS checks from time to time during their work as deemed appropriate by DCP. In the event that satisfactory checks are not received, any employment or supervisory volunteering role needing a check will be terminated.

Staff and supervising volunteers are required to immediately report to DCP any convictions or offences with which they are charged, including traffic offences.

If an individual is charged with, or convicted of a criminal offence this is not normally in itself reason for disciplinary action. Consideration needs to be given to what effect the charge or conviction has on their suitability to do the job and their relationship with DCP, work colleagues and customers. Criminal conduct carried out in the course of volunteering or employment, or which damages DCP's reputation or reasonably calls into question the trust and confidence in the individual, is likely to justify disciplinary action. However, off-duty conduct which has no bearing on their role with DCP is unlikely to justify disciplinary action.

All volunteers must complete a volunteer application form before commencing work at DCP. Details of criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) must be provided so an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken. (DCP reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary.)

### **10 Acting on safeguarding concerns**

#### **10.1 Staff and volunteers must not investigate concerns**

No one working with DCP should investigate concerns about individual children or adults at risk who are or may be being abused or who are at risk. The person who

first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for statutory services following a referral to them of concern about someone.

### **10.2 Staff and volunteers must report concerns quickly**

Everyone working with DCP has a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of abuse immediately. The report should be made to the designated person (section 7), their deputy or, in their absence, the Project Coordinator or their deputy who will report to statutory services, as appropriate. Where reporting to statutory services is appropriate, the person responsible for this should aim to make the report on the same day as the abuse took place. Our process for referrals is set out in DCP's Procedure for dealing with cases of abuse or neglect.

Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency. Telephone 999 in emergencies and 101 for historical reports. Preserve any crime scene evidence.

If anyone is concerned that a child or adult at risk might be subject to specific abuse or neglect, they should not ignore their suspicions and should not assume that someone else will take action to protect that person.

### **10.3 Recording disclosures and observations**

Staff and volunteers must ensure that their recording of any disclosures and observations is factual, accurate, legible and dated.

Written records should be made in black ink. This is to enable dating of the record to be verified, if necessary.

DCP's Procedure for dealing with cases of abuse or neglect sets out the factual information that staff and volunteers should aim to gather.

Staff and volunteers should take care:

- not to investigate the matter
- not to ask leading questions
- not to alert the abuser.

### **10.4 Whistleblowing**

Anyone reporting a concern will be taken seriously. DCP will aim to protect both the subject of abuse or neglect and the person making the report. Staff who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

### **10.5 Confidentiality and disclosure**

All personal and delicate information disclosed to DCP is confidential, but may not always be secret. Personal and delicate information will be confidential to DCP and shared with staff and volunteers on a 'need to know basis'. The designated person may decide to share the information with another agency when

- Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held.
- There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent.
- The law requires it.

### **11 Further information**

If you have questions about this policy, contact the designated person (section 7).

Signed: 

Glenn Jones

**Durham Christian Partnership  
Procedure for dealing with alleged cases of abuse or neglect**

**Staff member or Volunteer**

1. If you become aware of possible abuse or neglect, make people safe if it is possible to do so without endangering yourself.
2. Listen to disclosures and record information about the situation.
  - Explain to the person that you have to share their information with your manager who may have to contact the Local Authority/police.
  - Try to obtain the person's consent to share the disclosed information but make it clear that we have a duty of care to share the information.
  - You should complete the enclosed Record of Concern/Disclosure Form.
  - **Important:** You must not investigate the possibility of abuse or neglect as this could undermine an official enquiry. Take care not to ask any leading questions. Don't alert the abuser.
3. If you suspect a crime has been committed, then report this to the police: telephone 999 in an emergency or 101 for historical reports. Take care to preserve any crime scene evidence.
4. In all cases you must report any alleged abuse or neglect **immediately** to: Glenn Jones ([glenn@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:glenn@durhamcp.org.uk)) or Lindsey Brown ([lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk)) telephone 0191 303 8623 or, in their absence, to your Project Coordinator or their deputy.

**If you receive a report from a Staff member or Volunteer**

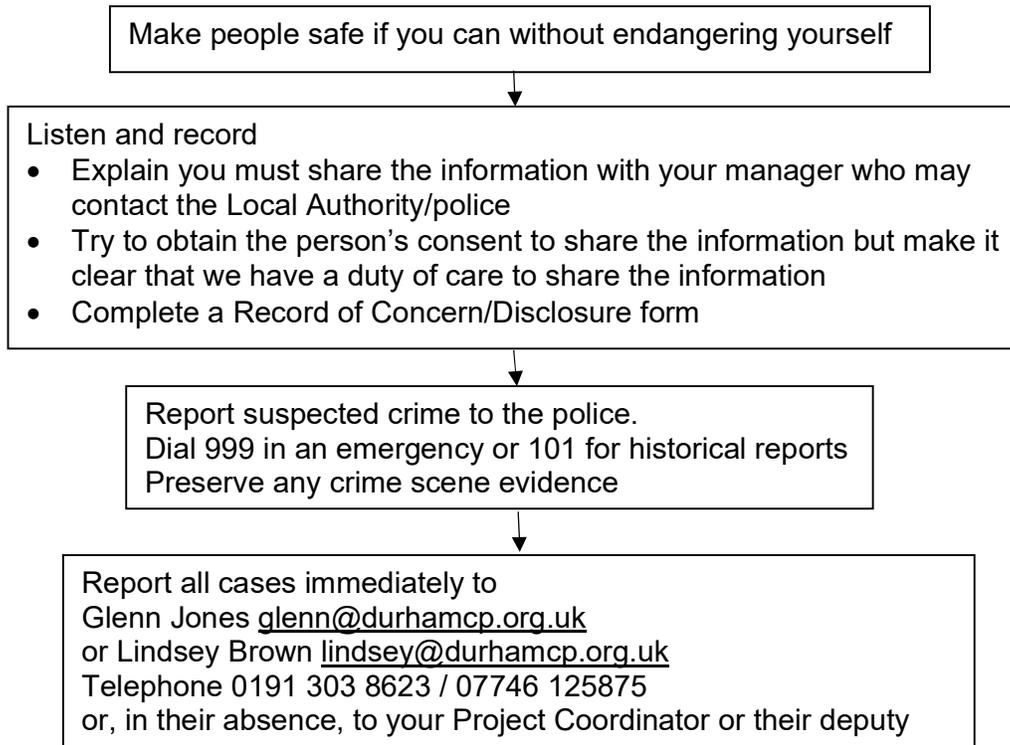
5. Identify whether the alert concerns a child or adult at risk.
6. For an adult at risk, assess the situation using the Risk Threshold tool provided by County Durham Safeguarding Adults Inter-Agency Partnership.
7. Report abuse or neglect to the relevant authority, except where there is only minimal risk to an adult at risk. If in doubt, make the report. Aim to report on the same day as the abuse.

	Children	Adults at Risk
Durham	Social Care Direct 03000 267 979	Social Care Direct 03000 267 979
Sunderland	Together for Children 0191 520 5560/5552	Safeguarding Adults Team 0191 520 5552

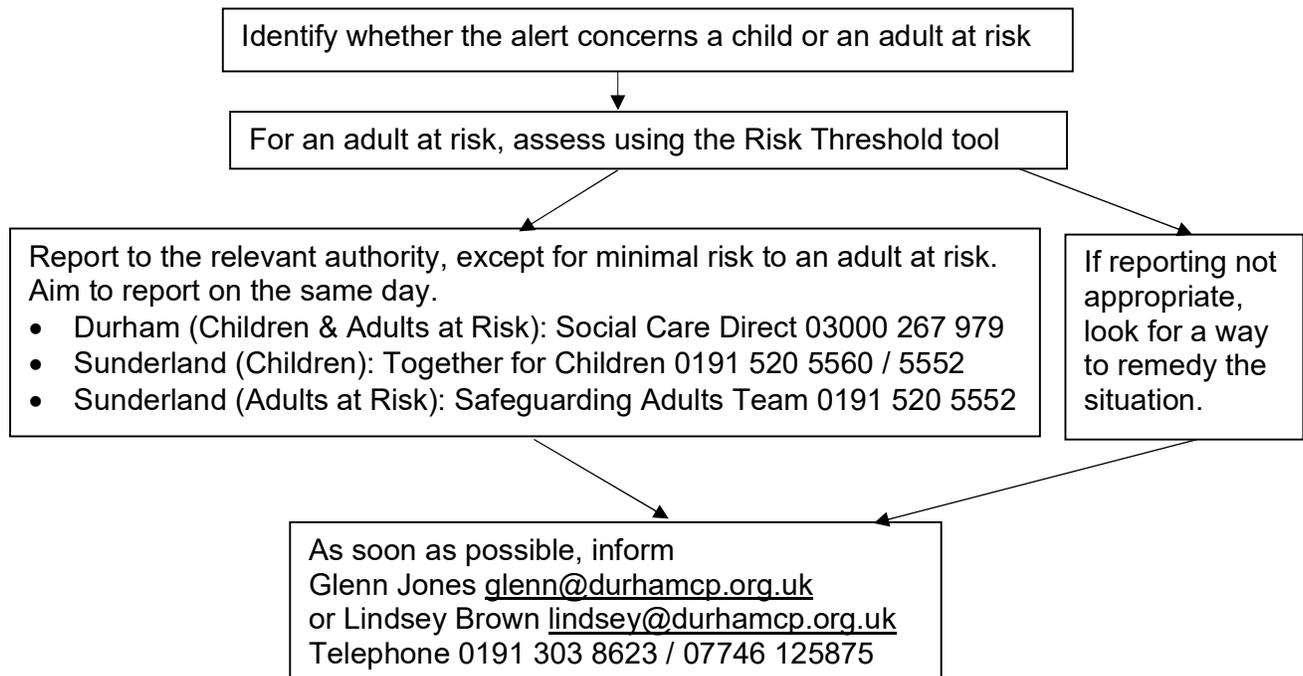
8. Even in cases where reporting is not appropriate, look for opportunities to remedy the situation. This might mean providing people with information or a referral or modifying the service and how it is delivered.
9. Inform Glenn Jones ([glenn@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:glenn@durhamcp.org.uk)) or Lindsey Brown ([lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk)) telephone 0191 303 8623 / 07758 400128 as soon as possible.

## Dealing with alleged abuse or neglect – Flowchart

### If you become aware of possible abuse or neglect:



### If you receive a report from a Staff member or Volunteer



**Durham Christian Partnership  
Record of Concern / Disclosure Form**

**1. Details of adult at risk or child**

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Age:

**2. Details of incident**

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Location of incident:

Details of the alleged perpetrator:

Brief description of the incident (an accurate and factual account, not opinion):

Details of all witnesses:

What action did you take (if any) to make people safe?

Were police notified?

If yes - Incident number:

Date reported to police:

Which other agencies are aware, if any?

**3. Please give an account of your concern(s) and why you are concerned**  
(Explain how you think the person might be being abused or neglected)

**4. Other relevant information for an adult at risk**

Does the adult at risk know this alert has been made?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the adult at risk consented to information being shared?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

**5. Details of any other children or adults at risk who may be at risk**

**6. Reporting within Durham Christian Partnership**

Report any alleged abuse or neglect **immediately** to Glenn Jones ([glenn@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:glenn@durhamcp.org.uk)) or Lindsey Brown ([lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk](mailto:lindsey@durhamcp.org.uk)) telephone 0191 303 8623 / 07746 125875 or, in their absence, to your Project Coordinator or their deputy.

Person to whom the report was made:

Date incident reported by staff member or volunteer:

Report made by (name & contact details of staff member or volunteer)

Date:

Signature:

Date Glenn Jones or Lindsey Brown notified of the incident:

Glenn Jones or Lindsey Brown notified by (name & contact details):

Date:

Signature: