

# Safeguarding for small group leaders

## Key information

Safeguarding is an important aspect of all ministry at St Helen's and is the responsibility of everyone, whether you are leading groups of adults, young people or children. As small group leaders, you may encounter vulnerable adults or issues of historical abuse raised by adult group members.

Appropriate response to issues of both current and historical abuse is vital, for the protection of the individual and for others who may be impacted.

We're conscious that abuse, whether recent or historical, is sensitive and pastorally challenging. If you have any personal concerns, please seek support by speaking to your SLOB leader or Ministry Area Leader.

Please refer to this leaflet as necessary during the year. More information on supporting vulnerable adults can be found in the St Helen's Safeguarding Policy (electronic copies of these documents available via [safeguarding@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@st-helens.org.uk)).

Thank you for helping us to serve the church family in this way.

## What is abuse and what is historical abuse?

### Abuse

The Department of Health states that 'somebody may abuse or neglect an individual by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Individuals may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.' Abuse can be described under any one of (or a combination of) these categories:

- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Psychological abuse*
- *Financial & material abuse*
- *Domestic abuse*
- *Discriminatory abuse*
- *Neglect & Acts of omission*
- *Self neglect*

More information on what these areas of abuse include and on how to recognise signs of abuse can be found in the St Helen's Safeguarding Policy.

Historical abuse is any allegation or disclosure of abuse committed in the past against a child or young person who is now an adult.

***If anyone reports any of the above abuse to you, whether recent or historical, and whether they were the abused or the abuser, you must follow the action points across the page.***

### Remember:

- Historical abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse
- 'Children and young people' means anyone aged under 18
- Illegal activity includes sex with someone aged under 16, child pornography and sharing explicit images of children
- The Church is required to take advice from the Diocese and may need to report allegations or disclosures of criminal acts to the Police

## When someone tells you they have been abused, or have committed abuse, whether recently or many years ago

### General points:

- Above all else, listen
- Keep calm, and show understanding/acceptance of what is said, however unlikely it seems. Reassure the individual that they were right to tell you
- Never push for information. Avoid leading questions and ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said
- Let the individual know what you are going to do next and that you will keep them informed. Let them know that you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality
- However, do reassure them that you will only tell who you need to, and that they will remain involved in decisions going forward

### Action you must then take:

- You must contact your Ministry Area Leader and tell them what you know (you do not need to disclose any names at this stage unless told otherwise)
- If the allegation is against your Ministry Area Leader, contact the Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO) - contact details can be found on the back page of this document
- You retain the right to report serious matters directly to Social Services or the police. Even so, as soon as possible (and within 24 hours), you must also contact either your Ministry Area Leader or the CSO
- Apart from telling your Ministry Area Leader/CSO, the information must be treated as confidential and not shared with co-leaders, SLOB leaders or other church members. Under no circumstances should you investigate concerns of abuse yourself – your role is to pass on the information you've received
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour, but always within 24 hours), writing down exactly what was said and when, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity/situation). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. A copy of these notes must be passed onto your Ministry Area Leader
- Your Ministry Area Leader/the CSO will let you know if you need to do anything else. They are available to answer any questions/concerns that you or the individual involved may have at any stage
- Consider your own feelings and ask your Ministry Area Leader for pastoral support if needed, and consider with your Ministry Area Leader what pastoral support is needed for the individual involved

## Key Contacts

- Church Safeguarding Officer: Andrew Wales, [safeguarding.officer@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding.officer@st-helens.org.uk),  
020 7910 8344

MINISTRY AREA	LEADER	CONTACT
<b>Sunday Morning</b> ( <i>including crèche, Sunday school, Central Focus weekend, Long weekend</i> )	Rev Charlie Skrine	<a href="mailto:c.skrine@st-helens.org.uk">c.skrine@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Sunday 2.30</b> ( <i>including crèche, Sunday school, IGG weekend, 2.30 weekend</i> )	Henry Eatock-Taylor	<a href="mailto:h.eatock-taylor@st-helens.org.uk">h.eatock-taylor@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Sunday 4pm</b> ( <i>inc. crèche, Sunday school, Food at 5s, 4pm weekends</i> )	Rev Aneirin Glyn	<a href="mailto:a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk">a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Sunday 6pm</b> ( <i>inc. RML weekends, RML training weekends</i> )	Rev Mickey Mantle	<a href="mailto:m.mantle@st-helens.org.uk">m.mantle@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>City</b> ( <i>including summer school, city weekend</i> )	Wes Illingsworth	<a href="mailto:w.illingsworth@st-helens.org.uk">w.illingsworth@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Students</b>	Tim Sheppard	<a href="mailto:t.sheppard@st-helens.org.uk">t.sheppard@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Youth</b> ( <i>including Bridge, Junction, Youth RML, youth weekend, Sorted, Sorted Nano, socials</i> )	Will Waugh	<a href="mailto:w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk">w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk</a>
<b>Little Pickles</b>	Rachel Anderson	<a href="mailto:rachel.anderson@btinternet.com">rachel.anderson@btinternet.com</a>
<b>Women on Wednesday</b>		
<b>Offsite</b>	Rev Mickey Mantle	<a href="mailto:m.mantle@st-helens.org.uk">m.mantle@st-helens.org.uk</a>

- If you have experienced abuse yourself, the issues raised by this document may be particularly sensitive. If you would like pastoral support, please approach your SLOB leader or Ministry Area Leader. We recognise this may be a very difficult thing to do, especially if you have not told anyone before, but we are eager to provide appropriate pastoral support
- If you have committed abuse or any related form of criminal act in the past, we would encourage you to be open about it with your Ministry Area Leader, however difficult that may be
- A disclosure of recent or historical abuse might have been made to you in a context outside St Helen's, for example on a summer camp. If you did not report the matter at the time, we encourage you to do so now, however much time has passed. If you are in any doubt, please raise the matter with your Ministry Area Leader
- If for any reason you feel unable to approach your Ministry Area Leader, please approach your SLOB leader in the first instance and seek advice. In the interests of maintaining appropriate confidentiality, we would encourage you to do this only as a last resort and without (at least in the first instance) disclosing to your SLOB leader the names of those to whom your concern relates