



THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH & COMMUNITY OF COVENTRY ARCHDIOCESE OF THYATEIRA AND GREAT BRITAIN

Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding Policy Statement

General statement

The Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek School of Coventry are committed to ensuring a safe environment for worship, study, work and entertainment for church members, students, teachers / volunteers and visitors. It is the responsibility of all members of the church committee, teachers and volunteers to take care of their own safety and that of other members of the community, teachers / volunteers and visitors, and to co-operate with the Executive Committee of the Church and its officers to enable it to carry out its responsibilities. In particular, teachers and volunteers have a duty to:

- work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues or any other person who has a right of access to the organisation's premises at any time
- adhere to safety procedures laid down by the Greek Church and the Greek School of Coventry from time to time, and conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety
- no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare .
- record all accidents, near-miss occurrences and hazardous situations in the health and safety/accident book and report them to the next Executive Committee Meeting.

All Church Committee members/trustees, teachers and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- read and fully understand the Greek Orthodox Church and Greek School of Coventry's Health and Safety Policy and the procedures to be carried out in the event of an emergency; if there is any doubt about the meaning, staff must seek clarification from the Chairman of the Church Committee, School Co-ordinator and the head teacher .
- co-operate with the Executive Committee of the Church and the Greek School Of Coventry Operational Management Committee , as appropriate, to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves , the students and others whilst on school premises.
- report to the Chairman of the Church Committee or the Head teacher within 24 hours of any accident occurring:
 - on the premises
 - off the premises, while acting on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Community of Coventry
- bring to the notice of the Chairman/head teacher any potentially dangerous circumstances that the staff/volunteer is unable to put right.
- The Chairman of the Church Committee, the School head teacher together with all teachers/volunteers are responsible for the clear explanation of the seriousness of abiding by the health and safety rules of the school and to encourage all children to take care of themselves and others at school.

- All teachers/volunteers must read carefully and understand the risks assessments carried out on school premises from time to time and ensure that the children are not exposed to these risks, through clear instructions and appropriate actions. All children should be made aware of no go areas and behaviour that could endanger their health and that of others on school premises.
- All teachers/volunteers /children should be encouraged to identify near miss and dangerous/hazardous situations and to report these to the head teacher/school coordinator, who should enter them in the Accident and Near-Miss book.

Safeguarding Policy:

1. The following Safeguarding /Child protection Policy has been reviewed following a meeting of the Church Committee and they recommend that it is deemed to be valid and appropriate for adoption as the latest safeguarding Policy for the Greek Orthodox Community of Coventry. The following designated persons have been nominated by the Greek Orthodox Church of Coventry to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

- 1) Costas Mairoudiou: President of the Greek Orthodox Community of Coventry**
- 2) Andreas Papageorgi: The Greek School of Coventry President and Coordinator.**

In the absence of the first two designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the following designated person.

- 3) Eleni Tsilipira, the School Head Teacher.**

The social services number for the area is: Tel: 024 7683 2568

For Child Services .The emergency number is: 02476832222 for the Council

The Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit: 02476 539044

Taking Action if you are Concerned about a Child or Young Person Contact: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 02476 788555

A. Safeguarding Children and Young Adults

2. Objective

Our main objective is to ensure the personal safety of all attendees at the Greek Church and Greek School of Coventry with particular reference to children/young and vulnerable adults attending the Greek Church and the Greek School of Coventry by promoting child and young and/or vulnerable adult protection awareness, good practice and sound procedures and ensuring all committee members, teachers and volunteers are properly equipped with the skills to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

3. Policy statement

The Greek Orthodox Community of Coventry is the organisation registered with the Charities Commission, and is basically responsible for the running of the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek school of Coventry. We believe that children/young and vulnerable people have the right to be treated equally and to partake in church life and learn in a safe and friendly environment, protected from maltreatment, abuse or bullying, physical or mental. We are committed to providing a protective umbrella for their religious, educational and emotional development and taking into considerations their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs. Furthermore the Greek Church and School of Coventry encourages active participation by children and young adults in the life of the church, education process and the decision making regarding the effective running of the church and school, not only as a place of worship and learning but as a centre of social and cultural interaction. We believe that this encourages children

not only to share views with their peers but also with their teachers. This general feeling of participation and belonging is essential for understanding children's' behaviour and knowing when something is not right with a child.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children/young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- committee members, teachers/volunteers are trained to understand the nature of abuse and to be alert to matters of concern
- committee members, teachers/volunteers working at the Greek church and Greek school have a responsibility to report concerns they may have about abuse to children to the designated persons with responsibility for child protection at the Church/School.

We aim to safeguard children/young people by:

- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff/volunteers
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children/young people, parents and carers and staff/volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children/young people appropriately
- following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers
- providing effective management for staff/volunteers through support, supervision and training.
- reviewing our policy and good practice regularly.

The role of the designated person

The Greek School of Coventry has two designated child protection persons: The school Coordinator and the Head Teacher, who undergo child protection training. It is the responsibility of these persons to make themselves available for consultation by committee members, teachers, volunteers, visitors and children/young people and their families. **The names of the designated persons and information about their duties are displayed in the entrance of the church and the school so that everyone (including parents/carers) are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns.**

The duties of the designated Safeguarding/Child Protection Person include:

- ensuring that the Safeguarding Policy is implemented throughout the school
- ensuring that all necessary enquiries, procedures and investigations relating to child protection are carried out
- reporting results of screening enquiries and preserving 'need to know' levels of confidentiality and access to secure records
- ensuring that all confidential records relating to child protection matters are kept secure
- liaising with social services at a formal and informal level on child protection matters, also with the police
- reporting allegations and suspicion of abuse to the appropriate authorities
- ensuring that there is adequate induction and training relating to child protection matters
- ensuring that each activity carried out by the school is sound in terms of child protection as regards personnel, practices and premises

- checking all incident reports made by staff/volunteers, countersigning them and making such reference to the appropriate authority as is appropriate.

4. Procedures: Good practice inside the school

The designated person (s) shall ensure that adequate child protection procedures are in place, as follows:

Each parent must fill out an enrolment form providing for each child providing personal details relating to name, age, address, contact details of parents, and any health issues/medicines that would be useful for the school to know to safeguard the health of the child. Signed consent is requested from the parents of each child /young person attending the school, to provide emergency treatment to the child and/or to call a doctor/ambulance, if this is required.

An attendance register is kept of all children/young people attending the school's activities, including information about arrival and departure times.

Teachers/volunteers are required to record any accidents or unusual events in the accident/incident book and to inform the head teacher before the end of the school day. Any incident that involves confidentiality must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding/ Child Protection Persons.

The school recognises that physical touch between teachers and children can be healthy and acceptable in public places, for comforting a crying child. However, staff/volunteers will be discouraged from this in circumstances where an adult and child/young person are alone together.

Child Minding Rotas during Breaks: All teachers/ volunteers have to take it turn to supervise children during breaks. There must be at least two responsible adults supervising children at all times. The head teacher will produce the rota and distribute it to all teachers.

All doors and gates to the school are locked after parents depart. Entry to the school after lessons start is accessed via the ringing of a door bell.

Parents collect their children at the end of the day from the classroom. Teachers must be informed if a non-designated person collects the child.

All teachers /volunteers should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect and use appropriate behaviour, language and attitude.

Outings and trips

All vehicles hired for outings must be insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts.

Children are always accompanied by teachers, who must ensure orderly behaviour on the coach and report any dangerous behaviour by the driver. All drivers and escorts should agree to abide by these guidelines.

A roll call will be taken at the start of a journey and again before beginning the return journey; if the group is travelling in more than one vehicle, children/young people will be encouraged to travel in the same vehicle there and back.

Teachers /volunteers accompanying trips will carry the contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services in the event of an alert being necessary.

If a child/young person goes missing while on a trip, teachers/volunteers should instigate an immediate search. If the child/young person cannot be found within half an hour, the police should be notified and the parents of the child informed.

The care of the remaining children/young people is paramount. It is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible, while a senior teacher/volunteer remains at the visit site to co-ordinate contact between security staff/volunteers and the child's/young person's parents/carers.

Safe recruitment

All staff/volunteers are appointed after a successful interview by at least two members of the management committee.

The Greek School of Coventry carries out safe recruitment checks on everyone who works for us. All roles require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and references before the individual joins us. Anyone interviewed for a post with our school, will need to show an understanding of safeguarding that is relevant to the role that they are applying for.

All staff/volunteers will:

- be given a clear job description or role description, setting out expectations for their work and conduct
- show that they meet the specifications for the post or role
- fill in a form on first appointment to provide their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience and qualifications
- supply the names of two referees, who will be contacted personally
- be taken through the school's child protection policy and procedures on induction and encouraged to participate in safeguarding courses, paid for by the school.
- be supervised by the head teacher
- be observed at work by the school's co-ordinator.

5. Procedures: Good practice inside the Church

- All Committee members should support the priest in his role as spiritual father and in furthering his duties and responsibilities.
- All committee members have a duty to ensure the safety of all church attendees with particular emphasis on the elderly, disabled, children and vulnerable adults. They should always be available to offer assistance to anyone in need.
- All gang ways and fire exits should be clear of any obstructions and easily negotiable by all particularly disabled persons.
- The ramp entrance to the church should be easily accessible with no cars obstructing the entry of wheel chairs.
- The Priest, given his regular contact with children, should undergo a DBS check.
- The priest should consider asking for someone to be present in the church, somewhere at the back of the church, during confessions of venerable adults.
- When children are brought in by the school to take part in the Holy Liturgy and to receive the Holy Communion, they should be accompanied by their teachers at all times until they return back to their classes.

6. Safeguarding training

We are committed to ensuring that all Committee members/teachers/volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and keep their knowledge up to date. They are encouraged to complete an online safeguarding training package within 3 months of taking up post, and after that at 3-yearly intervals. There will also be regular refresher training on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, including on specific areas of risk and safeguarding practice.

7. Responding to allegations of abuse: Procedures:

i) Concerns about children being abused should be referred by the school's Designated Persons to the children's social care department of the local authority where the child lives. Similarly, concerns about vulnerable adults should be referred to local authority adult services. Any committee member/teacher/volunteer who is in doubt about what to do should consult the head teacher.

ii) Allegations against a Committee members/teacher/volunteer:

The Church Committee will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child/young person. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff/volunteer, there are three stages in the investigation: a) the designated persons will discuss the matter and if there is sufficient evidence, b) call upon the services of the safeguarding authority and upon their advice, c) seek the involvement of the police.

iii) Concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Church/school's designated persons, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the chair of the Church Committee, who will advise how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the Church/school should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

iv) Internal enquiries and suspension

The designated person will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended, pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, the school will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be handled sensitively. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the church/school must reach a decision based upon the available information. Where on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true, the welfare of the child/young person must remain of paramount importance and the person accused must be suspended until the authorities complete their investigations..

v) What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

- a) You must report your concerns immediately to the designated person at your church/school. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those named above.
- b) Step-by-step guidance for teachers/volunteers on dealing with their earliest concerns is provided on the card 'What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused'. This guidance is produced by the Department of Health and endorsed by the local authority. Copies of the card must be available to every member of teacher and volunteer.
- c) The designated person will:
 - obtain information from teachers/volunteers, children/young people or parents/carers who have child protection concerns and record this information
 - assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information, as appropriate
 - consult with a statutory child protection agency such as the local social services department or the NSPCC to clarify any doubts or worries
 - ensure that the parents/carers of the child/young person are contacted as soon as possible, following advice from the social services department
 - make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or to the police without delay.

- d) If the school's designated person is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the chair of the Church Committee, who will refer the allegation to social services.
- e) It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If, for any reason, you believe that the designated people have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the child protection agencies directly.
- f) If a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure of abuse:
 - make notes as soon as possible (ideally within one hour of being told)
 - write down exactly what the child/young person or vulnerable adult has said, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before you were told (for example, what activity was taking place)
 - record dates, times and when you made the record
 - keep all your handwritten notes secure
 - report your discussion to the designated person as soon as possible
 - if the designated person is implicated, you need to report to the second designated person
 - if both are implicated, report to social services
 - do not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above
 - the designated person must consider carefully whether or not it is safe for a child/young person to return home to a potentially abusive situation, and, if necessary, they should take immediate action to contact social services in order to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

vi) Allegations of physical injury or neglect

If a child/young person has symptoms of physical injury or neglect, the designated person will:

- contact social services for advice in cases of deliberate injury or concerns about the safety of the child/young person, but they must not inform the parents/carers
- seek emergency medical attention if necessary
- in other circumstances, speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child/young person
- if appropriate, encourage the parent/carer to seek help from social services
- if the parent/carer fails to act, seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board

vii) Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the designated person will:

- contact the social services duty social worker for children and families directly, but must not speak to the parent or to anyone else
- seek advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and provide this information to social services, but should not attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicion of sexual abuse
- while allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse should normally be reported to the designated person, their absence should not delay referral to social services.

8) Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse:

- Follow the “6 R’s: RECEIVE, REASSURE, REACT, RECORD, REFER, and REFLECT.

RECEIVE: If a child wants to talk to you, never ask them to come back later.

- Ask them what they want to talk to you about and, if you are concerned about their welfare, give them the time to speak to you.

- Never promise confidentiality, inform the child that you are happy to talk to them but if they tell you anything that you believe may be putting them at harm that you will have to talk to someone. Do not make any promises you cannot keep.
- If you have any concerns that the child has been, or is at risk of harm, you must tell them that you will speak to someone to get help.
- Listen carefully to the child. Do not stop a child who is freely recalling information.
- Where a child is visibly upset or has an obvious injury, it is good practice to ask a child why they are upset or how an injury was caused, or respond to a child wanting to talk to you to help clarify vague concerns and result in the right action being taken.

REASSURE:

- Ensure that the child is aware that they have done the right thing in talking to you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- **Helpful statements to make:**
 - I believe you (showing acceptance of what the child/young person says).’
 - Thank you for telling me.’
 - It’s not your fault.’
 - I will help you.’

REACT:

- If you need to clarify information ask open-ended questions e.g. “Is there anything you'd like to tell me?”, “Can you explain to me...”, “Can you describe to me....”
- Never ask leading or suggestive questions e.g. “Did he/she do anything that they shouldn't have done?”
- Never ask 'accusing' questions e.g. Do not say:
 - ‘Why didn’t you tell anyone before?’
 - ‘I can’t believe it!’
 - ‘Are you sure that this is true?’
 - Why? Who? When? Where?’
- Never criticise the alleged perpetrator, it may be someone that they will continue to live with.
- Never ask the pupil to repeat their disclosure for any other member of staff, it is your responsibility to share the information. This may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by children’s social care or Police.

RECORD:

- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the words that the child has used.
- Do not record your assumptions and interpretations, just what you heard and saw.
- Do not destroy original notes even if you later write things up more neatly and fully.
- Record the date, time and place of the disclosure.
- Sign any written records and identify your position in the school setting.
- Do not ask a child to write an account or sign any of your documentation as this may compromise enquiries that need to be made later by Children’s Services or Police.

REFER :

- Immediately inform the Designated Person / Head teacher who will be responsible for following the appropriate procedures. In the absence of anyone being available in school, contact the Local Authority safeguarding Team..

REFLECT:

- Ask yourself if you have done everything you can within your role.

- Refer any remaining concerns to the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Persons. e.g. any knowledge of siblings in the school, or previous contact with parents.
- Dealing with disclosures can be difficult and disturbing: you should seek support for yourself via colleagues from within your church/ school or an alternative source but be aware of principles of confidentiality. Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with the Designated Persons. If you still have concerns, you or the designated person(s) should refer to Children's Services for further advice.

Call the Local Authority Help line: Coventry Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB Tel: 024 7683 2568) Email: coventryLSCB@coventry.gov.uk

Visit: <https://twitter.com/coventrylscb>

Address: Room 123. Broadgate House, Broadgate, Coventry, CV1 IFS

B. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

1. Our school promotes and encourages team working and joint responsibility for the safeguarding of all of us including adults. We believe that it is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the Greek School of Coventry, the management committee, teachers, volunteers, parents and children to help safeguard each other. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment, not only for children, but staff, parents and visitors too. We are all equally responsible for preventing physical harm and the abuse of adults just as we are for children and to act positively to report any abuse.
2. We promote a climate where teachers and volunteers will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.
3. Any concerns raised, including any concerns relating to any member of the teaching/volunteers team, will be investigated thoroughly and confidentially by the designated persons and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the person who raised the issue, in confidence. If the concern relates to the head teacher it should be reported to the School Coordinator. If it relates to the School coordinator it should be reported to the Chairman of the Church Committee.
4. No person will be victimised or prejudiced for raising a matter under this procedure. Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence. In the event where misconduct is discovered, as a result of any investigation under this procedure, our disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
5. The same climate is promoted for parents who may have any concerns about their children's safety or their own at the school. In such an event, again, where a parent raises a concern, an investigation will be carried out confidentially by the designated persons and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the person who raised the issue in a confidential way, and the promise that there will be no victimisation of the parent or child.
6. To deliver our commitment to the physical and mental safety of all our stakeholders: children, teachers, volunteers, parents and guests we undertake the following:
 - We ask all to attend courses on safeguarding within three months of joining our school and to update these every 2 years.
 - We offer staff/volunteers professional First Aid Training, so they can handle with confidence any relevant situations such as the use of their first Aid skills, in any emergency event, to both children and Adults.
 - Our First Aid Kits are regularly checked and replenished. We also make sure that they are accessible to trained staff.

- Any guests who come to school during term time will be asked to sign in and out. Their personal details will be kept for a reasonable amount of time only, and during that time the school will not share their details.
- The Greek School of Coventry has zero tolerance regarding physical abuse, bullying, and discrimination against any vulnerable group of people, people who are disabled, people with mental health or learning disabilities. Any case of physical harm or abuse reported will result in an immediate investigation and all procedures and policies will be followed.
- Our health and safety policy covers various risks assessments which can impact on pupils and adults at the school. For example, we ensure all accessible areas are free of obstructions and hazardous objects. The premises are always kept clean and tidy. All fire exits are kept clear and we have regular checks of fire alarms, emergency lights and fire extinguishers.
- The Greek School of Coventry is in the fortunate position of being a community school and all pupils and attendees at the school are community members. They feel part of the school and feel equally responsible for safeguarding of all pupils and adults attending our school.
- Recognising that it is never possible to eliminate all risks of an accident, the school is covered by a comprehensive insurance that covers the school premises, pupils, teachers, volunteers and any others using our premises against any risks of accident.
Apart from an employers and pupils' insurance there is public liability insurance to cover the likely hood of an accident at the school or when on school trips.

D. Support for Dealing with the Aftermath of Abuse

24. Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children/young people, parents/carers and teachers/volunteers may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. **The Directory of the British Association for Counselling is available from the British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, tel: 01788 550 899, fax: 01788 562189.**

9. Support for dealing with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children/young people, parents/carers and teachers/volunteers may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The Directory of the British Association for Counselling is available from the British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, tel: 01788 550 899, fax: 01788 562189.

10. Learning and improving

We are determined to keep improving our knowledge and understanding of how best to protect children and vulnerable adults. We will review our own practice regularly to check that we are placing the right emphasis on safeguarding in our work.

We will carry out in-depth reviews of our actions in cases where children /vulnerable adults suffer serious harm while under our care. The main purpose of the reviews is to learn lessons about when our systems need to improve to protect these persons better in future. We will also promote a culture in which we are able to highlight and review near misses to learn and improve our practice.

11. Review Dates:

The policy was last reviewed on 9n January 2019 and adopted by the Church Committee on 6 February 2019.

Signed by Chairman of Church Committee.....Date

Signed by Chairman of School Coordinator.....Date.

Date implemented	Future review dates						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Date reviewed	Dec 2014		October 2016		Feb.2018	9 January	
Date approved by trustees	28 January 2015		December 2016r		7 March 2018	6 February	

Registered Charity Number 1038431; Tel 02476 464 286
 Westwood Heath Road, Westwood Heath, Coventry, CV4 8GP