#

# Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

**Britain Yearly Meeting**

# Safeguarding Policy agreed by the

# Trustees of XXXX Area Quaker Meeting

**This policy should be reviewed not later than October 2016**

**1 DETAILS**

Name: The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers): XXXX Area Quaker Meeting

Address: XXXX

Tel No: contact the Clerk of Trustees *pro tem* – see Appendix

E-mail address: contact the Clerk of Trustees *pro tem* – see Appendix

Denomination: Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

# This policy covers all parts of the charity constituted by the governing document of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers): XXXX Area Quaker Meeting (hereafter referred to as XXXX, or the Area Meeting), including its local meetings, its properties and its employees.

**2 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

2.1 The Trustees of XXXX Area Quaker Meeting, (hereafter referred to as the Trustees) recognise the importance of the ministry to, and work with, children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Trustees also acknowledge their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of those children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to their care.

2.2 The Trustees are committed to:

a) Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their wellbeing, welfare and protection.

b) Providing an environment in meetings and gatherings where children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and free from physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and to report any such abuse that is discovered or suspected.

c) Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

d) Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.

e) Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.

f) Supporting those affected by abuse.

g) Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities and other organisations.

**3 POLICY**

3.1 The Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the affairs and work of XXXX Area Quaker Meeting in accordance with its religious and charitable objects. They undertake legal compliance, monitoring and scrutiny functions.

3.2 The Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for the children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care. They also acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional, psychological, financial or material and discriminatory abuse, and neglect.

3.3 The Trustees have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter “the policy”). They also recognise the need to build and maintain appropriate and constructive links with all multi-agencies (statutory and voluntary) involved in safeguarding work. The policy is based on a model published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS).

3.4 The Trustees undertake to file a copy of the policy and practice guidelines with CCPAS and any amendments subsequently published. The Trustees agree not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

3.5 The Trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training for all relevant staff, volunteers and trustees and will regularly review the XXXX Area Quaker Meeting Safeguarding Procedures and Guidelines (hereafter “the Procedures and Guidelines”).

3.6 The Trustees also undertake to follow the principles found within guidance issued by the Home Office and acknowledge that it is unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop (regardless of the age of consent for sexual activity) with a child, young person or vulnerable adult for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

3.7 The Trustees will comply with the legal and regulatory framework of England and Wales.

3.8 The Trustees undertake to ensure that a Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator are appointed by the Area Meeting. Constituent local meetings which hold regular activities for children and young people should appoint a local safeguarding co-ordinator. Trustees encourage the other constituent meetings to appoint a local safeguarding co-ordinator, and if they do not, the local meeting clerk will be considered to be the local safeguarding co-ordinator for the purposes of this policy.

**4 RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS, OBSERVATIONS OR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE, INCLUDING SEXUAL ABUSE**

4.1 On becoming aware of any allegation, suspicion, observation or admission of abuse, a Member or Attender, a staff member or a volunteer should clarify the immediate circumstances. S/he must do the following:

a) The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and if medical assistance is required this should be sought immediately.

b) Concerns must then be recorded and reported to the safeguarding co-ordinator in accordance with the Procedures and Guidelines which have been created by members of XXXX Area Quaker Meeting.

c) In an emergency the police should be telephoned on 999.

d) Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those named in the Appendix to this policy. A complete record of the concerns should be made in accordance with the Procedures and Guidelines. The record should be kept in a secure place as detailed in them.

e) In any case where Friends believe that any person is behaving inappropriately towards a child or vulnerable adult:

* the Friend dealing with the matter should make a written record of the incident as soon as possible in accordance with the Procedures and Guidelines and report to the AM Safeguarding Co-ordinator / Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who will decide whether or not the matter is to be taken further; and
* in no circumstances should any accusation be made against any person.

4.2 The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/ Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion, in accordance with the Procedures and Guidelines, and to pass this information on to the local authority or to the police. It is the statutory authorities’ task to investigate the matter under appropriate legislation and regulations.

So that the organisation can respond appropriately, aspects of any disclosure require that the circle of confidentiality be expanded in particular ways; but in all cases as few people as possible will be informed of the precise details:

a) Since there may be a possible implication of legal action involving the charity, any reference to statutory authorities should be communicated to the Clerk to the Trustees and to the officer with responsibility for the Area Meeting’s insurance. Those individuals should decide if and when information should be passed to the Area Meeting’s insurers and to the Charity Commission.

b) The current post holders are listed in an appendix to this policy, which will be kept up-to-date without the need to re-adopt this policy.

c) The Trustees will support the Safeguarding Officer / Deputy Safeguarding Officer in their roles and accept that any information that they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

* 1. Although the Trustees hope that Friends and Attenders will follow this policy and use the Procedures and Guidelines it is, of course, the right of any individual to make a direct referral to statutory safeguarding or child protection agencies or to seek advice from the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS).
	2. An individual who feels that the Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately, or who has a disagreement with the Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer as to the appropriateness of a referral, is free to appeal directly to an external agency.

**5 APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF STAFF, LEADERS & WORKERS WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS.**

The Trustees will ensure that all such workers will be appointed, trained, supported and receive supervision in accordance with the principles set out in current government guidelines, CCPAS guidance, Britain Yearly Meeting’s ‘Meeting Safety’ recommendations and our own Procedures and Guidelines. Trustees follow the guidelines recorded in ‘Meeting Safety’ (2014): “*You should not permit anyone to work unsupervised with children, young people or vulnerable adults without either a clear disclosure form, a clear scheme record or a letter form Quaker Life or the Churches’ Agency for Safeguarding stating that they may work with these groups.”*

**6 SUPERVISION OF GROUP/CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES**

The Trustees will provide on request details of how the policy is applied to activities arranged for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults within the Area Meeting including its seven constituent local meetings.

Local meetings which have regular activities for children and young people should agree and document local safeguarding procedures which put this policy into practice. Local safeguarding procedures must be consistent with this policy and must also take into account any requirements of the relevant local authority for voluntary and faith groups (for example, the council ”Yellow Book”). Copies must be sent to the trustees and the Area Meeting Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

If an Area Meeting event or activity for or including children and young people takes place in a local meeting house where the local meeting has agreed suitable local safeguarding procedures then those procedures shall apply to the event or activity.

In other cases this policy and the associated Procedures and Guidelines shall apply.

**7 SUPPORT FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

The Trustees are committed to encouraging and supporting meetings in the provision of pastoral care and support to those attending its constituent Meetings who have been affected by abuse, working with statutory agencies as appropriate.

**8 WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

8.1 When someone attending an event for which the Trustees are responsible is known to have abused children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Trustees will ensure that the individual concerned is suitably supervised and managed, and will ensure that provision is made for his or her pastoral care. Within the Trustees’ commitment to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, boundaries will be set for that person which s/he will be expected to keep. There may be events where such a person’s attendance will be deemed to be inappropriate.

8.2 If an employee of the Area Meeting is known to have abused children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Trustees, together with the Area Meeting Clerk, will ensure the supervision of the individual concerned and offer him/her pastoral care. In their commitment to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Trustees will ensure a risk assessment of that individual is undertaken and set boundaries for that person which s/he will be expected to keep. There may be events which are not suitable for such an employee to attend or undertake. In the case of activities being ‘regulated’ or where contact with children is expected, it is the Trustees responsibility to ensure that the individual does not continue to be employed in such a role (as this could potentially be a criminal offence) and caution should be taken to avoid the potential for any abuse of positions of trust held by such individuals.

1. **REVIEWAL OF POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed annually.

1. **APPROVAL**

Approved at a meeting of the Trustees of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Area Meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by minute \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk to the Trustees

**Safeguarding Policy**

**Appendix 1**

**Current post holders as at October 2015**

This list can be up-dated and corrected without the policy being re-approved.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Post** | **Name** | **Phone no.** | **Email** |
| **Safeguarding Officer** |  |  |  |
| **Deputy Safeguarding Officer** |  |  |  |
| **Area Meeting Clerk** |  |  |  |
| **Clerk to Area Meeting Trustees** |  |  |  |
| **Responsibility for insurance** |  |  |  |
| **BYM Safeguarding Officer** |  |  |  |
| **BYM Deputy Safeguarding Officer** |  |  |  |

Appendix 1 Procedures and guidelines for local meetings

XXXX area meeting requires local meetings to:

1. Appoint a safeguarding coordinator for their local meeting, who has a Disclosure and Barring Service clearance

(2) In addition to the nominated safeguarding persons, elders, overseers, local meeting clerks and area meeting trustees should be familiar with the policy and procedures document.

1. Those Local Meetings who hold a children and young people’s meeting must comply with the area meeting policy and procedures and are asked in addition to draw up a safeguarding policy and procedures for their local meeting to be sent to trustees.

(4) Local meetings are requested to check procedures with their local council guidelines for faith groups working with vulnerable adults and children.

(5) Area meeting wide activities and events will be covered by the area meeting policy and procedures. The host local meeting will be expected to have a code of practice in place. (See appendix 2- suggested code of practice).

**Appendix 2**

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

**A CODE OF GOOD**

**PRACTICE FOR**

 **VOLUNTEERS WORKING**

**WITH CHILDREN IN**

**MEETING**

Please keep this with you and think about how to put it into practice whenever you work with children or young people

**During activities organised for children and young people:**

* as far as possible, a volunteer should not be alone with a child where their activity cannot be seen. Where privacy and confidentiality are important, another adult must know the interview is taking place and with whom. Wherever possible, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know that they are there.
* as far as practicable, the recommended guidelines on ratios of children to adults should be followed. If no other adults are on the premises, or if an activity involves taking children off-site, these guidelines must be strictly observed.
* thought should be given to physical safety: access to the premises should be secure and well-lit; children should sit in the back of cars unless appropriate car seats and seat belts are only fitted in the front passenger seat.
* single-sex sleeping areas, supervised by an adult of the same sex, should be provided for residential events and the proposed arrangements agreed with all concerned in advance. In all situations, children's and young people's need for privacy should be respected as far as practically possible.

**Each person working with children and young people should:**

* treat all children and young people with respect and dignity, and should watch language, tone of voice and body language.
* be committed to using forms of control and discipline with children which, in harmony with our peace testimony, are not dependent in any way on physical restraint or punishment unless the use of an appropriate level of physical restraint is immediately necessary to prevent harm to the child involved or other children present.
* Make sure that another adult is present if, for instance, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be washed.

**No person working with children should engage in
 any of the following:**

* invading the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting unless they need help
* rough, physical or sexually provocative games
* making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun
* inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form
* any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person
* making any racially provocative comments to a child or young person, even in fun
* sexual relationships with children and young people even if they consent
* sharing sleeping accommodation with a single child or young person of the opposite sex on residential events
* letting young people involve you in excessive attention seeking which is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

**Given our policy of being with children and young people in the company of others wherever possible and in view of the danger of their actions being misunderstood, each volunteer should consider whether it is advisable to:**

* invite a single child or young person home without another responsible adult being in the vicinity. Where such an invitation is thought necessary, a parent or other appropriate adult should know where the child is.
* be alone with a child or young person in a car even for a short journey. In case of emergency, or where it would be advisable to offer a lift, the child or young person should sit in the back of the car unless that would endanger their physical safety.

*If you see another volunteer acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them and to the convenor of the Children's Committee about your concerns. We should encourage an atmosphere of mutual trust, support and care which allows us all to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.*

**If you suspect a child or young person is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually**

* Note any facts which support your suspicions
* Discuss them with the nominated safeguarding person or with the convenor of the Children's Committee
* Do not be tempted to lead the child into confiding in you
* Do not confront the suspected abuser

**If a child or young person tells you that they are being abused.**

**NEVER PROMISE TOTAL CONFIDENTIALITY**

* Allow the child to speak without interruption, reassure them that what they have said has been accepted by you and that you are taking them seriously
* Do everything possible to alleviate any feelings of guilt, isolation and vulnerability, but pass no judgment
* Do not press the child for more information than they are willing to give at that time: do not conduct an investigation
* Let the child know what you are going to do next [i.e. contact the safeguarding person] and that you will let them know what happens
* As soon as possible afterwards, make a written note of what the child has told you
* Contact the safeguarding person IMMEDIATELY

**If you receive an allegation from an adult about another adult in the Meeting or about yourself**

* You cannot keep this information to yourself
* Record the facts as you know them
* Immediately tell the safeguarding person or the Convenor of the Children's Committee
* Try to ensure that no-one, yourself included, is put in a position where they could be further compromised
* Encourage the person making the allegation to follow the same procedure

**NEVER PROMISE TOTAL CONFIDENTIALITY**