Area Meeting

Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

See also separate Appendices (Safeguarding Toolkit)

Manchester and Warrington Area Quaker Meeting

BYM Version 3 (*England*) MWAM Version 3
(see back page for Policy, Toolkit and Forms version history)

Agreed by Area Meeting Trustees on	15th September 2022 Updated 19 Sept 2024; 25 Sept 2025; 5 March 2026
Minute number	2022/41; 2024/41; 2025/56; 2026/04
Signed	
Name signed by (Clerk of Trustees)	John Booth
Date for next annual review by Trustees	June 2026 BYM additions Autumn 2023 made to MWAM policy September 2024
The role-holder responsible for starting the next review	Lead Trustee for Safeguarding

Quick reference

Summary to hand out: Section 1

What to do if there is a disclosure or allegation of abuse: Section 5

Key contacts: Section 2.3

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1 Summary of Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

This is a summary of the Area Meeting's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. It covers all the local meetings in the area, plus area meeting activities. The full version is available from local and area meeting clerks and on AM/LM websites.

Quakers recognise that of God in everyone. All children, young people and adults deserve respect, value and appropriate care. Our care extends to people who are potentially vulnerable to abuse, and to those who may be perpetrators. We recognise abuse can include physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, and other forms.

Abuse is unacceptable. Everyone, including children and vulnerable adults, have a right to participate in Quaker communities without suffering harm. We are committed to keeping everyone safe.

Quakers may be open to risks because we foster a culture of welcome and trust for everyone. Very often an abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult. Abuse can be hidden and manipulative.

Responsibilities

We all have a responsibility for safeguarding our children, young people, and adults at risk. Ultimately, trustees hold responsibility on behalf of the area meeting. One trustee is appointed as Area Meeting (AM) Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and two Friends are appointed as Safeguarding Coordinators, to act on behalf of the AM in dealing with an allegation or suspicion of abuse or neglect. This includes liaising with statutory agencies which have the legal duty to investigate. Contact details for the Safeguarding Coordinators are on the poster displayed in each meeting house, and on page 6 of the main policy. The main policy contains more contact details.

Safer Recruitment, Training and Good Practice

We recognise that we need to follow national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, as this reduces risks. The following roles will be appointed, trained, supported and monitored in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment: volunteers and employees who work with children and young people or adults at risk; pastoral care teams; trustees; safeguarding Coordinators. For these roles, as well as our spirit-led Quaker nominations process, we have role descriptions, personal details forms and self-declarations, discussions about safeguarding, references, criminal record checks (DBS) where the role is eligible, and a probationary period. Sometimes we do need to turn people down if they are not suitable. However, our processes need not be daunting, when done with care.

Everyone in those roles will have a safeguarding induction, some training and refreshers, and agree to the Code of Conduct. In addition, our clerks, elders,

nominations committees, and staff with other roles, will have a safeguarding induction: and will be encouraged to have training.

We ask everyone involved in Quaker activities to be familiar with our general Code of Conduct, our good practice guidelines, and any specific safeguarding arrangements for the local meeting (recorded in an appendix to the Policy). When we need to, we use the online Safeguarding Manual from Thirtyone:eight, the specialist safeguarding organisation that supports Quakers. They have a helpline available 7am till midnight: 0303 003 1111.

We will arrange opportunities to raise awareness throughout the AM of safeguarding issues in local and area activities, and with children, young people and adults at risk.

Quaker Trading's room hire agreement requires that organisations and individuals hiring rooms on our premises take full responsibility for safeguarding for all their activities. It will also require that any organisation using our premises will have their own safeguarding policy which follows national good practice, and have their own insurance in place.

Procedure for responding to concerns or allegations of abuse

The 5Rs are a useful reminder: Receive, Reassure, Recognise, Respond and Refer. Listen well. Make sure the child or adult involved is safe at the present time. If you think someone is in immediate danger, do not delay – call the police on 999 straight away. Make a written record of what you have been told, and who told you, ideally using the form in the Policy appendices. Sign it, with your name, date and time, and keep it safely with your notes. Under no circumstances should a volunteer role-holder or employee carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. This could increase the potential harm to the person at risk, and prejudice any investigation. Report concerns as soon as possible and within 24 hours directly to the:

AM Safeguarding Co-ordinator/s: ***See Key Contacts, page 6***

They will collate and clarify information, record it and pass it to statutory agencies who have the legal duty to investigate where appropriate. If you (the person raising the concern) are clear the matter needs to be reported to Children's/Adults' Services or the Police, then you should raise the concern directly, and then inform the AM Safeguarding Coordinators.

If another Quaker is contacted first (such as a member of the Pastoral Care Team or an Elder) then either you or the other Quaker must contact the AM Safeguarding Coordinators as soon as possible to make the report.

If a Safeguarding Coordinator is not available, or if the suspicions in any way involve them, then report to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. ***See Key Contacts, page 6***

If they are not available or are involved, use Thirtyone:eight's helpline 0303 003 1111. All contact details are in section 2.3 of the Policy. Then inform the AM Safeguarding Coordinators (unless involved). Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

Pastoral care and working with those who may pose a risk

As far as possible we will help all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the AM and its local meetings to access pastoral care and support - working with statutory agencies as appropriate. The AM itself is a worshipping community, not a professional safeguarding agency, and cannot provide professional care or support. If an incident happens within the Quaker community, the Safeguarding Coordinator will make sure that arrangements are made to support everyone affected, and liaise with outside organisations. We need to bear in mind that there may be people involved with the meeting who are survivors or victims of past abuse.

When someone attending the local or area meeting is known to have abused others, or is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to children or vulnerable adults, the local and area meeting will supervise the person and offer pastoral care. Arrangements will be put in place to protect children, young people, and adults at risk. This will include supervision and setting boundaries for that person in the form of a contract, which they will be expected to keep. Such a person should not work with children, young people or adults at risk, or be allowed unsupervised contact. There may be events where such a person's attendance will be deemed to be inappropriate. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. This is the responsibility of the AM Safeguarding Coordinators, working with other role-holders as appropriate.

Where such a risk exists or is reasonably suspected, it is important that the risk is managed robustly, with the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults given priority over subjective opinions or concerns about upsetting the person posing the risk. Think "What if…?" and contact Thirtyone:eight or the BYM Safeguarding Officer if in any doubt about the action to be taken.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator will inform the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. Seeking advice from outside the meeting can be very helpful, from Thirtyone:eight or Britain Yearly Meeting's Safeguarding Officer. ***See Key Contacts, page 6***

Caution should be taken to avoid the potential for any abuse of positions of trust held by such individuals. Specifically, area and local meeting nominations committees will need to consider seriously what roles such a person could be appointed to, without posing a safeguarding risk.

Those who have been mistakenly or falsely accused will also have support needs, and Elders and the Pastoral Care Team may need to support them.

Review

Annually, each local meeting's safeguarding practice will be reviewed by the local meeting Clerk(s), local Convenor of Children's Committee, and the local Convenor of the Pastoral Care Team, or their equivalents, the DBS Verifier, and Safeguarding Co-ordinators. They will report on this in their local meeting's Annual Safeguarding Report to AM Trustees, using a form which asks key questions about practice in the local meeting, and provides assurance to trustees. Trustees will consider and review the Policy and Procedures, and actual practice, based on a report from the Safeguarding Coordinators, and any updates from Britain Yearly Meeting and Thirtyone:eight. There will be a more comprehensive review every three years.

2 Introduction and Key Information

2.1 Who we are - our organisation:

Name: Manchester and Warrington Area Meeting

Key Contacts:	Section 2.3 has contact details for role holders & organisations.
Address:	Area Meeting Office, Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount St, Manchester. M2 5NS
Email:	admin@manchesterquakers.org.uk
Phone:	0161 834 5797
Website:	www.manchesterquakers.org.uk
Charity number:	1172087
Company number:	03094920 – wholly owned trading subsidiary Quaker Trading (Manchester & Warrington) Ltd.
Denomination:	This Area Meeting is a part of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). See: www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/safeguarding
Regulators:	The Charity Commission
Insurance company:	Ansvar Insurance

2.2 Who we are - our local meetings:

This Area Meeting is made up of these local meetings:

Central Manchester	6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS
Eccles	13 The Polygon, Wellington Road, Eccles, M30 0DS
Sale	Park Road, Sale, M33 6WX
South Manchester	82 Wythenshawe Road, Northenden, Manchester, M23 0DJ
Warrington	Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NR

2.3 Key Contacts

If reporting a concern to the Local Authority (LA), make written notes (using Form E3 of Toolkit if appropriate) and then phone the relevant LA. ***If possible, use the contact number for the LA where the person lives.*** You may be asked to complete a form online, accessed via the website of the relevant LA.

Role/Organisation	Name/details	Phone	Email
AM Safeguarding Coordinators	Ben Wickens Alexandra Casson Area Meeting Office:	0161 834 5797	mwamsafeguarding@gmail.com
Lead Trustee for Safeguarding	Siobhan Harpur	07883 872708	mwamsafeguarding@gmail.com
Clerk of AM Trustees	John Booth	07881 821 259	mwamclerkoftrustees@gmail.com
Thirtyone:eight - specialist safeguarding advice for Quakers	Helpline Mon-Fri 9am-5pm Emergency out of hours phone service Weekdays 7-9am, 5pm - midnight Weekends 7am till midnight	0303 003 1111	helpline@thirtyoneeight.org
Britain Yearly Meeting Safeguarding Officer – general support	Ask for the Safeguarding Officer Office hours	020 7663 1103	safe@quaker.org.uk
Manchester Local Authority **Safeguarding Children and Adults** www.manchester.gov.uk/info/100010/social_services/3843/tell_us_about_someone_being_abused_or_neglected	For **Central and South Manchester**	Manchester Contact Centre 0161 234 5001 (24/7, 7 days a week)	mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk
Salford Local Authority **Safeguarding Children** www.salford.gov.uk/worriedaboutachild **Safeguarding Adults**	For **Eccles** 8.30am to 4.30pm Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Mon – Fri 8.30am-4.30pm	0161 603 4500 0161 794 8888 0161 206 0604	Referrals via website portal salford.socialservices@nca.nhs.uk

www.salford.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/safeguarding-adults	Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)	0161 794 8888	or via website portal
Trafford Local Authority **Safeguarding Children** www.traffordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/Worried-about-a-child/Are-you-worried-about-a-child-or-young-person.aspx **Safeguarding Adults** https://myway.trafford.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/publicconcern	For **Sale** Trafford Children's First Response Mon to Fri 8:30am to 4:30pm Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Mon to Fri 8.30am to 4.30pm Emergency Duty Team	 0161 912 5125 0161 912 2020 0161 912 5135 0161 912 2020	firstresponse@trafford.gov.uk AdultSafeguardinghub@trafford.gov.uk
Warrington Borough Council **Safeguarding Children** www.warrington.gov.uk/mars **Safeguarding Adults** www.warrington.gov.uk/report-abuse-vulnerable-adult	For **Warrington** Office hours Outside office hours Office hours Outside office hours	 01925 443322 (option 1 then option 1) 01925 443322 (option 2) 01925 443322 01925 444400	
NSPCC	Helpline Mon to Fri 10am – 4pm	0808 800 5000	help@nspcc.org.uk 24/7
Police	Emergencies Non-emergencies	999 101	

Childline

Childline is there to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. You can talk about anything. Whether it's something big or small, their trained counsellors are there to support you. This Childline YouTube video shows what will happen when you contact them.

Childline is free, confidential and available any time, day or night. You can contact them in a number of ways:

- Telephone 0800 1111
- Email them via the Childline Locker site
- 1-2-1 counsellor chat
- Or via their website at www.childline.org.uk.

Note: Factual updates to Sections 2.1 to 2.4 can be agreed by the Clerk of Trustees, without reference to the Trustees or the area meeting.

2.4 What we do: Summary of activities with children, young people and adults

This section describes the situations covered by this policy. Any specific arrangements for each local meeting are shown in the toolkit section D.

We undertake:

a) Meetings for Worship open to the public
b) Social, learning and outreach activities and events
c) Pastoral care
d) **Children and Young People's Meetings** are held weekly in some meetings, or less frequently. They are run by adult volunteers from the meeting. Parents/ guardians typically meet in worship elsewhere in the building, although they are not always required to remain on the premises.
e) **Special events and trips out** are occasionally held for children, young people and adults. These may include sleeping overnight.
f) **Residential Events** are occasionally organised for adults and children.
g) Example: **Link Group** for teenagers meets over a weekend or more, residentially.
h) Annual residential Summer School – see organising committee for more details.
i) **Care of adults** We do not usually arrange anything which is designated a "Regulated Activity" in relation to an adult, such as providing personal care or regular support with activities that an adult is unable to manage independently, such as financial affairs. The meeting does not expect those who provide pastoral care or other volunteers acting on behalf of the meeting, to provide such regulated activities.
j) Hiring out rooms in our buildings (this is the responsibility of our wholly owned trading subsidiary, Quaker Trading (Manchester & Warrington) Ltd)

2.5 Appointments and Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Trustees are appointed by the AM and hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding on its behalf. One Trustee is appointed to act as Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. One or more AM Safeguarding Coordinators (who do not need to be trustees) are appointed. The specific responsibilities of these roles and others in the AM are set out in the Toolkit section A.

Where it is practicable, enough members and attenders should have DBS clearance to ensure there is a sufficient pool of potential volunteers at activities.

Once an incident has been appropriately recorded and reported, the responsibility to investigate alerts or reports lies with statutory agencies, not with Quakers.

2.6 Children, Young People and Adults – Definitions

We use “children and young people” to mean anyone aged under 18, and this is interchangeable with “child” throughout the policy and procedures.

We use “adults at risk” throughout this document, as used in government guidance. This includes “adults with care and support needs”, the term used in the Care Act 2014, and “vulnerable adults” used previously. Section 5.9.3 provides more guidance.

2.7 Our commitment

Abuse is unacceptable. Everyone, including children and vulnerable adults, have a right to participate in Quaker communities without suffering harm. We are committed to keeping everyone safe.

Quakers recognise there is that of God in everyone. All children, young people and adults deserve respect, value and appropriate care. Our care extends to those who are potentially vulnerable to abuse, and to those who may be perpetrators.

We recognise that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and other forms of abuse.

We are aware that Quakers may be open to the risk of abusive behaviour because we foster a culture of welcome and trust for everyone. Very often an abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult. Abuse can be hidden and manipulative.

We have therefore adopted the policy and procedures in this document in accordance with statutory guidance. They are based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight, adapted to the Quaker context.

This Area Meeting is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Using good practice procedures and guidelines, following national legislation and regulations, and inter-agency procedures
- Safely recruiting, training and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and adults at risk
- Supporting our Safeguarding Co-ordinators in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children, young people, and adults at risk
- Practising effective risk-management in response to those that may pose a present risk to others
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and others affected.

3 Prevention

3.1 Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our meetings, we adhere to the following UN Conventions in respect of children and adults as our starting point regarding definitions of abuse:

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19:
1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (which relates to adults and children) with particular reference to Article 5:
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

3.2 Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators, for children and adults are in the Toolkit, section B.

In summary, these include the following:

Child abuse includes: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, grooming, neglect, child sexual exploitation, and extremism.

Adult abuse includes: physical abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect and acts of omission, and self-neglect.

3.3 Safer recruitment

The AM will follow established good practice in safer recruitment for volunteers and staff. (The term ‘worker’ is used in this document to refer to staff and volunteers.) This

aspect of prevention is used by all organisations with reliable safeguarding arrangements, to reduce risks of abuse.

We will use the good practice set out below in a way which is complementary with our Quaker spirit-led practice in nominating and making appointments. Appointments can be made 'subject to completion of the safer recruitment procedure'.

Meetings and their nominations committees need to carefully consider the suitability of an individual for certain roles. Special care should be taken when considering the nomination of someone who has recently joined the meeting. A waiting period of six months may normally be appropriate, unless they were well established in their previous meeting and come with suitable references. For area roles, because the AM may not have any direct knowledge of a person nominated, the AM nominations committee is responsible for ensuring their appointment would be appropriate.

Everyone in the following roles will be appointed, trained, supported and monitored in accordance with government guidance on safer recruitment; DBS checks will be carried out for eligible roles:

- those who work with children and young people, or adults at risk, whether volunteers or employees
- trustees
- safeguarding coordinators
- advocates for children and young people's work
- members of pastoral care teams

For all the above roles (workers) this includes ensuring that:

a. **Each role has a role description,** so it is clear what is expected. For employees this will be a job description and person specification.
b. **Everyone will complete a personal details form** (or an application form) plus a self-declaration form (see Toolkit section C). If volunteers complete these forms after appointment, the forms must still be followed through with references etc. as below, before the role is commenced.
c. **Everyone appointed will be interviewed, during which safeguarding is discussed.** For voluntary roles this will be a conversation when asked to take on the role, which covers relevant experience, motivation, and situations which might occur, plus the safer recruitment process and their willingness to learn more about safeguarding.
d. **Written references will be obtained** and followed up where appropriate. When an individual has recently joined a meeting, seeking a reference from their previous meeting, or equivalent, is advisable. See Toolkit section C for a reference form and a model reference letter.
e. **A disclosure and barring service (DBS) check will be completed for those roles which require it and are eligible.** Enough members and attenders

should have DBS clearance to ensure a sufficient pool of potential volunteers at activities. **We encourage volunteers to join the DBS Update Service** and give consent for the AM to access their DBS certificate, as this reduces repeating the checks (Toolkit section C). The AM will comply with the DBS Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information. As procedures and eligibility for undertaking DBS checks change frequently, please refer to the Britain Yearly Meeting website for more information: https://www.quaker.org.uk/dbs-checks

f. **When a role-holder or employee has been checked by the DBS and cleared** to work with children and young people or adults, the Local Meeting verifier will inform the AM admin officer, who will keep a central record of all approved volunteers. This ensures that the meeting, including those organising activities involving children and vulnerable adults, and nominations bodies, can have access to a record of all approved volunteers. The record will also ensure that the meeting knows verifier is informed when to re-check, normally every three years. *[Or, substitute an equivalent process for recording: for example in some AMs, this recording is done at area meeting level.]*
g. **If an applicant is applying from outside the UK or has recently been living in another country**, background checks (certificates of good conduct) and references from the home country/previous country of residence will be obtained.
h. Qualifications will be verified where relevant (normally only needed for staff).
i. Each worker will be given a summary of the organisation's safeguarding policy and will know how to report concerns.
j. Each worker will agree to abide by the code of conduct (toolkit section C).
k. Each worker will have a suitable training programme (See Section 3.4.3)
l. **A probationary period** will be implemented, to allow for any issues to be addressed as they arise. The appointment should only be confirmed following a discussion before the end of the probationary period. If there are concerns, the probationary period could be extended, or it could be decided not to go ahead with the appointment.

Only at the end of the process above should the applicant be approved to work with children and young people and adults at risk. Meetings should be prepared to turn down people if they are not suitable. This can include after their appointment. Safer recruitment processes should not be daunting - they complement Spirit-led appointment, helping meetings find the most suitable Friends to serve.

3.4 Safeguarding awareness, learning and training

3.4.1 Overall

The AM is committed to providing learning and training opportunities for all workers (including volunteers), and developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding, to help protect everyone. It is good practice to develop a consistent approach to induction and training for all volunteers and staff.

Budgets will be set aside at area and/or local meeting level to cover these costs.

3.4.2 Safeguarding Induction

A safeguarding induction will be given to all role-holders listed in section 3.4.3. This should be before they start their role, if the role is shown in italics. Otherwise it should be shortly after they commence. Induction training can be organised and delivered at LM or AM level by an appropriate person. Induction includes:

- to understand what abuse is, and be able to recognise the signs
- the overall framework of responsibility, communication and support in the local and area meeting
- who is leading and organising the activities
- the safeguarding practice set out in this policy (Section 4)
- any local arrangements in place (toolkit section D)
- how to respond to a disclosure (Section 5)
- how to raise an alert about a concern (Section 5)
- receiving a summary of this policy (Section 1)
- being asked to read the full policy (emailed, on paper or online)
- signing the code of conduct (toolkit section C).
- receiving login details for the Thirtyone:eight website members' area, so they can access more guidance there if needed.

3.4.3 Safeguarding Training

Training may need to cover both children & young people and adults, depending on the role undertaken. It could be:

- an online course
- a session at the local meeting
- a session for the AM or with a neighbouring AM
- a session run by Thirtyone:eight or another training provider
- a session with another church
- inter-agency training by a Local Safeguarding Children's Board or Local Adult Protection Board
- suitable training provided in other settings, such as at work or volunteering elsewhere

The following roles will have safeguarding training, refreshed at least every 3 years:

- *All volunteers and staff who work with children and young people*
- *Pastoral Care teams*
- *Staff who interact directly with Quakers or users of meeting houses (like Wardens, Resident Friends and Caretakers)*
- *Elders*

The following roles will have safeguarding training with elements tailored to their role, refreshed at least every 3 years:

- *Lead Trustee for Safeguarding*
- *Safeguarding Coordinators*
- *Clerk of Trustees*
- *All Trustees*
- *DBS Verifier*

For the following roles, safeguarding training and refreshers are beneficial, not essential:

- Local Meeting Clerk
- AM Clerk
- Nominations committee member
- Staff who do not interact directly with many Quakers, or users of meeting houses (like gardeners, cleaners and bookkeepers)

3.4.4 Information Poster, Policy Availability and Awareness

Each local meeting will display the poster in toolkit section A so it can be easily seen by children, young people and adults. If necessary, there will be two posters at different heights or in different rooms. This gives everyone a clear message about who to contact, and that safeguarding is important in the meeting. The summary of this policy will also be displayed.

The full AM policy will be available from the local and area meeting clerks, and on the area and/or local meeting website. Placing it on a website makes it accessible and open, and the information and forms are all available quickly when needed.

If a local meeting does not have premises where the poster and summary can be displayed, we will ensure the information is regularly communicated to adults, children and young people.

The area meeting and local meetings will take opportunities in their programmes of events to raise awareness of safeguarding and who to contact.

The AM Safeguarding Coordinators will support local meetings to ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern. Examples include by displaying posters, raising awareness in group discussions, and making information available in email bulletins/notice sheets.

4 Practice Guidelines

4.1 Practice Guidelines

We wish to operate and promote good working practice, so we can run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusations.

New legislation under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 expands the definition of those in a 'position of trust' under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to include Faith Leaders.

The definition of a Faith Leader is someone who "teaches, trains, supervises or instructs (a 16 or 17 year old) on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion".

In a Quaker context, this change means that regular volunteer at young people's meetings or youth groups, or adult volunteers at any form of Quaker event (residential or otherwise) who engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old participant in such an event, would be committing an offence under the Sexual Offences Act, regardless of whether that sexual activity was consensual.

The Thirtyone:eight helpline can give practical advice about good practice. Our practice guidelines are made up of four parts:

a) A general **code of conduct** for workers (including volunteers) toolkit section C

b) **Good practice guidelines** for the activities we are involved in.

Children and young people: Refer to toolkit section D for practice guidelines.

Adults: See Thirtyone:eight's guidance for working safely with adults here: https://thirtyoneeight.org/get-help/resources/help/safeguarding-adults/ and general resources on the Britain Yearly Meeting website www.quaker.org.uk/pastoralcare

c) Specific safeguarding arrangements for local meetings in toolkit section D records any agreed variations to the general good practice guidelines and gives local arrangements.

d) More comprehensive guidelines in the Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Manual Standard 5 Working Safely are available to area meetings which are Thirtyone:eight members at: https://thirtyoneeight.org/get-help/safeguarding-manual/england/5-working-safely/ The login details for the Thirtyone:eight website's members' area will be given at induction sessions.

For the avoidance of doubt: we undertake to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office. It is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to abuse that trust by engaging in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues. This is included in our code of conduct. All adults in roles which involve contact with children, young people and adults at risk are considered to be in positions of trust.

4.2 Working in partnership

4.2.1 Partners we work with

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding of what constitutes abuse, for example. Where we work in partnership with other organisations, we will therefore have clear guidelines regarding our expectations of those organisations, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and where appropriate have a partnership agreement for safeguarding.

4.2.2 Britain Yearly Meeting

The AM will report annually to Britain Yearly Meeting.

4.2.3 Thirtyone:eight

The AM is a member of Thirtyone:eight and will seek specialist advice from it whenever necessary.

4.2.4 Room hirers

Each Quaker Trading room hire agreement will require that organisations and individuals hiring rooms on our premises take full responsibility for safeguarding for all their activities. It will also require that any organisation using our premises will have their own safeguarding policy which follows national good practice, and have their own insurance in place.

4.3 Communication

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children, young people and adults, and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Our expectations around communication between role-holders/workers/volunteers and children, young people and adults are set out in our Code of Conduct (toolkit section C).

We use the guidance in the **Thirtyone:eight Safeguarding Manual Standard 6*:* Communicating Safely** when considering how to communicate safely. https://thirtyoneeight.org/get-help/safeguarding-manual/england/6-communicating-safely/

5 Responding to concerns or allegations of abuse

5.1 The 5Rs of Responding

The 5Rs are a useful way to remember the steps of the process when handling a disclosure. They are:

Receive

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said without judgement.
- Take it seriously.
- Let the person tell their story and don't push for information.
- Do not ask leading questions.

Reassure

- Do reassure them that they are right to tell.
- Explain that you will have to pass their information to the Safeguarding Coordinator, who will make sure the matter is dealt with appropriately.

Recognise

- Be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse.

Respond

- Reassure the individual they have taken the right step in sharing this information and they are not to blame.
- Be honest; never make promises to keep what you are being told confidential. If abuse is involved, or someone might be at risk, you will need to tell someone.
- Use open questions (e.g. use phrases like 'tell me', or 'explain to me')
- Avoid closed questions.
- Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if they are telling the truth.
- Tell them what you will do with the information they have shared and that they will be kept informed.

Refer

- See 5.2 to 5.6 below.

5.2 Immediate next steps

Make sure the child or adult involved is safe right now. If you think someone is in immediate danger, do not delay – call the police on 999 straight away.

Make a written record of what you have been told, and who told you, as soon after the event as possible, ideally on the form in toolkit section E. Sign it, with your name, date and time. Keep it safely, along with your original notes.

Report the allegation or concern as described below.

5.3 Do not investigate

Under no circumstances should a volunteer role-holder or employee carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. This could increase the potential harm to the person at risk, and contaminate evidence. Instead, follow the procedures below.

5.4 How to report a concern or allegation

You will find contact details in Section 2.3

Flowcharts are in the toolkit section E.

If you think someone is in immediate danger, do not delay – call the **police on 999** straight away.

If you (the person raising the concern) are clear that the matter needs to be reported to Children's/Adults' Services or the Police, then you should **raise the concern directly**, and then inform the AM Safeguarding Coordinators.

Otherwise, you should report concerns **directly to the AM Safeguarding Coordinators** as soon as possible and within 24 hours. They are appointed by the AM to:

- act on its behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion.
- record them on the Safeguarding Coordinator's form in the toolkit section E.
- refer the matter to the statutory agencies who have the legal duty to investigate where appropriate.
- They may first ring the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice.

If you first contact another Quaker (such as a member of a Pastoral Care team or an Elder) then either you or the other Quaker must contact the AM Safeguarding Coordinators as soon as possible to make the report. This avoids losing details, reduces the number of people involved initially, and can save time.

If a Safeguarding Coordinator is not available, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Coordinator, then report **to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding or to another AM Trustee.** If they are unavailable, or involved, contact **Thirtyone:eight's helpline**, and subsequently inform the AM Safeguarding Coordinators (unless involved). All contact details are in Section 2.3.

5.5 Raising concerns direct with the statutory authorities

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Coordinators, the absence of a Safeguarding Coordinator should not delay referral to social services, the police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight. However, the AM hopes that Quakers will use our internal procedure in non-urgent cases. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Coordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement, we demonstrate our commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

5.6 Sharing information

The Safeguarding Coordinators should be notified in all cases, even if they were not available initially, unless they are implicated (then use the process above).

It is not a breach of confidentiality to seek advice and guidance from the Safeguarding Coordinators. The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 are not barriers to justified information sharing.

The Safeguarding Coordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, including but not limited to:

- Advice may need to be taken from the Local Authority Children's Services or Adult Services, and a referral may need to be made. Advice may also be sought confidentially from Thirtyone:eight.
- If it is suspected that a criminal offence has been committed, the police must be informed.
- If any reference has been made to statutory authorities, the Clerk of Trustees and Lead Trustee for Safeguarding should be informed. They will then determine whether and what information should be passed to:
    - the Charity Commission (as a serious incident),
    - the area meeting's insurers (because of possible legal action),
    - and other Trustees (because of wider implications).
- If allegations have been made about a person who holds any position of trust in relation to children and young people under the age of 18, irrespective of whether they hold that role within a Quaker setting, then the Designated Officer of the local authority (formerly "LADO") should be informed.
- If allegations have been made about a person who holds a position of trust in relation to an adult, the Local Adult Safeguarding Board should be informed.
- If, after a statutory investigation/enquiry is complete, a referral needs to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the statutory authorities will provide guidance.

An information sharing agreement is in place between Thirtyone:eight and Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) which allows for the BYM Safeguarding Officer to receive a copy of any advice offered by Thirtyone:eight to area meetings, based on the consent of the caller.

5.7 Limitations to sharing information

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

The Trustees will support the Safeguarding Coordinators in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

5.8 Storing and Retaining Records

See toolkit section A.

5.9 Detailed procedures in respect of children and adults

5.9.1 Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- Contact the local authority team responsible for Safeguarding Children (or Thirtyone:eight if they are unsure) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted the local authority Safeguarding Children team. This is to avoid evidence being destroyed, potential perpetrators being alerted, and people being silenced with threats or bribery.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact the local authority's Safeguarding Children team direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to the local authority.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- Contact the local authority team responsible for Safeguarding Children, or the police, direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else. This is to

avoid evidence being destroyed, potential perpetrators being alerted, and people being silenced with threats or bribery.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact the local authority/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

5.9.2 Detailed procedures where there is a concern about an adult

If there is concern about suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm of an adult, including: physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery or domestic abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, contact the emergency services, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact the local authority team who have responsibility for Safeguarding Adults. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

5.9.3 Scope of safeguarding responsibility in regard to adults

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance states that:

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) *[and]*
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect *[and]*
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

If an adult does not have care and support needs (and is not a carer for an adult with care and support needs) then there is no duty to refer concerns of abuse to the local authority. If there is any doubt about whether there is a duty to refer, then advice should be sought from the local authority or Thirtyone:eight.

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm or risk of harm to adults with care and support needs (or carers of adults with care and support needs). This may result in a range of options including: action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers, or no further action if the person at risk of harm does not want further action to be taken and they have the mental capacity to make this decision. This is a decision for Adult Services to decide, not the local or area meeting.

Adults without care and support needs can still experience abuse and may need support and pastoral care. The AM takes any form of abuse seriously. Therefore, concerns about an adult who *does not* have care and support needs should still be

reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator unless the adult refuses and there is no-one else at risk.

5.9.4 Concerns about spiritual abuse

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern, and follow the advice given.
- Identify support services for the victim e.g. counselling or other pastoral support if they want these.

5.9.5 Allegations against people in a position of trust

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a children/young people's worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Coordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Services in regard to the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to a designated officer, formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Designated Officer if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults at risk

The Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Services in regard to the suspension of the worker.
- Make a referral to the local authority. There is no Designated Officer role in Adults' Services; however, the local authority still has a duty to consider concerns about people working in a position of trust with adults in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, following the advice of Adult Services.

6 Pastoral care and working with those who may pose a risk

6.1 Supporting those affected by abuse

We are committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the AM and its local meetings, working with statutory agencies as appropriate.

If an incident happens, the Safeguarding Coordinator will make sure that arrangements are made to support everyone affected, and to liaise with any outside organisations that become involved.

We need to bear in mind that there may be people involved with the meeting who are survivors or victims of past abuse.

6.2 Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the local or area meeting is known to have abused children or adults at risk, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk, the local and area meeting will supervise the person and offer pastoral care. Arrangements will be put in place to protect children, young people, and adults at risk. This will include supervision and setting boundaries for that person in the form of a contract, which they will be expected to keep. The boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties. Such a person should not work with children, young people or adults at risk, or be allowed unsupervised contact. There may be events where such a person's attendance will be deemed to be inappropriate.

Where such a risk exists or is reasonably suspected, it is important that the risk is managed robustly, with the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults given priority over subjective opinions or concerns about upsetting the person posing the risk. Think "What if…?" and contact Thirtyone:eight or the BYM Safeguarding Officer if in any doubt about the action to be taken.

This is the responsibility of the AM Safeguarding Coordinators, working with other role-holders as appropriate. The Safeguarding Co-ordinators will inform the Clerk of Trustees and the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding. Seeking advice from outside the meeting can be very helpful, from Thirtyone:eight or Britain Yearly Meeting's Safeguarding Officer.

Further guidance is in the toolkit section A, which leads to more guidance from Thirtyone:eight.

Caution should be taken to avoid the potential for any abuse of positions of trust held by such individuals. Specifically, area and local meeting nominations committees need to consider seriously what roles such a person could be appointed to without posing a risk.

Those who have been mistakenly or falsely accused will also have support needs, and Elders and Pastoral care teams may need to support them.

7 Annual Review

Each year:

- **The local meeting's** safeguarding practice will be reviewed by the local meeting Clerk(s), local Convenor of Children's Committee, and the local Convenor of the Pastoral Care team and the DBS Verifier (if different from the Clerk). They will report on this in their local meeting's Annual Safeguarding Report to AM Trustees, using Form A5 in the toolkit (*normally by the end of May*). This asks key questions about practice in the local meeting, and provides assurance to trustees.
- **Britain Yearly Meeting** will publish any updates to the model safeguarding policy for AMs (normally in January, from 2021 onwards), based on advice prepared by Thirtyone:eight.
- **The AM Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and Safeguarding Coordinators** will review:
    - the local meeting annual safeguarding reports
    - practice that they are aware of
    - the AM's safeguarding training needs and opportunities
    - incidents and intelligence during the year
    - the updates from Britain Yearly Meeting
    - whether any amendments are needed to this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- **The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and AM Safeguarding Coordinators** will report on these matters *(normally by the end of July)* to **Trustees,** who will consider and review the Policy and Procedures and actual practice.

At least once every three years:

- **Trustees** will initiate a more comprehensive review, including discussions with each local meeting, and a review of the policy and procedures (either using the model policy published by Britain Yearly Meeting, or with Thirtyone:eight directly).

8 List of Appendices

Appendices to this Policy are available separately in the Safeguarding Toolkit.

A. General
- A.1 Responsibilities of key roles
- A.2 LM Annual Safeguarding Report to AM Trustees
- A.3 Definitions and Signs of Abuse
- A.4 Safer Recruitment
- A.5 Practice appendices
- A.6 Responding to concerns appendices

B. Definitions and Signs of Abuse
- B.1 Definitions of child abuse
- B.2 Signs of abuse in children
- B.3 Definitions of adult abuse
- B.4 Signs of abuse/neglect in adults

C. Safer Recruitment
- C.1 Role description for a children's meeting volunteer
- C.2 Personal details form (volunteers)
- C.3 Personal details form (employees)
- C.4 Self declaration form (enhanced disclosure)
- C.4(A) Verifier Request for DBS check
- C.5 Self declaration form
- C.6 Reference request letter
- C.7 Reference request form (volunteers)
- C.8 Reference request form (employees)
- C.9. Code of conduct
- C.10 DBS Update Service consent
- C.10 (A) Verifier Confirmation of satisfactory DBS/DBS Status check
- C.11 Safeguarding Requirements for Quaker Roles

D. Practice appendices
- D.1 Practice guidelines
- D.2 Specific safeguarding arrangements
- D.3 Information and consent form
- D.4 Children's activities and day visits
- D.5 Image use consent form
- D.6 Accident/incident form
- D.7 Activity risk assessment sheet
- D.8 Event or premises information sheet

E. Responding to concerns appendices
- E.1 Flowchart A: in cases of concerns about a child
- E.2 Flowchart B: in cases of concerns about an adult
- E.3 Initial disclosure/concern reporting form
- E.4 Safeguarding co-ordinator's disclosure reporting form
- E.5 Referral form of host authority

F. Safer Recruitment Process – Administration

Table of versions of MWAM Safeguarding Policy and Toolkit

Version	Approved by MWAM Trustees
V1	15/9/22
V2	19/9/24