



Meeting Safety 2008

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Britain Yearly Meeting's advice on Safeguarding

To keep Meetings up-to-date with good practice around Safeguarding issues, and to provide Meetings with details on where to find information, Quaker Life has issued this document.

“Guidance to Churches”, published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) contains the guidelines for safe practice and child protection that have been adopted by Britain Yearly Meeting. A copy of “Guidance to Churches” was sent to each Area and Local Meeting in early April 2008. This document, Meeting Safety 2008, should be kept with “Guidance to Churches”, which together should be referred to in place of the publication Meeting Safety (2001).

Guidance to Churches is designed to:

1. Provide advice on areas of child protection including safe work, responding to concerns, recruiting volunteers, contacting statutory agencies, risk assessment and working with offenders
2. Suggest model policies and forms that can be simply adapted to suit a meeting's needs and circumstances
3. Be a comprehensive guide, covering many aspects of work with children and young people

The Yearly Meeting continues to work with Churches' Agency on Safeguarding (CAS) for the processing of Criminal Record checks.

Getting information and help about safe practice

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. 0845 120 4550.

Email info@ccpas.co.uk. Website: www.ccpas.co.uk

CCPAS is an agency offering advice, support and training on all areas of child protection and safe practice to organisations and churches across the denominational spectrum throughout the United Kingdom. CCPAS is a registered charity that is committed to helping all organisations create a safe environment for children and young people.

CCPAS offers a wide range of advice and expertise to organisations that includes:

1. Help through a telephone helpline, or by e-mail, at times of need (all advice is confirmed in writing).
2. A members only area of their website with up-to-date information including online versions of the circulated manual and similar guidance in regard to vulnerable adults . Every Area Meeting will have access to this.
3. Training and resources, full details published in the magazine "Caring" or on the CCPAS website.
4. A monthly updating service on guidelines and best practice documents.

As a result of its policy review, Britain Yearly Meeting has paid for each Area Meeting to be a member of CCPAS during 2008 with the Area Meeting Clerk listed as the contact point. Please contact CCPAS if you wish someone different to be listed as the contact point. In early 2009, CCPAS will contact Area Meetings to request continued membership, it will be the decision of each Area Meeting to continue their membership, but it is strongly recommended.

The function of Safeguarding Co-ordinators

Each Area Meeting should appoint one or more people as a Safeguarding Co-Ordinator, and a deputy. They have three main functions

- to act as an advocate for Children and for Vulnerable Adults.
- to act independently in reporting concerns of abuse to the statutory authorities.
- to oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policies for Children and Vulnerable Adults and ensuring that they are regularly reviewed.

Different Meetings may adopt different titles for this role. Co-ordinators do not need to be Members of the Society of Friends.

Policies adopted by Meetings should include the names of the individuals appointed.

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) issues a helpful and informative leaflet about the role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, which was included in the membership pack sent to Area Meetings; it can also be downloaded from the CCPAS website.

Area Meetings may decide that the person in this role should be the named contact person with CCPAS. All **Local Meetings** should understand how this role is being carried out within the Area Meeting.

Any advice required about this role should be sought from **CCPAS**.

What is a Criminal Record Check?

Those working with children and young people in connection with Quaker meetings should undertake a check, known as a disclosure application. In Scotland, Disclosure Scotland is the body that undertakes this, whilst in England and Wales it is the Criminal Records Bureau. Updated CRB Guidelines for obtaining these checks in England and Wales were sent to Area Meeting clerks in June 2007. The current guidelines for Scotland are to be found on the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding website <http://www.churchsafe.org.uk/>. The forms, which are obtained from Quaker Life should be completed by the applicant, and then verified. Completed forms are dealt with by the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding.

Verifiers: all area and local meeting clerks are listed as verifiers (for the period of their appointment), additional verifiers can be appointed by meetings, details of the minute of appointment should be sent to Michael Booth in Quaker Life.

Churches' Agency for Safeguarding.

25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. 020 7467 5216

Email: cas@methodistchurch.org.uk

website <http://www.churchsafe.org.uk/>

CAS is a collaboration between a number of participating churches, including Friends, acting as an Umbrella Body within the terms of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB); acting between the CRB and the participating churches. It handles applications and forwards them to the CRB, receives Disclosures, interprets the information contained and gives advice as appropriate. Also, it will provide initial risk assessment based upon the Disclosures and will assist in further investigation. It will provide letters on each Disclosure to individuals, to the authorised verifier in the Meeting or nationally and a copy to the denomination / recruiting body as appropriate for applicants not deemed unsuitable.

Who to contact for what

Getting information and help about safe practice

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

For enquiries about the safe practice guidelines, ongoing support in preparing and maintaining policies, general child protection queries, specific advice on concerns and help with issues and incidents contact CCPAS 0845 120 4550, email info@ccpas.co.uk

Enquiries about Criminal Record Checks

Churches' Agency for Safeguarding (CAS)

For enquiries about the CRB checks process, including specific queries about how to fill in forms or how to verify applications and for general enquiries about the CRB checking process, contact the Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) on 020 7467 5216, e-mail cas@methodistchurch.org.uk

Obtaining Forms and Quaker Enquiries

Quaker Life, Friends House

To receive a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or Disclosure Scotland application pack, including forms, contact Philip Iddon, Quaker Life Administration Officer, 020 7663 1029, e-mail philipi@quaker.org.uk

To report an additional verifier, and receive guidance notes for verifiers, contact Michael Booth in Quaker Life (see below).

For Quaker specific queries in relation to these areas, contact Michael Booth, Quaker Life Support for Meetings Officer on 020 7663 1023, e-mail michaelsb@quaker.org.uk

These **guidelines and the system** for obtaining these checks are available on the Quaker website at www.quaker.org.uk within the "Working with Children & Young People" section.

Checklists for good practice by Quaker Meetings

Meetings may find the following checklists helpful in identifying tasks that need to be done to fulfil the safe practice guidelines:

When recruiting volunteers meetings should:

- Produce guidance notes
- Ask people to consider the role they are asked to take on
- Ask people to fill out an application form
- Take up references
- Ask volunteers to go through the Criminal Records check procedure
- Have a conversation to explore practice
- Support volunteers and agree a time span for the role
- Have clear accountability and oversight
- Offer training opportunities

When running activities when parents or guardians are not on site, forms should be used to provide:

- Medical information, particular and dietary needs
- Parental consent to take part in the activities
- Medical consent for treatment
- Parental contact details
- An awareness of participant needs
- Information in advance and updated for each event
- All data collected should be kept within guidelines

To protect children, meetings should:

- Work to avoid abuse happening
- Be aware of the correct adult / child ratios
- Know who is the Area Meeting's safeguarding co-ordinator
- Have written guidelines covering child protection
- Encourage volunteers to spot signs of abuse
- Help volunteers know what to do if abuse is disclosed
- Be prepared
- Know where to seek expert advice

To ensure health and safety:

- Make sure insurance is appropriate for on and off site
- Carry out risk assessments
- Have an up to date first aid kit
- Check building safety
- Check fire safety equipment and procedures
- Keep a record of children's attendance
- Keep an accident and incident book
- Review all policies annually

If your meeting can tick most of these points this is an indication that you are operating within the guidelines, if this is not the case your Meeting should review its practice.

To ensure ongoing effectiveness meetings should:

- Inform Quaker Life whenever someone who is not the Clerk is appointed as a verifier.
- Keep the Area Meeting membership of the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) up-to-date.
- Ask volunteers to obtain a new CRB check every three years.