

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding Report 2023

St Mungo's Church has continued to follow the Scottish Episcopal Church [SEC] Policy in respect of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Childline fulfil the role of an independent person available to children who wish to discuss protection matters and Silverline provide this service for vulnerable adults within the congregation.

All staff and volunteers who work with children and young people under the age of 18 and those who work in the Wellness Centre counselling ministries and the Valley Friends befriending project go through St Mungo's recruitment procedures including the provision of job descriptions, application form, self-declaration, references and interviews. New volunteers and staff apply for membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups [PVG] Scheme. Records are kept of all these appointments. Training in SEC policy and St Mungo's procedures is provided for all new staff and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults.

The staff responsible for safeguarding at St Mungo's Church are as follows:

- Child Protection Co-ordinator – David Lyons
- Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator – Helen Yewdall
- The Wellness Centre Safeguarding lead – Lynn Millar
- PVG Co-ordinator – Wendy Brown

All of these staff report any safeguarding concerns directly to John Wyllie the newly installed SEC Provincial Safeguarding Officer. The staff named above will regularly speak with John Wyllie in an advisory capacity, and he will offer guidance and support when navigating any possible safeguarding related concerns.

In addition to this St Mungo's also has a safeguarding panel, which operates as a subgroup of Vestry. This panel consists of:

Child Protection Co-ordinator / Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator / Associate Rector / A member of Vestry / a member of the congregation with relevant safeguarding experience.

The role of this sub-group is to ensure St Mungo's compliance with the law and with SEC guidelines concerning safeguarding, to provide advice and direction on complex safeguarding situations within the church [if required] and to assist in managing any member of the congregation who may require a signed agreement in order to attend church activities [if required].

The safeguarding panel updated the safeguarding policy in September and this updated policy was issued to all active volunteers across St Mungo's ministries. To continue serving as a volunteer at St Mungo's all volunteers are required to sign a declaration affirming that they will operate within the boundaries set out in the policy, this includes any volunteers serving the Wellness Centre who are not part of St Mungo's.

It is important to recognise that in a church of nearly 700 people, statistically speaking, there are going to be several safeguarding situations. The leadership and safeguarding panel are committed to improving the way in which these incidents are recognised, supported and reported. The overarching principle is to make St Mungo's a safe place for everyone.

There were 7 situations this year where active safeguarding discussions were required to be held. Advice provided by external agencies or by John Wyllie was observed.

David Lyons, Child Protection Co-ordinator
Helen Yewdall, Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator