

# NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF IRELAND

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY



V1 – Dec 2025

Agreed at Pro-Re nata General Synod 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026

***This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Denominations Code of Discipline, The Whistleblowing Policy, The Grievance Policy, and the Bullying and Harassment Policy.***

# Table of contents:

Section 1.....	3
Details of the denomination .....	3
Section 2:.....	5
Governance and leadership.....	5
Our commitment .....	5
Governance.....	6
Role of Congregations: .....	7
Section 3.....	8
Prevention .....	8
Understanding abuse and neglect.....	8
Positions of Trust .....	10
Safer recruitment .....	11
Safeguarding training .....	11
The GPC is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all those involved in church activities, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All those involved will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis. ....	11
Practice Guidelines.....	12
Management of Workers and volunteers – Codes of Conduct –.....	12
Section 4:.....	12
Partnership working .....	12
Section 5.....	13
Responding to allegations of abuse .....	13
Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child: .....	15
Detailed procedures where there is a concern about an adult at risk:.....	16
Section 6.....	19
Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care.....	19
Supporting those affected by abuse.....	19
Working with those who may pose a risk.....	19
<b>Adoption of the policy .....</b>	<b>19</b>

# Section 1

## Details of the denomination

**Name of Denomination:** Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland

**Address:** C/O 31 Glanleam Drive, Belfast, BT15 3FN

**Tel No:** Clerk 07740362817

**General Email address:** NSPCI.Clerk@outlook.com

**Safeguarding Lead:** Right Rev Alister Bell

**Safeguarding Lead Contact Telephone:** 07546117811

**Email :** [safeguarding.nspci@outlook.com](mailto:safeguarding.nspci@outlook.com)

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead:**

Vacant

**Regulators:** Charity Commission for Northern Ireland

**Insurance Company:** NFU Mutual

The following is a brief description of our place of denomination and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and Adults at Risk of Harm.

### **Liberal Christian Thought**

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland is a small but significant denomination with a historical witness to liberal Christianity. Although a separate denomination in its own right, it has no exact parallel with any other church outside Ireland and may best be understood in relation to Irish Presbyterianism, within which tradition it had its origins and with which it still retains a deep affinity.

## **Respect for All**

We belong to a friendly church which regards all people with respect. Ministers of other Christian churches are, by our constitution, welcome to join in Communion and to occupy our pulpits.

Agreement among Christians of every detail of doctrine is not necessary to the acceptable practice of faith and true unity is to be sought, not in the uniformity of creed but in a common standard of righteousness and obedience to the commandments which Christ has laid down.

In the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church respect for all is reflected in the diverse character of the Ministers and their congregations as well as the unique expression of each person's Faith.

## **Free Enquiry**

The principles of free enquiry and love of liberty have bound the leaders together over the years to minister to the spiritual wants of the many and aid the spread of Christian religion and just freedom among succeeding generations of worshippers.

We believe that it is the inalienable right of every Christian to search the Scriptures and, with prayerful consideration, to seek the will of God through lives of discipleship.

## **Faith Guided by Reason and Conscience**

We hold that Scripture is the only rule of faith and duty under the teaching of Christ. We accept the guidance of our reason and conscience, and we believe that human creeds and confessions restrict the sacred rights of private judgement which is a fundamental principle of the Reformation.

The activities which will be undertaken with children would be mainly within the Sunday School and youth activities in each congregation and in the denomination under the Sunday School and Youth Committee.

The activities with Adults at Risk of Harm would range from attending services and activities to pastoral support at home, in hospital or other caring establishments.

**This Policy was created using the Thirtyone:eight model safeguarding template.**

## Section 2:

# Governance and leadership

## Our commitment

As the General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland (NSPCI) accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.”

As the General Synod of The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The denominations safeguarding statement can be found in supplement 1 in the supplement to the safeguarding policy.

The policy and any attached supplement are based on the ten safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight our external safeguarding provider and are outlined below:

1. Governance
2. Culture
3. Safeguarding Policy
4. Safer recruitment
5. Training and awareness
6. Working safely
7. Managing Workers and volunteers
8. Partnership working
9. Responding to concerns

10. Working with those who may pose a risk.

## Governance

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland General Purposes Committee (GPC) is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility. This includes having a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the denomination.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (IICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).

The GPC will have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within the denomination, including referring to the relevant charity regulator which is the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland – Serious incident reporting

[New guidance on serious incident reporting | The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#)

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our denomination but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example and are committed to the safeguarding of all.
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures with codes of conduct.
- the values of the denomination are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people and
- there is open communication

## Role of Congregations:

- Each congregation should appoint a Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP).
- The DSP will be the main liaison between the congregation and the Denominational safeguarding lead (DSL).
- The DSP should undertake the designated training for the role.
- Their role will be to gather information when a disclosure is made using (supplement 5) and pass to the (DSL). There is no remit at present in the role to investigate.
- The DSP should report to the church committee at each meeting if there have been any safeguarding issues and this should be noted in the minutes (suggested permanent agenda item for each committee meeting) with it record as having been none or the number of cases which have arisen and what action was taken i.e. reported to the DSL, names and details should not be given nor recorded.
- The DSP should lead on ensuring that Access NI checks have been carried out in line with this policy when required via the DSL who will inform them of the outcome.
- The DSP should securely keep records of safeguarding training undertaken within the congregation and when training should be renewed in keeping with this policy.
- The DSP should securely keep the originals of the signed declaration (supplement 4) regarding receipt of the policy from those concerned in their congregation.
- The DSP should securely keep records of permission for using images of Children (supplement 6) and dispose of these according to the policy.
- The DSP should ensure that sufficient copies of the Accident and Incident Form for Children and Young People (supplement 7) are held on Church property.
- The DSP should undertake the buildings checklist (supplement 8) each September and January and report any concerns to church committee as part of their report to church committee.
- For small congregations it might be better to cluster and have one DSP covering several congregations.
- The DSP should keep a secure record of any cases which have been passed onto the DSL.
- It is advised that congregations should formally minute that they have accepted the NSPCI Safeguarding policy and supplement at a committee meeting.

# Section 3

## Prevention

### 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 with care and support needs 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.

For the purposes of this policy, a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old,

An adult at risk of harm will be defined in this policy as:

A person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) personal characteristics and/or
- b) life circumstances

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An **'Adult in need of protection'**\* is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) personal characteristics AND/OR
- b) life circumstances AND
- c) who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests;

AND

d) where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (a) or (b) must be present, in addition to both elements (c), and (d).

\*Definition per Service Instruction SI2517 PSNI Public Protection Branch. Initial Publication 29 June 2017, Reviewed 09 August 2022, Last Amended 12 June 2023.

Self-harm or self-neglect does not sit within the definition of an 'Adult in Need of Protection'.



Persons with alcohol dependency or drug addiction are not viewed as an Adult at Risk of Harm unless they also have a mental illness or disability.

A person with a physical disability or an older person may not deem themselves as being an Adult at Risk of Harm and may not wish to be dealt with under these procedures. In cases such as these, the incident can be investigated as normal, unless there is a concern that they do not have the capacity to make these decisions for themselves.

To safeguard those in our denomination we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, 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.*

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

This policy is in line with the following legislation and departmental guidance:

- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2024
- Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015
- Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011
- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents 2015

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Types of abuse Please note that signs and indicators can be found here: [Types of abuse](#) and in supplement 2 of the supplement to the safeguarding policy.

## Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers and volunteers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England and Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

'Position of trust' is a legal term defined in the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) order 2008. In article 29 it is explained as an adult "caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge" of a child under the age of 18.

This order defines settings in which adults would have a position of trust e.g. hospital or an educational institution (article 29). It does not include a list of roles, but examples include:

- Teachers
- Care workers and volunteers
- Youth justice workers and volunteers
- Social workers and volunteers
- Doctors

It is against the law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent. This means that even though the child may be over the age of consent (16), it is illegal to engage in sexual activity with any 16- or 17-year-old if you hold a position of trust.

Legal exceptions when in a position of trust include marriage or civil partnership, and sexual relationships that pre-date a position of trust.

Article 29A of the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 was added by the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (NI) 2022, has been broadened to include "sport" and "religion". This includes anyone who: 'coaches, teaches, trains, supervises or instructs someone under 18, on a regular basis, in a sport or a religion'.

These sport coach and faith leadership positions are currently defined as:

"religion" includes:

- a religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- a religion which does not involve belief in a god.

## Safer recruitment

The GPC will ensure all those involved in Church activities will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A self-declaration form and AccessNI has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme and induction is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the denomination's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

### Safeguarding training

The GPC is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all those involved in church activities, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All those involved will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The GPC will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The GPC will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead undertaking advance safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

The GPC will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the governance i.e. congregational committees and Trustees which will be renewed every three years.

The GPC will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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.

## Practice Guidelines

As a denomination working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable those involved to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of potential harm or abuse and false or unfounded accusations.

We have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in, are available in the supplement to this policy.

For some activities you will need specific forms, e.g. consent forms, risk assessments etc.

The relevant forms can be found in the supplement to this policy.

## Management of Workers and volunteers – Codes of Conduct –

As a GPC we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct for supporting children, young people and adults with care and support needs, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and outside of their role. They will also receive further training as necessary.

The code of conduct can be found in the supplement to this policy.

## Section 4:

### Partnership working

The diversity of denominations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults with care and support needs. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

It is also our expectation that any denomination using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets our safeguarding standards.

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

# Section 5

## Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a worker or volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:
- The person in receipt of disclosures, allegation or concern of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

**Name: Right Rev Alister Bell** (hereafter the "Safeguarding Lead")

**Tel:** 07546117811

**Email:** [safeguarding.nscpi@outlook.com](mailto:safeguarding.nscpi@outlook.com)

The above is nominated by the GPC to act on their behalf in dealing with the disclosure, allegation or concern, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or, if the concerns in any way involve the Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made to:

**Name:** (hereafter the "Deputy Safeguarding Lead") **VACANT**

**Tel:**

**Email:**

If the concerns implicate both the Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

**Name:** (hereafter the "Safeguarding Appointed Person") **VACANT**

**Tel:**

**Email:**

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required: Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the cause for concern form and share this with the Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding Deputy or Safeguarding Appointed Person as soon as possible.

Please see a copy of the cause for concern form in the Supplement 5

The Safeguarding Lead may first ring the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. Based on the concern, they may then then contact the relevant statutory services.

Your relevant local Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) Gateway Service team:

(HSCT)	Contact No	Out of Hours	Areas covered
Belfast	028 9050 7000	028 9504 9999	Greater Belfast Area
South East	0300 1000 300	028 9504 9999	Lisburn, Dunmurry, Moira, Hillsborough, Bangor, Newtownards, Ards Peninsula, Comber, Downpatrick, Newcastle and Ballynahinch
Northern	0300 1234 333	028 9446 8833	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey, Larne, Ballymena, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush and Coleraine
Western	028 7131 4090	028 9504 9999	Derry, Limavady, Strabane, Omagh and Enniskillen
Southern	028 3741 5285	028 9504 9999	Craigavon, Banbridge, Dromore, Lurgan, Portadown, Gilford, Armagh, Coalisland, Dungannon, Fivemiletown, Markethill, Moy, Tandragee, Ballygawley, Newry City, Bessbrook, Annalong, Rathfriland, Warrenpoint, Crossmaglen, Kilkeel, Newtownhamilton

Further details: [Gateway-Teams-contact-details-nidirect-Jan-21.DOCX](#)

Adult Social Services:

Out of hours telephone number for all HSCT areas (adults and children) 02895 049999

Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) 101 or 999 if person at is at risk of harm

Charity Commission for Northern Ireland:

The Safeguarding Lead may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as:

- The Moderator who may need to liaise with the insurance company or Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as a serious incident.
- The Gateway Team (Northern Ireland) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Concerns 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.

Whilst disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead should not delay referral to the statutory services, Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight.

The GPC will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead 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.

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, although the GPC hope that members of the denomination will use this procedure.

If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Lead(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the GPC demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

## 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 Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:
- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.
- Contact Children's Social Care Gateway Services (Northern Ireland) (or Thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).
- For lower-level concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of 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 Children's Social Care direct for advice.

- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Gateway Services (Northern Ireland).

### **Allegations of sexual abuse:**

In the event of allegations or concerns of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- Contact the Gateway Services for children and families and Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) on 101.
- Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Gateway Services, Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about an adult at risk:**

Concerns or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, denominational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Lead will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services on 999, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact or Adult Social Work Services who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions required. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

### **If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Lead will:**

- Identify support services for the Survivor i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.



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

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Lead, will:

- Make a referral to the Gateway Team 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 the relevant AccessNI for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Gateway Team if they are involved.
- Share information about the concern with the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI).

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:**

The safeguarding Lead will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Work Services to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the relevant AccessNI (Northern Ireland) following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI).

The legislation across all four UK nations (The Care Act 2014, Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership key documents 2015 (Northern Ireland) and Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014) places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or denomination causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Social Care to decide not the denomination.

### **Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult:**

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above).

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). If the adult does not wish to report this to the police, then the Safeguarding Lead can pass on the information relating to the alleged perpetrator, however, must not share details of the survivor.

- If the alleged perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Gateway Team whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- If the alleged perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Work Services to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- If the alleged perpetrator is in a role within your denomination, contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

## Section 6

### Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

#### Supporting those affected by abuse

The GPC is committed to offering wellbeing support/pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the denomination.

Please see below the details for the individual responsible for wellbeing support/pastoral care as an interim measure until a pastoral support team is put in place:

**Name:** Rev Lynda Kane  
**Tel:** 07740362817  
**Email** NSPCI.Clerk@outlook.com

#### Working with those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the denomination is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with care and support needs; the GPC will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing support/pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

### *Adoption of the policy*

This policy was agreed by the General Synod and will be reviewed annually before each General Synod:

Signed by:  Position: Moderator of the NSPCI

Signed by:  Position: Clerk of the NSPCI

At the Pro Renata General Synod held at Dunmurry NSPC on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026