



# Safeguarding Policy

## Document Information

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## Contents

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Policy</b>	<b>2</b>
Overseeing Safeguarding	2
<b>Prevention</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Definitions of Abuse</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Document Control</b>	<b>13</b>
Approvers	13



## Purpose

The leadership and board of trustees of Novo UK recognises the importance of its work with children, as well as young people and adults in need of protection, and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

## Policy

### Who is this policy for?

This policy is for anyone working under the umbrella of Novo UK. This includes members of Novo UK, staff and trustees.

Novo UK recognises that its members often work in partnership so disclosure of a safeguarding concern may occur through more than one organisation's safeguarding channel. Any safeguarding concern identified by a Novo UK member should be disclosed through Novo UK and the procedures outlined here followed. The safeguarding officers for Novo UK will then decide on the appropriate next steps and liaise if necessary with their counterpart in the partner organisation.

### Overseeing Safeguarding

The National Director is responsible for ensuring the appropriate implementation and ongoing administration of Novo UK's safeguarding policy. This includes ensuring regular updates and distribution of the policy, recruitment of Safeguarding Officers, allocation of resources towards safeguarding training, and monitoring that workers and volunteer teams working with children have regular DBS or Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

The following statement has been agreed by the board of trustees:

*Novo UK is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with health and support needs, as well as ensuring their well-being.*

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age), and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe, and happy. We want to make sure that children with whom we have contact know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to, and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial, and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs, and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.



- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of Novo UK unless they pose a risk to the safety of those involved.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who work with children and adults.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements of UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>), as well as good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>).
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring as far as possible that all members of Novo UK adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Supporting the Safeguarding Officers in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/adults with health and support needs.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring, and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the organisation affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (<https://lx.iriss.org.uk/content/safe-and-secure-key-facts-summary-ccpas-ten-safeguarding-standards-places-worship-and-other-.html>).

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- When working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate and their procedures followed. We will also report concerns to Novo UK's leadership and board of trustees.
- It is our conviction that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult with care and support needs then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Safeguarding Officers for Novo UK.

- Danny Aanderud ([danny.aanderud@novouk.org](mailto:danny.aanderud@novouk.org))



- Kimberly Drage (kimberly.drage@novouk.org)

## Prevention

### a. Safer recruitment of staff and members

Novo UK will ensure all staff and members are appropriately recruited / accepted as well as trained, supported and supervised to ensure that they uphold the principles of safeguarding outlined in this policy. This includes ensuring that:

i. There is a clear application process for both a staff role and to be a member and those appointed as staff / accepted as members are suitable for their roles. For both staff and members:

- An application form is completed.
- There is a rigorous discernment process, including a face-to-face (in-person or Zoom) interview.
- Character references are obtained and followed up where appropriate.
- DBS checks are obtained.
- If working in Scotland, a PVG is issued by Novo UK.
- Those appointed /accepted have been given a clear understanding of their responsibilities in relation to child and adult safeguarding and the principles of non-discrimination. The process will ensure that they have expressed their commitment to these principles prior to appointment / acceptance.
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ii. All staff and members receive regular safeguarding training. In addition, all staff and members are asked on an annual basis to read this safeguarding policy and confirm it has been understood.

### b. Safeguarding culture

We recognise that Novo UK is a charity and its staff and members may hold a position of trust with others, including sometimes vulnerable people.

Novo UK is committed to creating a culture that is proactive at ensuring the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk. This includes (but is not limited to):

i. Ongoing training and professional development in relation to safeguarding.

ii. All staff and members have an appropriate level of supervision.

iii. Regular team meetings take place where ideas and issues can be discussed, concerns expressed, and feedback given.

iv. Staff and members promote the importance of safeguarding in our work with partner organisations.



v. Ensuring there is a mechanism in place for all staff and members to be able to raise legitimate concerns about others, either within or outside of the Novo UK community, with impunity (see Whistleblowing Policy).

c. Working with contractors

Novo UK commits to take all reasonable measures to ensure high safeguarding standards of the contractors we use. This will include ensuring they are able to comply with the standards outlined in this policy.

d. Ministry partners

Novo UK commits to doing everything we reasonably can to ensure that ministry partners are making donations without coercion, within their means, and with a sound mind.

If we have concerns, we will err on the side of caution and endeavour to ascertain more information – while recognising the need to respect the rights and privacy of the individual and act in a non-discriminatory manner. We have the right to refuse a donation.

## Definitions of Abuse

There are broadly speaking 10 different types of abuse; physical abuse, domestic violence or abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational or institutional abuse, neglect or acts of omission and self neglect. People can be subject to a number of different abuse types at any one time.

In addition, safeguarding children and vulnerable adults means keeping them safe from the risk of radicalisation and reporting any concerns that an individual is potentially being drawn into extremism or terrorist activity.

## Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse

a. Recognising Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered:

Signs of possible physical abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Repeat injuries
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains



- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

#### Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Physical signs such as bruises, scratches or bite marks
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

#### Signs of possible emotional abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adult
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Excessive dependence
- Running away/stealing/lying
- Self-harming

#### **b. Responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse**

We recognise that as a charity where our staff and members may be in a position of trust, they may identify signs of abuse. If our staff or members suspect abuse, whether involving another Novo member or a partner organisation or anyone else, they should follow the procedures outlined in this section. Under no circumstances should an employee or member of Novo UK carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

#### **Recognise**

- If you suspect or are concerned that someone under 18 is at risk of harm/ abuse please follow the steps below
- If a young person or adult reports that someone under 18 has been harmed or is at risk of harm, follow the steps below.
- If anyone including a young person is at immediate risk of harm, call 999 immediately.



## Respond

- **Tell:** As soon as you realise that someone is telling you that an under 18 has been harmed or is at risk of harm, make sure they understand that you have to pass this information on to the Safeguarding Officer and that they may need to pass that information on to relevant authorities. Reassure them that the information will only be passed on to those who need to know.
- **Listen**
  - Stay calm.
  - Take what they say seriously.
  - Do not express shock, judgement or fear. Be aware of your body language and facial expression as well as what you say.
  - Do not jump to conclusions.
  - Never stop a young person who is freely recalling events, but don't push the young person to tell you more than they want to.
  - Avoid asking too many questions and use basic questions - who, where, when.
  - Do not put words into the young person's mouth. Remember this may be the beginning of a legal process as well as a process of recovery/healing for the young person. Legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the young person has been led in any way.
  - Do not ask them to repeat what they said to another adult, or stop them part way through to get someone else.
- **Reassure** them they are not to blame and were right to tell you. Reassure them they are not in trouble (if relevant).
- **Contact Details** - Confirm or get the full name of the young person, date of birth and if possible their address, name of parent/s or carers and phone numbers.
- **Never investigate**

## Record

Record your conversation as soon as possible (preferably within an hour). Write down what was said. In your report you should include:

- exactly what the child/young person said in as much detail as possible (in their own words where possible)
- what you said in reply
- what was happening immediately beforehand (eg a description of the activity).
- record your impression of body language, tone etc. Make it very clear which parts are impressions and which are what the person said.
- any visible injuries you observed (do not examine them).
- any witnesses.
- the time and date of the conversation, sign it and store it somewhere secure until it can be stored by NovoUK Safeguarding Officer
- Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

## Report

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Danny Aanderud or Kimberly Drage, (Safeguarding Officers). If the allegation or



suspicion implicates both the Safeguarding Officers, the report should be made to the local Children's or Adult Social Services or the Police.

- The Safeguarding Officers have been appointed by the Board of Trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter to the statutory authorities.

## Role and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officers

- The role of the Safeguarding Officers is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegations or suspicions and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate. It is not the role of the Safeguarding Officers to investigate allegations and concerns.
- Where required, the Safeguarding Officer should then immediately inform the Chair of the Board, Andy Wright.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns are kept in a private digital file only accessible by the safeguarding officers or chair of the board.

Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Officer will

- Contact the local Children's Social Service for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety, or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns (e.g. poor parenting), encouraging 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 case of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services directly for advice.
- Seek further advice from Social Services where needed.

Where the concern is regarding an adult at risk the Safeguarding Officer will

- Contact Adult Social Services
- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to autonomy, privacy, and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the adult at risk is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care safeguarding team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to make enquiries into any adult at risk of being abused or neglected.

The Board of Trustees will support the Safeguarding Officers 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.





The National Director must also consider any duty regarding informing Novo UK's insurers and regulators of offences by staff and members.

It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies. Although Novo UK expects staff and members to use this procedure, if an individual with the concern feels that Novo UK has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency directly. We hope by making this statement that Novo UK demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

## Support

### Pastoral care

Novo UK recognises the importance of pastoral care for those affected by abuse. We may not be positioned to provide pastoral care to those concerned but we will do everything that is reasonably possible to ensure that individuals affected by abuse are able to access appropriate pastoral care.

## Appendix A - Code of conduct towards children

This code of conduct includes but is not limited to the following expectations of all staff, members, and trustees in their behaviour relating to, conduct around, and treatment of children. The expectations specified here apply at all times where children are present. They apply every day: in the family home, team settings, during ministry and work platforms, and at conferences. Intentional disregard for and/or consistent or deliberate departures from the code of conduct will be examined and may result in a child protection response and removal from this organisation. The code of conduct provides standards for how every adult should treat and behave around children. If adhered to, it protects children from harm and protects adults from accusation or allegation of abuse.

### Visibility

All work with children shall be planned in a way that minimises risks for children and caregivers as much as possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working with children. This can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at times when other activities are occurring. Leaving a door or window open can create some visibility where it is not possible to have children in the main room where people are gathered.

### Overcoming isolation

At least two unrelated adults shall be present in work with children or when children are gathering (e.g. a playdate). When this is not possible, reduce isolation by having a minimum of two children present, informing the child's parent of the supervision arrangements, and doing it during a time and/or in a location where your interaction with the child is visible to others. Isolation could be overcome, for example, by taking two or more children to the toilet together, dropping off siblings last in a carpool, or taking your own child or spouse along when providing rides.



Where children are under the supervision of other caregivers, nappy changes should take place in open areas where visibility is high and only with prior agreement by the parents.

We expect an adequate number of adults to supervise youth events, especially overnight activities or sleepovers between families. Any such youth activities, including overnights, should first give clear communication to parents about sleeping arrangements and the supervision of those arrangements. It must also include communication about rules for screens during the event, including the use of phones, tablets, laptops, and televisions.

### Accountability

When ministry to a child involves one-on-one contact, the following guidelines shall be followed:

- Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with youth or children.
- Counselling or other necessary confidential meetings with children shall be done in a room with the door left open and only when another adult is in close vicinity, aware that the meeting is occurring, and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed.
- Parents are to be notified beforehand of any activities with youth or children. For example, before transporting a youth or child, keeping a child after a youth activity, or when tutoring a child or youth.
- There shall be mutual accountability between team members to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.
- Take any of the children's allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately to Novo UK's safeguarding officer.

### Supervision

Supervision also reduces risk. Programme administrators for events shall periodically and randomly inspect offices, work areas, and other areas where children and adults are together. Parents should also be regularly checking in on children playing together at home or in common areas at conferences or during team times.

### Technology

Technology should be used appropriately to protect children or youth from abuse and exploitation. All reasonable measures should be taken in the home and at events and conferences to prevent the downloading of pornographic material from the internet. This includes those accessed via social media apps, and access to inappropriate emails, chat rooms, or movies. No one is permitted to use any type of device to show children or youth pornography or other inappropriate content. Parents should employ filtering tools on devices, as well as ongoing education with their children about harmful content on the internet.

During conferences or other events, no photographs should be taken of any child by event volunteers and organisers without first seeking prior permission from the parents of the child. Where permission has been given, photographs must only be held personally and not disseminated on social media or via other formats, unless the parents have given their explicit approval. It is also wise for teams to discuss photography of children and families and to set appropriate ground rules for taking and sharing any photographs.



## Touch

Healthy, caring touch is valuable and vital for children, but unhealthy touch is abusive. Due to this, the following guidelines apply both within the family setting and beyond the family home. Touch shall be open rather than secretive. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. Touch should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult. It should be with the child's permission and any resistance from the child should be respected (unless doing so would expose the child or another person to the risk of injury). Touch should always communicate respect for the child.

Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, taking them to the toilet etc. Adults and other youth or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, or otherwise assault children.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise, side hugs, shoulder- to-shoulder hugs, and pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate). For smaller children, touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, hugs, or holding them when others are present is appropriate.

The following behaviours between an adult and a child are inappropriate or may be perceived as inappropriate and shall not be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs, showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child, sleeping in bed with a child, inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development, flirtatious or seductive looks, any form of affection that is unwanted by the child, showing sexually suggestive videos or playing sexually suggestive games with any child, and any behaviour that could be interpreted as sexual in nature.

(Family and cultural norms will be taken into account, especially where a child is upset and requires comfort from their parents).

## Verbal interaction

Words can also be used to support and encourage a child, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and appropriate jokes.

Inappropriate verbal interaction includes the following: Shaming, belittling, humiliating, name calling, using harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate a child, cursing, or making derogatory remarks about the child. Adults should avoid favouring or showing differential treatment to particular children or youth to the exclusion of others.

Inappropriate verbal interaction also includes telling off-colour or sexual jokes, making sexually suggestive comments, telling secrets, or inappropriately discussing sexual encounters or desires with children.

## Parental involvement

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. Therefore, parents shall be informed of all planned activities regarding their child. Parents are encouraged to make



unannounced visits to activities involving their child, as this also reduces the risk of abuse. Parents should take all reasonable measures to ensure that anyone who has permission to supervise their child is known to the family (not merely an acquaintance), has demonstrated appropriate boundaries around children, and is generally a safe and trusted adult who is capable of caring for and supervising their child. Parents should make themselves aware of red flags (concerning behaviours outlined in our child protection training).



## Document Control

### Approvers

Approver(s) Name and Title
Board of Trustees