

## Cornhill Scotland Safeguarding Policy

Cornhill Scotland is a Christian ministry organisation, which subscribes to historic, orthodox Christian beliefs. Those who participate in the Ministry of Cornhill Scotland are expected to be Christians committed to biblical authority in all matters of life and doctrine, and do so on the understanding that we adhere to a conservative evangelical theological position, and hold to the historic, orthodox Christian position on matters of ethics, including the doctrines of humanity, marriage and human sexuality. We believe that all people have been created in God's image with God-given value and dignity. As a result, we value all people, and recognise our duty of care towards all those for whom we have a particular responsibility in relation to our ministry.

Cornhill Scotland is therefore committed to nurture, protect and safeguard all those involved in our ministry, especially those at particular risk of harm.

This document applies to anyone working at or on behalf of Cornhill Scotland including all staff, visiting teachers, apprentices, volunteers and students.

The main areas of Cornhill Scotland's work are:

1. The Cornhill Training Course (CTC)
2. The Pastors' Training Course (PTC)
3. Day Conferences/Residential Conferences

### Safeguarding Children

#### **1. The Cornhill Training Course / Pastors' Training Course**

The minimum age for admission to our courses is 18 (and in practice, generally significantly older). The safeguarding of children therefore does not arise within the scope of this work.

#### **2. Residential Conferences**

Our residential conferences are for our PTC students. The minimum age for such delegates is 18. The safeguarding of children therefore does not arise within the scope of this work.

#### **3. Day Conferences**

The minimum age for attendance at our day conferences is 18 (unless accompanied by a parent). If delegates bring those younger than 18 it is made clear to them that they are responsible for the care and safety of their children.

### Safeguarding Adults at risk of harm: General

None of the activities Cornhill Scotland undertakes by their nature routinely involve providing services (e.g., health or care services) to those generally or routinely considered vulnerable

adults. However, we recognise that any adult may be vulnerable in certain respects. Some factors that increase vulnerability include:

- A sensory or physical disability or impairment
- A learning disability
- A physical illness
- Mental ill health, both chronic or acute
- An addiction to alcohol or drugs
- The failing faculties in old age
- A permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, for example bereavement or previous abuse trauma.

We also recognise that a particular situation may render any adult vulnerable, including the desire to please a lecturer, prominent figure, employer, church minister, church supervisor or other role model.

A person who might be considered vulnerable in this way has the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Have their privacy respected
- Be able to lead as independent a life as possible
- Have the protection of the law
- Have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, or cultural background
- Be able to use their chosen language or method of communication
- Be heard.

Cornhill Scotland will seek to safeguard vulnerable adults by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- exercising proper care in recruitment, making all the necessary checks;
- ensure that all staff, visiting teachers, apprentices, volunteers and students are made aware of the safeguarding policy;
- ensuring effective management of all those people involved in our ministry through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures;
- responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation raised;
- appointing a Safeguarding Officer who will have an overview of all Cornhill Scotland's activities and seek to implement the safeguarding policy;
- regularly reviewing the safeguarding policy to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
- Appoint an External Safeguarding Officer as a person entirely outwith the organisation to whom reference may be made if internal procedure proves insufficient in a particular situation.

## Safeguarding adults at risk of harm: activity-specific information

### **1. The Cornhill Scotland Training Course & The Pastors' Training Course**

We recognise that we have direct responsibilities towards our students in relation to the time they spend with us for teaching and supervision, as well as some indirect responsibility towards students in relation to churches from which they are sent and may be engaged as ministry trainees or with some other role related to their training.

During the application process, the Directors reviewing the application and conducting the interviews will be watchful for signs of particular vulnerability. Each prospective student will be treated individually as appropriate and where there are concerns these will be sensitively noted by the staff, and also relayed to the church supervisor as felt appropriate.

During the course all teaching staff are vigilant towards the needs of individual students. If a concern arises or we are made aware of a concern by a church supervisor, staff will be alerted as necessary, balancing the need for privacy and the need for awareness to ensure the individual is safeguarded. There is a formal complaints procedure that all students will be given within their 'Cornhill Scotland Student Handbook' and they will also be made aware of the safeguarding policy.

Each student on the course is assigned a tutor. These tutors are the first point of contact for any issues to be talked through, relayed or reported. Cornhill tutors will meet occasionally with their students (at the end of term 1 and the end of term 3) to talk through their experience of Cornhill and ministry in their church. There are also tutor lunches where groups of students meet with tutors to talk and pray together. A tutor can also be contacted by the student at any point to talk through concerns. If a student raises a safeguarding concern or allegation relating to their course study during such discussions, the tutor should promptly refer the matter to the Safeguarding Team or if this is not appropriate, to the Safeguarding Officer. If the student prefers, they may refer the matter directly to the Safeguarding Team without involving their tutor.

At the end of the Cornhill year, each student is given the opportunity to offer feedback on their time as a student. This is not just feedback on the course content but also explicitly includes the opportunity to comment on how they have been treated by the staff at Cornhill Scotland and their supervisor and other staff at their church. Tutors should be mindful of any safeguarding issues raised in this feedback and deal with them in accordance with the safeguarding policy.

### **2. Residential and Day Conferences**

Staff running and speaking at conferences are vigilant to ensure the needs of vulnerable adults are met. Disabled delegates are routinely accommodated appropriately. If staff are aware in advance of delegates affected by any of the factors other than a physical disability, an individual risk assessment is made and the staff will work hard to ensure their safe and satisfactory experience at the event.

At the end of each conference, all delegates are given contact details which can be used to offer feedback on their experience. Any safeguarding issues raised in this feedback will be dealt with in accordance with the safeguarding policy.

## Safeguarding within the student's church

Safeguarding matters in churches which send students to study with Cornhill are properly the remit of the churches themselves. We strongly recommend that Cornhill students take it upon themselves to find out about, and adhere fully to, the safeguarding policies and procedures of any church where they have a placement, apprenticeship or where they are placed for mission week. Any safeguarding issues witnessed within these settings should be reported and addressed through the procedures that are in place within that church or organisation.

Cornhill Scotland will exercise proper care in arranging or facilitating any student placements within a church. If a student should experience abuse, bullying, neglect or any other inappropriate behaviour during a placement, they should first raise it within that organisation using that organisation's reporting procedure. If these procedures prove unhelpful, the student may also seek advice and help from the Cornhill Safeguarding Officer.

We recognise that Cornhill has no direct responsibility for, or control over, any other church or organisation, however we will endeavour to support any student facing difficulties wherever possible and with the means open to us. If a student reports such unresolved concerns to someone within Cornhill Scotland, that person should consult a member of the Cornhill Scotland Safeguarding Team who will ordinarily refer the matter to the safeguarding officer of the relevant church or organisation in order to seek to urge that a helpful process and satisfactory resolution is arrived at. If there is a compelling reason for not so referring, the matter may be passed to the Cornhill Scotland External Safeguarding Officer who will follow the safeguarding policy and guidance given by the Scottish Charity Regulator in determining any action which may be appropriate.

## Reporting

All staff, visiting teachers, apprentices, volunteers and students should be made aware that they are encouraged to report safeguarding issues of concern to a member of the Safeguarding Team. Any safeguarding allegation reported to the Safeguarding Team will be dealt with promptly, efficiently and with due attention to obligations of confidentiality. The action taken will depend on the severity of the allegations and the risk of continued abuse taking place.

Cornhill Scotland takes seriously the responsibility of care for those who are involved with our ministry. Therefore, if a case of abuse or another serious incident is reported, we will follow the guidance given by the Scottish Charity Regulator to report to the police if the incident may involve criminal behaviour, and where necessary also referring to social services and reporting

to other agencies. In case of a serious incident, a report will also be made to the Scottish Charity Regulator.

If a less serious concern is raised about the behaviour of an individual within the organisation then the matter will be referred to a member of the Safeguarding Team who will, where appropriate, discuss the matter with the Directors of the course, the Safeguarding Officer, Trustees or the External Safeguarding Officer depending on the scope and scale of the disclosure. Appropriate action will be taken by the Safeguarding Team to deal with the issues raised and to prevent a recurrence. The complainant will be listened to and kept informed throughout and, if they are unhappy with the outcome will be encouraged to consult the External Safeguarding Officer to discuss what further options are available to them.

#### The Safeguarding Team:

- The Director of The Cornhill Scotland Training Course (Jonathan Gemmell)
- The Director of The Pastors' Training Course (Andrew Gemmill)
- The Director of Operations at Cornhill Scotland (Charles Alford)
- The Safeguarding Officer, the Cornhill Scotland Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding (Rev Craig Dyer)

November 2023