

Name of policy	Safeguarding policy
Last updated/reviewed	August 2025
Update interval	Every year
Authorised sign-off	BMS Board of Trustees



BMS Safeguarding Policy

To report a safeguarding concern:

- 1) Contact a member of the [safeguarding team](#) or safeguarding@bmsworldmission.org
- 2) Complete a report form and send it by e mail
- 3) Follow the partner organisation's safeguarding procedures if needed

Remember – if a child or adult is in immediate danger contact the relevant emergency service where it is safe or appropriate to do so, or urgent seek medical assistance if needed.

Outside of office hours: If the concern is urgent and cannot wait BMS personnel can call the emergency phone number.

Emergency advice is also available from Thirtyone:eight helpline:

+44 (0)1322 517817 can be called from outside the UK and is open from 7am – midnight everyday (UK time).

1.1 About the policy

Purpose of the policy:

This policy is intended to make clear the safeguarding responsibilities of BMS staff, volunteers and representatives, wherever they are located in the world. These can be summarised as:

- Upholding the dignity and respect of children and adults at risk
- Taking preventative steps to ensure a safe environment for children and adults at risk
- Responding quickly and appropriately to concerns and allegations
- Acting in line with BMS values in the best interests of the child or adult at risk.

Introduction to the BMS Safeguarding Policy

BMS is committed to creating safe spaces which do not contribute to suffering and injustice. We recognise our duty of care to all those who come into contact with BMS, we do not tolerate any form of harm or abuse and seek to ensure that staff, volunteers and representatives 'do no harm' while working with or representing BMS.

At BMS our [vision](#) is that "Together we are working for a world where all can experience faith in Christ and the abundant life only he provides".

We do this by mobilising people, resources and skills across the Global Church to share the good news of Jesus and practical hope where they're needed most.

We work hand-in-hand with global organisations, mission workers and supporters to:

- share Christ and nurture disciples
- alleviate suffering and injustice
- enable all God's people to play their part in his mission.

Our [values](#) demand behaviours that reflect our commitment to safeguarding – treating each other equally and with respect, working with integrity, honesty and transparency and supporting one another's wellbeing.

Together with our global partners, BMS seeks to support people living in places where political, economic and environmental failure create significant obstacles to human resilience. In all of these situations children and adults may be at increased risk.

Though we work towards a 'polycentric' model, we do recognise that the nature of our work with some of the most vulnerable and marginalised communities can create unequal power dynamics, and therefore there is an inherent risk that BMS personnel or representatives could exploit the position of power. We recognise the need to ensure the welfare of children and adults at risk, and ensure action is taken to support them if they are at risk of harm, whether that is from a worker, a volunteer or the local community.

BMS staff, volunteers and representatives must always:

- Ensure their personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standards and in keeping with BMS vision, mission and values and does not bring BMS into disrepute.
- Act in good faith and treat other people with dignity and respect, without discrimination, harassment, abuse or neglect.
- Take reasonable action to protect others from harm and to challenge infringements into the rights of others.

The BMS policy is informed both by biblical principles (see safeguarding [handbook](#)) and in the case of children, by principles which derive from the [UN Convention on the Rights of a Child](#), including that:

- All children have equal rights to safeguarding from abuse and exploitation
- All children should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and safeguarding of children
- International Non-Governmental Organisations have a duty of care to children with whom they or their representatives work
- If agencies work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of safeguarding for the children in their partners' programmes.

Other standards which this policy encapsulate are:

- Relevant national laws of England and Wales (as BMS is a UK registered charity) which include but are not limited to the [Children Act 1989](#), [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#), [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#) and [The Care Act 2014](#)
- Relevant national laws in each of the countries in which BMS partners work
- [The UN Inter Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, 2019](#)
- [The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability \(CHS\)](#)
- [Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office: Safeguarding for External Partners.](#)
- [The internationally-accepted safeguarding standards of the Keeping Children Safe Coalition.](#)

Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to all BMS global staff, trustees, volunteers and those representing BMS in any capacity (for example church speakers, photographers, film crews etc).

Partner Requirements

This policy will be shared with partner organisations who receive resources and support from BMS. BMS will work with partners to ensure that they are equipped to develop their own local, appropriate and robust safeguarding policies (see section 10 of the Safeguarding Handbook). Partners will be required to demonstrate that they have considered safeguarding at the project proposal stage and this information is considered during the appraisal process. The reporting process enables reporting of numbers of concerns that have arisen in programme or partner organisational each reporting period. Partners will also be required to demonstrate that they have engaged in policy updates at least every three years.

Scope of the policy:

We recognise that we are working in countries and contexts where there may be huge legal and social difficulties in applying child safeguarding principles and that applying safeguarding principles can be complex and cause dilemma.

Children and adults at risk can need safeguarding due to poverty, conflict or crisis. This is distinct from those who need safeguarding due to specific acts of maltreatment. BMS is a UK based organisation working with global partners, therefore workers may need to apply the policy in ways that are culturally sensitive but without condoning acts of maltreatment that are universally described as abusive.

This policy focuses primarily on safeguarding children and adults at risk, and is part of a suite of policies which help us protect those who come into contact with us including:

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Whistleblowing policy](#)
- [Grievance policy and procedures](#)
- [Disciplinary policy & procedures](#)
- [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Bullying and Harassment policy](#)
- [Informed Consent policy](#)
- [Social Media Policy](#)
- [Serious incident Policy](#)
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion Principles

It is recognised that there can be areas of overlap with Safeguarding Policy and Bullying, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy.

These are complementary policies which work together to address and respond to inappropriate behaviours in the workplace, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for all. Where instances of bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment intersect with safeguarding concerns—such as the involvement of an adult at risk or child—these policies operate in tandem to ensure that complaints are handled appropriately and in line with legal and organisational standards.

Allegations involving safeguarding, bullying, or harassment will be handled by the

Safeguarding Lead and People and Culture department to ensure a thorough and appropriate response. An incident which may impact the safety and wellbeing of an individual may be managed within the context of another policy e.g. disciplinary and bullying and harassment, and this decision will be recorded with any safeguarding report that has been created, along with any safeguarding actions taken.

Concerns such as harassment or abuse directed toward a child, adult at risk, or beneficiary will always be managed in line with safeguarding procedures.

- If a reported incident involves behaviours that may constitute a safeguarding concern (e.g., harassment of an adult at risk or child, or any action that may place an individual at risk of harm), it will be assessed under both Safeguarding Policy and the Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy, and if there are safeguarding concerns will be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Lead for further action.
- If a complaint falls under both policies, a coordinated approach will be taken, involving People and Culture and the Safeguarding Team. They will ensure that the organisation's response aligns with both safeguarding principles and workplace fairness
- Staff will be trained on the overlap between these policies, including:
 - Recognising safeguarding concerns in the context of bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment.
 - Knowing how and when to escalate concerns under the Safeguarding Policy.
 - Understanding their responsibilities to create a safe and respectful workplace.

Likewise any safeguarding-related breaches investigated using Disciplinary Policy will be handled in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy, ensuring a coordinated approach to addressing any concerns involving vulnerable individuals. Reports of safeguarding breaches will be escalated immediately to the Safeguarding Team, who will collaborate with People and Culture to determine the appropriate disciplinary actions. Where applicable, external authorities will be notified in line with legal requirements and guidance

BMS recognises that safeguarding people is not reliant only on policy and procedures, rather it is a culture which includes valuing each individual. As such, BMS's cross-cutting themes of Gender Justice and Creation Stewardship contribute to safeguarding those we come into contact with.

This policy applies to the work undertaken by BMS personnel, volunteers and representatives and some of the practical guidance is not intended to prescribe how a parent might manage their own children.

Compliance with the policy:

- The safeguarding lead works with the safeguarding team and Department for People and Culture to monitor compliance and review any action plans. The safeguarding lead also works with directors and trustees to ensure that the policy is implemented across the organisation.
- If a lack of compliance is noted by any individual it must be reported to the safeguarding lead immediately.
- Corporate risk in relation to safeguarding is monitored within the corporate risk register.
- Procedures are reviewed/adapted/revised in light of any safeguarding reports/incidents that have taken place.
- All BMS staff, trustees, volunteers and anyone else representing BMS are expected to read and acknowledge this policy, and a copy of the acknowledgement should be kept on their record.

1.2 Definition of a child:

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, a child is “any person under the age of 18 years”.

1.3 Definition of an adult at risk (sometimes referred to as a vulnerable adult):

An adult is a person over the age of 18. Any adult may at some time be unable to take care of or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment, or exploitation. Some adults may be more at risk because of a disability, mental function, age or illness. Some adults become at risk because of the circumstances they find themselves in, such as a traumatic event or natural disaster, or becoming dependant on aid or help. Or they may be at risk because of the nature of the power dynamics within a family or community or their status within that hierarchy.

1.4 Recruitment

BMS seeks to develop a culture where children and adults at risk feel safe and supported and therefore follows safer recruitment practices, which are summarised below:

- BMS safeguarding commitments must be displayed on the website.
- The safeguarding risks of each role (whether voluntary or paid) must be identified.
- Safer recruitment questions relevant to each role must be asked at each interview.
- A range of procedures and actions are taken in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers and must be completed before the employment or role is commenced. This includes references, appropriate DBS checks, checks under the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, and police checks for overseas workers. Convictions and information on DBS certificates and police checks do not necessarily disqualify someone from a role as it depends on the individual circumstances of each case, but each case will be assessed individually and confidentially by the recruiter and safeguarding lead.
- DBS checks are repeated every three years for UK resident staff and volunteers whose roles demand it. BMS will request a police check in the country of residence for staff and volunteers who are not in UK roles every three years. UK nationals (or those who have lived in the UK) working overseas with vulnerable groups must apply for an international child protection certificate every 3 years. Safeguarding information gathered as part of the recruitment process will be handled as set out in the BMS Privacy Notice, which is available to employees on 'SharePoint' or the BMS website.
- BMS follows an equal opportunities policy and uses DBS checks only when relevant to assess suitability for positions of trust and positions where work includes regulated activities.

1.5 Training

In order for BMS to meet its safeguarding commitments it is essential that all staff, volunteers and representatives are clear about the expectations BMS has of them and feel confident to report any concerns. They also need the opportunity to explore safe culture within BMS.

All people representing BMS must read and accept the code of conduct and safeguarding policy.

STAFF:

All new staff will meet with the safeguarding lead as part of their induction.

All new staff will attend a safeguarding training session. This should be repeated every three years. As a minimum the training will provide workers with opportunities to:

- Understand what safeguarding means
- Understand related principles such as information sharing and confidentiality
- Understand what BMS has put in place to protect those it comes into contact with
- Understand what constitutes a safeguarding concern, and to recognise and respond accordingly
- Explore safeguarding issues for the context in which they live and work

In the alternating two years, staff are expected to access an annual safeguarding update according to their role, for example, safer recruitment, policy development, responding to reports, the challenges of working overseas or creating safe cultures.

VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteers will receive training appropriate to their role, and those managing volunteers should check with the safeguarding lead as to what is needed – for example church speakers will need different training compared to trustees, or those volunteering with children at an 'Expect' event. Those on the people pool will undertake an initial training on acceptance which must be repeated every three years whilst they remain active. Their training needs will be reviewed according to their assignments.

1.6 Reporting allegations or concerns of abuse or harm

Obligation to report:

It is the duty of all BMS staff, volunteers and representatives to report safeguarding concerns, allegations of abuse or breaches of related policies such as code of conduct, bullying and harassment or informed consent which may present risk of harm.

Equally any person can raise a concern or report something they have experienced or witnessed in relation to BMS activity.

Reporting Concerns:

The safety and care of the survivor or victim is paramount. On hearing of an allegation or concern, the first action is to ensure that the survivor is safe and has access to appropriate care. This might include seeking medical assistance. In the case of a serious allegation where there may be further harm to a child or adult at risk then action must be immediate to remove the potential victim(s) from the situation.

It is not the responsibility of the person reporting the concern to decide whether abuse or harm has occurred, but the concern must be passed on to the safeguarding team in a timely manner, usually within 24 hours. If an incident happens outside UK office hours and warrants immediate action, overseas personnel can use the emergency phone number to seek initial advice.

All reports will be taken seriously and can be made by any person without fear of reprisal (See the [whistleblowing policy](#)).

The need to pass on a concern arises when

- You witness or suspect any form of abuse or harm
- You receive a concern, allegation or complaint that indicates abuse or harm may have occurred
- A survivor discloses abuse or harm

Indicators of abuse can be found in section 3 of the handbook.

In addition to the mandatory reporting of abuse and harm to children and adults at risk, we strongly encourage the reporting of sexual abuse or harassment to the safeguarding team, even if the allegation does not involve a child or adult at risk. The consent of the individual affected is required unless there is risk of immediate or serious harm, however advice and guidance may be sought from the safeguarding team without disclosing names or other identifying information.

Reports are usually made to a member of the safeguarding team (see section 9 of the handbook). See section 6 of the handbook for reporting flow charts.

If there is a concern about a member of the safeguarding team it should be reported to the [Director of People and Culture](#). If the concern implicates both groups, it should be made to the [General Director](#). If the concern is believed to implicate the General Director contact the [chair of trustees](#) or safeguarding trustee.

Any safeguarding incident constitutes a serious incident therefore the serious incident policy and procedures will also be followed.

The four categories of concerns/incidents that will be reported are:

1. A concern/incident that relates directly to a BMS staff member, volunteer or representative:

BMS has a duty of care and will initiate appropriate actions or investigations.

2. A concern/incident relating to an incident where a BMS partner organisation is involved:

BMS will expect the partner to take action and follow their safeguarding policy and procedures.

3. A concern/incident relating to abuse in a community in the UK or overseas:

BMS and the Partner will not have a formal responsibility to investigate.

Concerns/incidents that happen in the UK must be reported to the appropriate statutory agency.

For overseas concerns the partner should be informed – they are expert in their community and may have some influence. It may be necessary to pass on information to the relevant local authorities if it is in the best interests of the child or adult at risk.

4. A concern/incident relating to an external organisation.

The organisation's policy and process should be followed.

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. Information that identifies individuals involved is limited to and can only be accessed by personnel with absolute need to know. The exceptions to this are where a child is at risk, where there is considered to be a high level of risk to the safety or life of an adult at risk, or where information is required by statutory agencies or law.

Response to reports of allegations or concerns:

Emails will be monitored each working day in case of a report. An initial response will be made within 24 hours of the report being received during office hours, or on the next working day when the office is closed.

On receipt of a concern or allegation a written record will be commenced by the safeguarding team member. The safeguarding team member will ask for the reporter to complete a safeguarding incident report form. This will form part of the written record. All concerns or allegations will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as appropriate.

BMS takes a survivor-centred approach which considers the following factors:

- 1. Safety:** The safety of a child is paramount. The wishes and feelings of an adult survivor are respected, unless there is a risk to life or the safety of themselves or another individual.
- 2. Confidentiality:** Survivors can choose who they tell about their experience, and information shared as a result of the report is on a need-to-know basis. However, there are exceptions where a child is at risk, an adult at risk is in danger, or where information is required by statutory agencies or law.
- 3. Non-Discrimination:** Survivors must receive equal and fair treatment regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other characteristic.
- 4. Case Management:** Records will be kept in a secure and confidential manner. Where further investigation or ongoing actions are needed, a member of the safeguarding team (usually but not exclusively the safeguarding lead) will be identified as lead for the case, they may involve other members of the safeguarding team and create a 'core group' in order to ensure robust risk assessment and identify next steps. The survivor will be kept

informed of progress (if they wish), and the next steps will be made known to the person reporting the concern as appropriate.

5. Investigations: The need for investigation will be discerned by the safeguarding team; where necessary, referrals will then be made to the local authority, local authority designated officer or the police. An independent investigation may also take place. Investigations continue to recognise the rights and duty of care to all involved including the survivor, complainant, witnesses and subject of the complaint.

6. Accountability: BMS will refer to appropriate policy to ensure that any necessary administrative action, disciplinary action or referral to relevant authorities is considered. If necessary, a safeguarding report may be made to other organisations involved or implicated. A 'core group' from the safeguarding team is established to ensure impartiality, transparency and accountability. The trustee responsible for safeguarding is informed when a concern is received (whilst maintaining confidentiality of identity etc) and takes responsibility for deciding whether to report to the charity commission. The safeguarding lead will also inform our insurers of any safeguarding incidents as per insurance and serious incident policy.

7. Survivor Support: A survivor of abuse needs to receive specialist services. BMS commits to referring survivors to appropriate services, these may include but are not limited to medical assistance, counselling or coaching and mentoring, either via employee services or externally (taking into account the wishes of the survivor and the country/context of the survivor).

For more detailed information about BMS response to concerns and allegations see section 7 of the handbook.

Complaints about non-recent abuse:

Non recent abuse allegations (previously referred to as 'historic') are treated in the same way as those of current abuse. BMS recognises that the pain and distress caused continues to be as real as it was at the time of the abuse. It is also important to recognise that a perpetrator who abused in the past could remain a current risk to children or adult at risk. BMS also recognises the need for survivor support and will refer to appropriate services

wherever possible (taking into account the wishes of the survivor and the country/context of the survivor).

Abuse of Trust:

'Position of Trust' is a legal term used in the UK to refer to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children (for example, teachers, doctors, care workers, sports coaches and faith group leaders).

It is against UK law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child (that is someone under the age of 18) even if they are over the age of consent (16).

The imbalance of power creates an abuse of trust.

BMS bases its best practice guidance on this law. Therefore:

- It is not acceptable for a BMS worker to form a 'romantic relationship' with a child or adult at risk.
- It is always wrong for a BMS worker to enter into a sexual relationship with a young person or adult at risk, even if that relationship is 'consensual'. The imbalance of power creates an abuse of trust.

The appropriate legal authorities will always be notified, and due process carried out if an accusation of abuse of trust is made against a BMS worker. If after due legal process and, following established disciplinary procedures, any BMS worker is found to have abused a child or adult at risk they will be summarily dismissed. In addition, BMS will have a legal duty to refer the worker to the DBS for barring consideration.

Appendix 1

Definitions of key terms used in this policy:

ABUSE

Abuse (or maltreatment) constitutes all forms of ill treatment, that result in actual or potential harm to the child or adult's health, survival, development or dignity. It occurs in the context of a relationship where one person has responsibility, trust or power over another.

Abuse can also refer to the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others, for example, the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects.

TYPES OF ABUSE:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Can happen to a child or adult at risk.

Physical abuse is defined as deliberately hurting someone and causing physical harm. It includes injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns and cuts.

It may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, or any other method of causing non-accidental harm.

Physical abuse may also happen when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

NEGLECT

Can happen to a child or adult at risk.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

SEXUAL ABUSE

This can happen to a child or adult at risk.

Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or adults at risk in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, but women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children (though consideration must be given to safeguarding procedures for a child who is a perpetrator).

SEXUAL EXPOITATION (or SEXUAL EXPOITATION AND ABUSE)

This can happen to an adult or a child.

It refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. It includes but is not limited to exchanging money, employment, goods or services for sex. This includes transactional sex regardless of the legal status of sex work in the country. It also includes any situation where sex is coerced or demanded by withholding or threatening to withhold goods or services or by blackmailing.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Sexual harassment may occur between adults of the same or opposite sex and both males and females can be victims or offenders.

Any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation. Sexual harassment may occur in or outside the workplace and during or outside working hours, including during official travel or social functions related to work. Sexual harassment is particularly serious when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident.

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Emotional/psychological abuse includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, shaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse (name calling, belittling), cyber bullying and isolation. It can happen to a child or an adult.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human Trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. Men, women and children of all ages and from all backgrounds can become victims of this crime, which occurs in every region of the world. The traffickers often use violence or fraudulent employment agencies and fake promises of education and job opportunities to trick and coerce their victims.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice of FGM is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women

BULLYING

A definition can be found in the Bullying and Harassment Policy [here](#)

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Also known as "domestic violence" or "intimate partner violence", [the UN states](#) that it can be defined as a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.

- Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic and can include psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone.
- Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender.
- It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating.
- Domestic abuse affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or class.
- Victims of domestic abuse may also include a child or other relative, or any other household member.
- Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature. Incidents are rarely isolated, and usually escalate in frequency and severity.
- Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death.
- So called 'honour violence' is also a form of domestic abuse.

FINANCIAL/MATERIAL ABUSE

Includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance and financial transactions, also the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery is defined as the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation. It is a crime in the UK under the [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) and includes holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them.

DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

Abuse based on a person's race, gender, disability, faith, sexual orientation or age, or other forms of harassment, slurs or hate crime.

ORGANISATIONAL ABUSE

Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting.

The abuse can either be a one-off incident or an ongoing culture of ill-treatment. The abuse can be due to inappropriate use of power or control, or poor professional practices.

SELF NEGLECT

Self-neglect is an extreme lack of self-care, it is sometimes associated with hoarding. Safeguarding duties may apply in the UK if the adult has care and support needs.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. There is a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. The abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a form of punishment, and superiority and elitism.

Spiritual abuse is not found in statutory definitions of abuse but is seen as a form of emotional or psychological abuse within the context of a religious or church setting. There may also be physical or sexual abuse.

More detail about the types of abuse relating to adults at risk can be found [here](#) and relating to children [here](#).

ADULT AT RISK

An adult is a person who is 18 years or older. Any adult may at some time be unable to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment, or exploitation. Some adults may be more at risk because of a disability, mental function, age or illness. Some adults become at risk because of the circumstances they find themselves in such as a traumatic event or natural disaster, becoming dependant on aid or help. Or they may be at risk because of the nature of the power dynamics within a family or community or their status within that hierarchy.

CHILD

According to the [UN Convention on the Rights of a Child](#) a child is “any person under the age of 18 years”. The definition recognises that children are particularly vulnerable and require additional safeguards to protect their rights. It should not be confused with the age limit set out in other relevant laws (for example age of sexual consent or voting age).

CONTRACTOR

Someone who works for, or provides a service on behalf of, BMS for a limited period of time, but is not an employee, for example photographers, videographers.

CORE GROUP

For the purposes of this policy a core group refers to the small group of people, which might include safeguarding team members, directors and/or relevant managers, who ensure robust practices are followed when dealing with safeguarding incidents relating to BMS.

SAFEGUARDING

Refers to the measures in place by BMS to prevent, report and respond to various forms of harm that could occur through the actions or inactions of the organisation through its activities.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

A suspicion or claim that a breach of the safeguarding policy has occurred or may be at risk of occurring. This includes disclosures by children or adults at risk.

STAFF

Refers to BMS paid employees whether situated in the UK or overseas.

SURVIVOR

This term describes someone who has experienced abuse, exploitation or harassment. A survivor can be an adult or child. Some people prefer to be called victims because they do not feel they have survived; some prefer to be called survivors as they do not like to be defined as victims. Their wishes need to be respected.

VOLUNTEER

Refers to a non-salaried person working with or representing BMS. Volunteers may be situated overseas or in the UK, they may be working with partners or representing BMS in churches or at conferences and events.