

1. Introduction

Bible Society/the Navigating Trauma Programme has adopted the following principles:

We believe that all human beings are of equal worth in the sight of God.

Therefore:

- We commit ourselves to promoting the nurture, protection, and safekeeping of everyone.
- It is the responsibility of all engaged in the process, at their level of responsibility to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse (Abuse), and to report any Abuse suspected or discovered.
- Navigating Trauma groups should be facilitated in such a way that neither participants nor facilitators are vulnerable to possible Abuse.

In order to implement these principles, the Navigating Trauma programme requires all involved, and especially facilitators, to commit to following the guidelines and procedures outlined in this document and in the Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators.

The component parts are:

- Policy Statement
- Partner Church Agreement
- Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators, as found on the Navigating Trauma website
- Procedures and guidance in this document are based on the Government's Working Together 2018 (England), Working Together to Safeguard People 2018 (Wales), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) (England), Keeping Learners Safe (Wales), Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Care Act (2014) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

For the purpose of this policy,

- participants refers to all individuals attending a Support group
- facilitators refers to those voluntarily engaged in delivering groups using the Navigating Trauma materials
- DBS refers to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the vetting scheme in England and Wales. In the case of the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, this will be the local safeguarding vetting authority.

The policy statement included in this document has been adopted following approval by the British and Foreign Bible Society (Bible Society). It will be reviewed and re-endorsed annually, and is available from the Navigating Trauma website and in written form on request.

2. Policy Statement

Navigating Trauma is a structured programme of contextual Bible-reading to explore trauma, grief and pain through Biblical narratives. Bible Society is responsible for the promotion of the overall programme in England and Wales, the training and development of facilitators and partner churches, and the development of resources and materials, with the support of the Trauma Healing Institute. Bible Society is not responsible for the recruitment of facilitators, nor the delivery of programmes by facilitators to participants. It is solely the responsibility of Partner Churches to ensure the safe recruitment of appropriate facilitators, and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of participants.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, temporary workers, volunteers, consultants, contractors, agents and subsidiaries acting for, or on behalf of, Bible Society ('associated persons'), and those acting on behalf of partner churches of Bible Society in the delivery of the Navigating Trauma programme. Every employee and associated person acting for Bible Society or a partner church is responsible for maintaining the highest standards of business conduct. Any breach of this policy may constitute a serious disciplinary, contractual and/or criminal matter. It may also cause serious damage to the reputation of Bible Society.

All employees and associated persons are required to familiarise themselves and comply with this policy, including any future updates that may be issued from time to time by Bible Society.

4. Guidelines and Procedures

4.1 Church Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

The partner churches from which facilitators originate, and through which Support groups are delivered, are expected to have in place their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in England or Designated Senior Person (DSP) in Wales in accordance with the government's Working Together 2018 (England), Working Together to Safeguard People 2018 (Wales), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) (England), Keeping Learners Safe (Wales), Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Care Act (2014), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Navigating Trauma Programme will not register facilitators who are not linked to a partner church.

4.2 Minimise Situations Where Abuse May Occur

As Support groups are delivered at prearranged and agreed locations and times, and in a group environment with at least two facilitators present, situations should not arise where a facilitator is alone with an individual participant.

Facilitators should always operate in pairs. However, if there are exceptional circumstance and it is necessary for a facilitator to be alone with a participant, i.e. where a participant leaves the group for a wellbeing break and is being checked on, the second facilitator is responsible for checking in with these individuals and either ensuring the participant returns to the group, or is sent home if that is not appropriate. No facilitator should be alone with a participant for longer than is absolutely necessary.

4.3 Bible Society's Commitment to Safeguarding

Facilitators are recruited for the Navigating Trauma Programme by partner churches across the country, not by the Navigating Trauma Programme itself or Bible Society. It is therefore the responsibility of each partner church to ensure the appropriate vetting of the facilitators it recruits (see 4.6 below). This should include an interview and references, and obtaining a clear DBS check in accordance with current DBS guidelines. The minimum requirement, based on guidance, will be a clear enhanced DBS check without barred list. The partner church should be satisfied that each individual is suitable for the Navigating Trauma Programme prior to the commencement of their role. The processes and procedures for recruiting facilitators should be documented by the partner church.

Training of facilitators is undertaken by approved Master Facilitators, either from Bible Society (British and Foreign Bible Society), other Bible societies, or the Trauma Healing Institute (part of American Bible Society). Trainee Facilitators who satisfactorily complete training are approved by mutual agreement by Bible Society and the Master Facilitators, and signed-off by the Trauma Healing Institute. They are reassessed after the delivery of initial Support groups, and are again approved by mutual agreement by Bible Society and the Master Facilitators, and signed-off by the Trauma Healing Institute as Navigating Trauma Facilitators.

This training includes focused attention on maintaining the safety and wellbeing of participants, in line with the Partner Church Agreement and Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators which a trainee facilitator must sign before attending the training. Guidance and advice on good conduct when delivering Support groups, including protecting wellbeing and referring individuals to professional bodies if appropriate, is given and included in initial and ongoing training of facilitators.

For the purposes of this Policy, a 'clear DBS check' means that the results of a DBS check reveal no information which would, in the view of the church conducting the vetting, make the individual unsuitable for the facilitator role. If, when a DBS check is carried out, the results reveal criminal history information relevant to the role of a Navigating Trauma facilitator, an assessment of the individual's suitability for the role should be carried out by the church vetting that

individual. Information revealed that is not relevant to the role of facilitator cannot be relied upon as a reason for refusing an individual for the role.

If someone from overseas applies to become a facilitator, the person making the appointment should ask the applicant to obtain criminality information (also known as a certificate of good conduct/character) from their relevant embassy/high commission (or police force). This means that in addition to the DBS check in the UK, the candidate must seek this additional check to cover the time they spent abroad. Further advice can be found on the Home Office website: [gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants).

There may be times when, at the request of another Bible society or the Trauma Healing Institute, an individual not from a Bible Society approved partner church may attend a training. This offer is open as part of Bible Society's commitment to the global community of practice, but this individual is not approved to deliver Navigating Trauma in England and Wales as part of Bible Society's programme.

4.4 Facilitators Commitment to Safeguarding

All Facilitators must sign up to follow the Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators. They are also expected to adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and relevant procedures of their partner church of origin. Every Facilitator agrees to follow this policy, the Code of Conduct and partner church's relevant local policies and procedures.

Facilitators must adhere to the Navigating Trauma Programme's commitments around serious incident reporting and safeguarding disclosures as outlined in section 4.7.

4.5 Supervision and Safeguarding

All Navigating Trauma facilitators should plan and review their delivery of the Navigating Trauma programme with the leader of the partner church to whom they are accountable, and the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP), ensuring at all times they have official approval by the church to deliver the programme. The church leader and facilitators should liaise with the wider church leadership team to ensure the wellbeing and safety of participants are maintained.

Two approved facilitators are required to always deliver Support groups, both to ensure the wellbeing of participants and themselves as facilitators.

4.6 Recruitment of Facilitators

Facilitators are not interviewed or selected for their roles by the Navigating Trauma Programme or Bible Society staff, but are required to be members of the partner church and approved for the delivery of Support groups in these churches by the respective church leaders. Recruitment to the role of Facilitator

includes vetting by individual churches. Should an applicant not wish to undergo the appropriate vetting that the partner church requires, which is entirely their choice, the application must not proceed further and must be terminated.

The recruitment and selection process listed below should be followed by all churches.

Initial Selection

Following the Initial Church Gathering to explore whether a church wishes to partner with Bible Society to deliver the Navigating Trauma programme, the church leader or the individual responsible for its pastoral or outreach ministries should identify potential facilitators from within their network based on the guidance provided at the Gathering.

DBS Check

The partner church must conduct and obtain a clear DBS check on potential facilitators in accordance with current DBS guidelines. We believe, based on guidance, that an enhanced DBS check (without barred list) will be required.

Interview or Discussion

Have a face-to-face discussion with pre-planned and clear questions to assess a person's suitability for the role as a facilitator, both in terms of their skills in listening and empathy, their aptitude for facilitating a programme of Bible reading with people affected by trauma and to identify whether there is any reason to believe they should not be working with potentially vulnerable individuals. You may want to have references as part of this recruitment process.

Training

If, during the training of new facilitators, it becomes clear that there is a concern around the suitability of an applicant to be a facilitator, that individual will not be approved and the partner church will be made aware of the circumstances behind this.

4.7 Disclosure of Abuse or Safety and Wellbeing Concerns (See Appendix)

Bible Society puts the safety of participants at the centre of the Navigating Trauma Programme. Those attending Supportgroups are likely to have experienced a traumatic event at some point in their life, and protecting their wellbeing is vital. Through the recruitment of facilitators, Bible Society will work with partner churches to ensure that, as far as possible, all facilitators are safe and well equipped to work with participants.

However, it is essential to ensure that should an incident of abuse, or concerns around safety and wellbeing be raised, that facilitators or members of partner churches, are equipped to adequately report them to the appropriate bodies.

For the purposes of this document, Bible Society describes abuse as:

a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The disclosing and reporting of abuse or safeguarding concerns varies depending on the age or vulnerability of the individual.

Children and Young People

In the event that a Navigating Trauma facilitator or member of staff at a partner church becomes aware of a concern regarding the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person (under 18) – either via a disclosure by the participant or their own observed concern/discovery of abuse – they must report it immediately to the children's social care team at their local council (found via the website gov.uk/report-child-abuse) and the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP).

If the individual believes a child is at immediate risk then the police should be called on 999, or if it is thought a crime has been committed the police should be notified on 101.

Should the facilitator or church staff member want to discuss their concerns or get advice they can call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Adults at Risk

For the purposes of the Navigating Trauma programme, Bible Society uses the NHS England Safeguarding Adults pocket guide definition of an 'adult at risk':

any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support

and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 definition of an 'adult at risk':

an adult who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

In the event that a Navigating Trauma facilitator or member of staff at a partner church becomes aware of a concern regarding the safety or wellbeing of a vulnerable adult – either via a disclosure by the participant or their own observed concern/discovery of abuse – they must report it immediately to the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP).

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) or Designated Senior Persons (DSP) will follow their church's safeguarding procedures including notification to the local Safeguarding Authority (i.e. the local council) when required.

If the individual believes a vulnerable adult is at immediate risk then the police should be called on 999, or if it is thought a crime has been committed the police should be notified on 101.

Other Circumstances

If, during the course of the Navigating Trauma Programme, a participant should disclose that they have suffered serious abuse (for example, rape, or domestic violence) and do not fit into one of the categories above, it is for them to report this to the police should they choose to. This is key to restoring survivors' sense of consent and control over their own lives, and is a core part of the respective sections of the Navigating Trauma Programme. Reporting without their consent may put them in more danger.

However, if the facilitator believes this to be an emergency, or that they themselves or someone else is in immediate danger, they should call 999 and notify the police.

Notifying Bible Society

Bible Society has a legal responsibility to notify the Charity Commission in the event of a serious incident, defined as:

An adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- harm to Bible Society's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with Bible Society through our work
- loss of Bible Society's money or assets
- damage to Bible Society's property
- harm to Bible Society's work or reputation.

Significant means significant in the context of Bible Society, taking account of its staff, operations, finances and/or reputation.

Therefore it may be appropriate to report abuse or concerns with regard to safety or wellbeing to Bible Society's Human Resources Manager. As part of its statutory obligations, Bible Society may then be required to report this to the police, Charity Commission, or other statutory organisations.

Spiritual Abuse

Whilst not a recognised statutory definition of abuse, we understand that Spiritual Abuse could be a concern for facilitators, partner churches, and Navigating Trauma participants.

Spiritual Abuse can be defined as:

a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive

and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. However, holding a theological position is not in itself inherently spiritually abusive, but misuse of scripture, applied theology and doctrine is often a component of spiritually abusive behaviour.

4.8 Concerns About Facilitators (See Appendix)

Should any member of Bible Society, or a facilitator, or staff of a partner church become aware of a concern regarding a facilitator's suitability to continue facilitating the Navigating Trauma Programme because of risks posed to the safety and wellbeing of participants, they should immediately report their concern to the relevant Church or Denominational Safeguarding Officer, the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP), and notify the Human Resources Manager at Bible Society.

If the individual believes a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk then the police should be called on 999, or if it is thought a crime has been committed the police should be notified on 101.

Safeguarding Officers, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) or Designated Senior Persons (DSP) will follow their church's safeguarding procedures including notification to the local Safeguarding Authority when required.

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this policy prevents a member of Bible Society staff or a facilitator reporting concerns regarding another facilitator's suitability to deliver the Navigating Trauma Programme. They should report their concerns immediately to the relevant Church or Denominational Safeguarding Officer, the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP), and notify the Human Resources Manager at Bible Society.

Safeguarding Officers will follow their church's safeguarding procedures including notification to the local Safeguarding Authority when required.

Bible Society may require a temporary suspension of a facilitator from the Navigating Trauma Programme in the interests of safety, so it is imperative that the Bible Society Human Resources Manager is notified immediately. If it is appropriate for the Support groups to continue, Bible Society can support the partner church in finding another facilitator to cover.

5. Good Practice Commitment

All facilitators agree to:

- present the materials and deliver sessions in a way that is appropriate for the audience, whilst sticking to the content of the programme as presented in the Navigating Trauma resources and using these materials without addition or improvisation - following the guidelines in the Navigating Trauma books

- show respect and sensitivity to those participating in Support groups, who may come from different denominational or theological backgrounds, or hold no faith
- notify Bible Society and their church leader of every Support group taking place
- deliver Support groups in an appropriate location, such as a space within a church or community venue, and not a private residence
- fulfil the relevant safeguarding requirements i.e. follow this policy any related procedures
- always work in pairs during Support groups
- sign and follow Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators
- uphold the copyright of the Navigating Trauma materials.

6. Risk Management

Each facilitator should have a copy of the Navigating Trauma Handbook and the Starter Facilitator Handbook which contains the guidance on good practice, as well as the Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators.

Bible Society will update facilitators of changes to this Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures, and partner churches must similarly notify facilitators of any changes to their safeguarding policies or procedures. Facilitators should, where possible, attend annual local facilitator gatherings which will include a safeguarding update. Additionally, church leaders should ensure that safeguarding matters, this Policy, any relevant procedures and the Code of Conduct for Navigating Trauma Facilitators are discussed with their leadership teams and with their facilitators once a year. This will ensure everyone is up to date and aware of how to handle any concerns about safeguarding.

New facilitators must attend formal training with the Navigating Trauma Programme and be signed off via the agreed process. We recommend that facilitators attend their denomination's Safeguarding training and a session with the church's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Designated Senior Person (DSP).

7. Reporting Suspected Abuse

Bible Society depends on its employees and facilitators to ensure that the highest standards of conduct are maintained in all its dealings. Employees and facilitators are requested to assist Bible Society and to remain vigilant in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse or wellbeing concerns.

Employees and facilitators should report any concerns that they may have regarding the suspected abuse or wellbeing concerns using the procedures in sections 4.7 and 4.8 of this policy (see also attached Appendix).

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the

words used, times and dates noted, along with concerns, discussions and decisions made and reasons for those decisions should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

If action is not being taken by the local Safeguarding Authority or church, and Bible Society reasonably considers it is appropriate, an investigation will be carried out, in the interests of safety and wellbeing, following Bible Society's internal procedure.

8. Action by Bible Society

Bible Society will fully investigate any instances of alleged or suspected abuse or safeguarding issues by its employees and, to the extent possible will fully investigate any instances of alleged or suspected abuse by its associated persons. Employees and associated persons suspected of abuse or safeguarding issues may be suspended from their duties, where necessary, while the investigation is being carried out. Bible Society may invoke its disciplinary procedures where an employee is suspected of abuse, and proven allegations may result in a finding of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal. Facilitators are church volunteers and, as such, are not subject to Bible Society's disciplinary policies which are applicable to its employees only. However, as registered volunteers with the Society, facilitators may be asked to step down from their role in the case of suspected abuse or safeguarding issues.

Bible Society reserves the right to terminate without notice its relationship with any person, and their associated partner church, where it deems them unsuitable to act for or on its behalf by reason of their involvement in abuse or safeguarding issues.

Bible Society may also report any alleged or proven abuse to the relevant authorities, including the police. Bible Society will provide all necessary assistance to the relevant authorities in relation to any subsequent investigation.

Bible Society will report any concerns concerning alleged abuse or safeguarding issues by an employee to the Local Authority Designated Officer and comply with Local Safeguarding Children Board and adult safeguarding policies and procedures, including statutory investigations.

9. Review of Procedures and Training

Bible Society's Human Resources Department will monitor and review the implementation of this policy and related procedures annually. Employees and those working for, or on behalf of, Bible Society are encouraged to contact Human Resources with any suggestions, comments or feedback that they may have on how these procedures may be improved.

Bible Society reserves the right to amend and update this policy as required. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy does not form part of employees' contracts of employment.