

BETH SHMUEL SYNAGOGUE

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Charity number: **251044**

Synagogue address: **169-171 Golders Green Rd, London NW119BY**

Main contact: **Rabbi Moishe Halpern**

Email: **info@beisshmuel.org**

Phone: **020 8458 7511**

This policy was first adopted / last reviewed on 30/08/2024 This policy should be reviewed every 12 months in line with best practice standards and Local Authority requirements, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation and guidance.

Context

BETH SHMUEL SYNAGOGUE is an independent charity registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales. The Synagogue has a formal membership and is led by Trustees, the Elders, and the Rabbi.

The Synagogue was established in 1967. Our beliefs are outlined in our Statement of Faith which is available upon request and is run in accordance with our constitution which is available upon request.

The Synagogue does not provide any activities specifically for children, young people, or for adults at risk of abuse. However, we recognise that during the course of our ministry we may come into contact with vulnerable people. The synagogue conducts regular prayer sessions each day, alongside study sessions and evening lectures. Children may attend prayer sessions but they should be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Our responsibilities

We recognise that both as a charity and as Jews, we have a responsibility to:

- Protect and promote the wellbeing of those who attend the Synagogue; paying particular attention to those who may be more vulnerable than others.
- Ensure that we have suitable systems and processes in place to manage safeguarding risks, including the appointment of a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Ensure that those who act on our behalf are competent and safe to do so.
- Report any safeguarding concerns that meet the threshold to the appropriate statutory services as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours of becoming aware of the concern. Where immediate action is required to ensure safety, an urgent report to the Police (999) or the appropriate Social Services department will be made without delay. If we are unsure whether a statutory threshold has been met, we will seek advice from either the relevant statutory services.
- Ensure that our conduct and practice is accountable and transparent and that we care well for those to whom we minister.
- Ensure that if problems occur or dissatisfaction is expressed, we examine these in an impartial and careful way in accordance with this Policy, and manage any conflict of interest effectively.

Our commitments

- We will treat all who engage with the Synagogue through its ministries with courtesy and respect and will seek to uphold their inherent dignity and worth.
- We will seek to support and care well for anyone who discloses to us that they have been a victim of abuse or neglect and report this to statutory services in line with local procedures where required.
- We will listen well to any concerns, complaints, or other expressions of dissatisfaction and to respond in a proportionate, impartial, transparent, and accountable manner.
- We will carefully examine any allegations made or concerns raised about any member or leader and respond appropriately.
- We will ensure that our trustees, staff and volunteers are competent to fulfil their roles and the legal duties associated with safeguarding.

Governance, Oversight and Management of Safeguarding

The trustees will include a statement on safeguarding in their annual return as required by the Charity

Commission and are ultimately responsible for safeguarding and for ensuring that volunteers are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be trained in the role and will update their safeguarding training every two years in line with best practice standards and Local Authority requirements. The trustees will ensure that those who act on behalf of the Synagogue are competent and appropriately trained.

The Beth Shmuel Synagogue Committee is responsible for managing the day-to-day running of the Synagogue.

Mark (Mendy) Spitzer of the Committee is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and should be the principal contact for Safeguarding concerns. The DSL reports directly to the trustees and is responsible for:

- Ensuring that anyone working on behalf of the Beth Shmuel Synagogue is made aware of this Safeguarding Policy and associated policies.
- Arranging for the board of trustees to review this Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis or (if sooner) when there are material changes to the safeguarding legislation
- Ensuring that the Beth Shmuel Synagogue follows safe recruitment practices that are appropriate to the role and the level of risk
- Arranging safeguarding training for trustees, staff and volunteers on induction and at regular intervals
- Working to promote a culture of listening to people and encouraging people to speak up
- Auditing and reviewing compliance with this Safeguarding Policy on a regular basis
- Acting as a point of contact within the Beth Shmuel Synagogue for safeguarding questions, concerns or complaints
- Ensuring that safeguarding concerns are investigated appropriately and in line with this Policy
- Maintaining a record of all safeguarding incidents, concerns, reports and referrals
- Maintaining contact details of relevant local safeguarding services, police and health services
- Liaising with external stakeholders on safeguarding issues.

Please see the “Handling safeguarding concerns” section below for further details.

Any allegations that may require a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission will be passed to the trustees as a matter of urgency and certainly within 48 hours of the matter being reported. The Trustees will file the Serious Incident Report with the Charity Commission in accordance with their legal responsibilities. If the Trustees require advice or support in this duty, they will seek such from suitably qualified and experienced sources.

Handling safeguarding concerns

We use the term safeguarding to refer to the steps that we take to protect people from the risk of harm or abuse that might arise when they come into contact with the Beth Shmuel Synagogue.

Safeguarding risks can take many different forms and we have listed some examples below. This list is not exhaustive and it is important to recognise that any action or inaction by another person that causes a violation of a person’s human and civil rights is a safeguarding issue, whether deliberate or unknowing, and whether contained in a single act or repeated acts.

Safeguarding risks you must be alert to:

- **Sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation** – including indecent exposure, exposure to pornographic material, sexual teasing or innuendo, and inappropriate touching
- **Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, pushing, restraining, burning or scalding or otherwise causing physical harm
- **Emotional or psychological abuse** – including threatening to hurt or abandon, humiliating, blaming, controlling, overprotecting, isolating, intimidating or harassing
- **Bullying or harassment** – including cyber bullying, harassment, or abuse
- **Discriminatory abuse on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010** – abuse that is related a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- **Neglect and negligent treatment** – including withholding medication, food or shelter, ignoring medical, physical or emotional needs
- **Commercial or financial exploitation** – including stealing, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Misuse of spiritual authority or power** – This can take the form of the all the abuses listed above. Furthermore, all forms of abuse have the potential to cause damage to the individual's emergent spirituality. Holding a spiritual position or role involves differing power relationships and imbalances and these need to be recognised to respect the autonomy or rights of the individual.

If you have any concerns that someone may be experiencing, has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, abuse or exploitation you should make a report to the DSL without delay. You should report safeguarding concerns, even if your concern relates to an incident that occurred some time ago.

If you witness a safeguarding incident, or if an incident has just taken place, and you believe someone is at imminent risk of significant harm, you should call the emergency services by ringing 999 and then report the matter following the process below.

If someone raises a safeguarding concern with you, you should:

- Listen;
- Empathise with the person making the report;
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why;
- repeat what you have been told to check your understanding;
- reassure the person making the report that the Beth Shmuel Synagogue will treat all safeguarding reports as confidential and that information will only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis; and
- (if the person receiving the report is not the DSL) make a report to the DSL without delay.

When you make a report, it is helpful if you can provide details of your concerns including the name(s) of the people involved, a description of each incident and the dates, times and location of each incident.

The DSL is Mark (Mendy) Spitzer.

They can be contacted by phone on 07980 011 228 or email at mark@parkmeadestates.co.uk.

If the concern involves the DSL, or if the DSL is unavailable, the report should be made to Solomon

(Shloime) Mozes at smozes@hotmail.co.uk.

The details of the concern will be clearly and accurately recorded and stored securely. The Beth Shmuel Synagogue will treat all safeguarding reports as confidential and information will only be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis. This may include sharing information with Elders and trustees. Anyone who makes a report under this procedure will be protected against negative repercussions as a result of raising a safeguarding concern.

The DSL will ascertain whether any action needs to be taken. If required, support and advice will be sought from the relevant statutory services. The DSL will make any necessary referrals according to local procedures. This could include:

- Carrying out an internal investigation – when appointing someone to carry out the investigation, the DSL will take account of relevant experience, skills, geographical, cultural, linguistic and legal considerations as well as potential conflicts of interest or loyalty. Support and resources from external providers may be sought;
- Taking action under the Code of Conduct or Volunteer Code of Conduct;
- Bringing employment or voluntary roles to an end;
- Termination of partnership agreements or other relationships with third parties; or
- Making a report to external agencies (see below).

In reaching this decision, the DSL will review all of the available information and, if necessary, discuss the matter further with the person who reported the concern. The DSL will cooperate with statutory services and provide the link between the Synagogue and those professionals involved in responding to the situation. Records of all discussions, advice sought, decisions made, and actions taken will be retained in the confidential file.

Safer Recruitment

The Synagogue will ensure that its staff and volunteers are DBS checked in accordance with national guidance.

Although the Synagogue does not engage in regulated activity with either children or adults, reasonable and proportionate assessment of the suitability and competence of staff and volunteers will be made and decisions recorded. The Synagogue will provide training for formal roles where required. Volunteers will be required to comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct and all visitors to the Synagogue will be required to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Handling Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Allegations against staff or volunteers will be passed to the DSL.

Upon receipt of an allegation, advice will be sought to ascertain whether a statutory threshold for reporting has been reached:

If a statutory threshold has been reached, the matter will be handed to the responsible statutory authority and the Synagogue will fully cooperate with the process of investigating the allegation.

If the person handling the allegation on behalf of the Synagogue is unsure whether the statutory threshold has been met, they will consult with either the statutory services or with Christian

Safeguarding Services to establish this.

If the statutory threshold has not been met, a proportionate response will be developed, and implemented. Where necessary (including for the avoidance of conflict of interest) advice and support will be sought from Christian Safeguarding Services, who will support in developing a plan to address the concerns raised.

Appendix 1: Key Contact Details

The Synagogue's DSL is Mark Spitzer.

They can be contacted on 07980 011 228 or email at mark@parkmeadestates.co.uk

The Synagogue's Safeguarding Trustee is Solomon Mozes.

They can be contacted by email at smozes@hotmail.co.uk.

The Local Authority is BARNET COUNCIL

They can be contacted on 020 8359 2000 or email at socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk

Childrens Social Care can be contacted on 020 8359 2000 or email at email at socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk

Adult Social Care can be contacted on 020 8359 5000 or email at socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk