

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The effectiveness of the current definition of ‘regulated activity’ with children for faith communities in England and Wales.

Inquiry by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Safeguarding in Faith Communities.

1. Background

1.1 This report has been undertaken to examine strengths and risks in the understanding and application of the current definition of ‘regulated activity’ (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) in England and Wales.

1.2 This Terms of Reference document sets out the scope, objectives, and methodology for undertaking the inquiry.

1.3 This inquiry is being undertaken by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Safeguarding in Faith Communities.

2. Purpose and Objectives

2.1 The purpose of the inquiry report is to:

- Assess the understanding and application of definition of ‘regulated activity’ for faith communities and organisations.
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas of risk related to the definition of ‘regulated activity’ for faith communities and organisations.
- Provide findings and recommendations, as appropriate.

2.2 The report shall address, but not be limited to, the following key questions:

- To what extent is there a shared and consistent understanding and application of the definition of ‘regulated activity’ across faith communities and organisations?
- What are the strengths of the current definition of ‘regulated activity’ in the context of faith communities and organisations?

- What complexities and loopholes arise from the application of the current definition of ‘regulated activity’ in the context of faith communities and organisations?
- What are the associated risks of the current definition of ‘regulated activities’ to faith communities and organisations?
- What are the implications of these associated risks for safeguarding practices and promoting safe environments for faith communities and organisations?
- What would strengthen the current definition of ‘regulated activity’ and understanding and application of the definition in practice for faith communities and organisations?

3. Scope of the Inquiry

3.1 Matters Included

The inquiry shall examine:

- The definition of ‘regulated activity’ in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) in England and Wales
- The impact of this definition on safeguarding in faith communities and organisations

3.2 Time Period Covered

The inquiry shall cover the period from April 2026 to March 2027, unless otherwise required.

3.3 Stakeholders

The inquiry may involve consultation with:

- Relevant government departments and agencies
- Affected stakeholders
- Subject matter experts
- Members of the public - Victims and Survivors (where appropriate)

3.4 Matters Excluded

The inquiry shall not include:

- Considerations for Scotland and Northern Ireland (as this sits outside the current scope)
- The definition of regulated activity for adults

- Considerations for additional communities and organisations (that sit outside of faith communities and organisations)

4. Methodology

4.1 The inquiry shall be conducted using appropriate and proportionate methods, which may include:

- Review of relevant legislation and reports
- Questionnaires
- Stakeholder written submissions
- Public hearings and interviews

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Co-Chairs

Co-Chairs shall:

- Chair the hearings
- Launch the inquiry
- Present at the All-Party Parliamentary Group and parliamentary launch event on the inquiry's findings and recommendations.

5.2 Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- Coordinate the questionnaires, written submissions and hearings
- Maintain accurate records of hearings and written evidence
- Provide support to the Co-Chairs for the hearings.
- Prepare and submit the final report

6. Output

6.1 The inquiry shall produce:

- A Final Report containing:
 - Executive Summary

- Background and Context
- Scope and Methodology
- The Evidence – written and oral
- Findings
- Conclusions and Recommendations

7. Timeline

- Commencement Date: 14th of April 2026
- Submission of Final Report: March 2027

8. Approval

Approved by:

Name: Ruth Jones MP

Title: Co-Chair of APPG

Role: The Rt. Rev Joanne Grenfell

Date: Co-Chair of the APPG