



*Promoting* Safeguarding  
*Preventing* Abuse  
*Protecting* The Vulnerable

# ***Safeguarding Policy Children & Adults***

..... *Church*

*Southern Synod*

July 2013

## Introduction

..... Church agrees that children, young people and adults have a right to live in a way that does not cause them harm or impede their human rights. We therefore acknowledge their right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. We consider that, in accordance with legislation, the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by all at ..... Church.

We will organise activities in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to children and adults.

We will follow a safer selection process for the appointment of people to work with children or adults.

We are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and adults.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the Police and Social Care if necessary, either Adult or Children's.

We will co-operate with the Police, Children's and Adult's Services in any investigation, will follow multi agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed. They can be contacted as detailed below (*please insert details*)

Name .....

Contact phone number .....

Email address .....

## **Aim and purpose of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting the vulnerable, both children and adults. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action following the raising of safeguarding concerns involving children and adults within our Church, or those who attend our activities and events.

## **Who this policy applies to**

This policy applies to those who attend our Church/place of worship, our trustees, staff (both paid and volunteer) and those who hire our building. It is approved and endorsed by the Elders.

Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy, and our procedures.

Children refers to those under the age of 18 years.

## **Duty of care and confidentiality**

We have a duty of care to beneficiaries of the charity, either adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk.

## **Preventing abuse**

Activities will be organised in accordance with URC good practice guidelines so as to promote a safe environment and minimise opportunities for harm. Risk assessment will be carried out, appropriate consent forms will be used for activities with children and young people, appropriate records will be kept (see URC Record Keeping policy for further details), and adequate insurance will be in place for each event.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers and will ensure that these procedures are followed, which include

- Asking applicants to complete an application form
- Providing workers with role/job descriptions and person specifications
- Obtaining Disclosure and barring checks where legally entitled to do so
- Taking up two references (not family) and
- Interviewing candidates

Training in safeguarding will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision in their role.

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers work within a code of conduct and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or termination of working/volunteering with us.

If we become aware of someone known to have harmed children or adults in our congregation, we will inform the Synod Safeguarding personnel and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory agencies to put in place a plan to minimise the risk of harm to children and adults

Organisations wishing to hire our building for activities with children or adults must confirm in writing that they will follow the principles of this safeguarding policy as a condition of the letting agreement.

### **What are we protecting from?**

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. A copy of the definitions relating to children is attached to this policy at Appendix 1. The definitions of abuse in relation to adults is attached as Appendix 2

### **How to recognise abuse**

It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. A list of such possible signs and symptoms in relation to children is attached at Appendix 3 and in relation to Adults at Appendix 4. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories.

It is essential to note that these are only **indicators** of **possible** abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for any of these signs and/or behaviour. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for a child or adult's behaviour.

### **What to do if there is an allegation**

If a child, young person or adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret.

- Inform your Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, refer to the deputy or to Synod safeguarding personnel )
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.

### **Procedure in the event of concern**

If there is an immediate threat of harm we will contact the Police.

Where it is judged that there is no immediate threat of harm the following will occur:-

- The concern will be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory agencies.
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix 5. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory agencies if a referral is made.
- The person about whom the allegation is may not be informed by anyone in the Church if it is judged that to do so would place a child or vulnerable adult at increased risk.

### **Who to contact in the case of a Child**

*Please insert local contact details for your Children's Social Care Department, including out of hours number*

### **Who to contact in the case of a Vulnerable Adult**

*Please insert local contact details for your Adult Social Care Department, including out of hours number*

### **If the allegation is regarding a member of staff or volunteer**

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted. A decision will be taken about when to inform the member of staff or volunteer. The timing and method will be discussed and agreed with the LADO.

*Please insert local contact details for your LADO*

### **If someone in the church is alleged or known to have harmed children or adults**

We will inform one of the Synod Safeguarding personnel, so that they can offer advice and support.

Synod Safeguarding Officer:

Currently vacant

Synod Safeguarding link person(s) - children:

Redv Roger Jones    Tel. 020 8640 4053                      Email    jones.ra@btinternet.com

Synod Safeguarding link person(s) - adults:

Revd Colin Telfer    Tel. 01843 448705                      Email    colintelfer@uwclub.net

Revd Hilary Nabarro    Tel. 01303 268621                      Email    hnabarro@yahoo.com

### **Complaints**

Should anyone have any concerns or complaints please contact *(please insert name of person and telephone number e.g. minister or church secretary)*

If would be helpful to have complaints in writing as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing complaints will be acted upon.

Any written complaint will be responded to within 10 days.

### **Review**

The Elders will review this policy annually.