

Trinity United Reformed Church
Station Road, Upminster, Essex. RM14 2SJ

Ministers: Rev. Brian Buschkill

Elder: Dr Adam Woodgate

Safeguarding Policy

This document is the main Safeguarding Policy for Trinity United Reformed Church, Upminster. It is based on 'Good Practice 6' which is the United Reformed Church guidance on local church policy. For the full national advice document please see :

<https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding>

'Good Practice 6 - Safeguarding for everyone' – October 2023

This local church document, based on P1 : Template for local church safeguarding policy, incorporates the following relevant additional documents :

- S1 : The role of a Church Safeguarding Coordinator (*Page 6*)
- S2 : URC Training Matrix (*Page 8*)
- S3 : Roles eligible for DBS check within the URC (*Page 10*)
- C1 : Code of conduct for working with children (under 18s) (*Page 13*)
- C2 : Code of conduct for working with adults (over 18s) (*Page 15*)
- F1 : Safeguarding concern form (*Page 18*)
- F2 : Self declaration form (*Page 21*)
- P2 : Template safeguarding policy statements for local churches (*Page 25*)
- P5 : Local church safeguarding checklist (*Page 26*)
- P6 : Handling, use, retention and disposal of DBS certificates policy (*Page 28*)
- D2 : Suggested safeguarding wording for websites (*Page 30*)

Further additional documents, which may only be relevant to local church activities occasionally, can be found at the website above and listed at end of this document (*Page 31*). In addition :

SA6 – Safeguarding clauses for letting agreements – is incorporated into the separate Hall Hire Agreement document.

And following documents to be held and circulated with this policy and displayed on notice boards in building (Sanctuary area and link area) :

- D1 : Model church safeguarding poster (local version, to be displayed alongside P2 policy statement).
- D3 : Feel Safe poster (local version).

Responsible Elder i/c Policies – Dr Adam Woodgate

Church Safeguarding Co-Ordinators – Mrs Jackie Woodgate & Mrs Christine Hewitt

This policy should be reviewed and agreed yearly by the Elders Meeting and Church Meeting.

Safeguarding Policy Version / Review History

Version	Description of Changes	Elders Meeting review date	Church Meeting review date
SP Draft	New Document – GP6 Review	8/10/2024	20/10/2024
SP Final	New Document Final		
SP Final			
SP Final			
SP Final			

1. Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that protecting people from abuse, harm or neglect is central to our culture. It provides procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised.

Who this policy applies to

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Elders and applies to:

- All members of our church
- All those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- Our Trustees and Elders
- Paid staff (both internal and external eg contractors or consultants)
- Volunteers.

Principles underpinning the policy

- Our theology and values
- Our commitment to put the welfare of children and adults at risk first
- A willingness to be open and listen
- A commitment to comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

Definitions

The term 'children' refers to those under the age of 18 years.

The term 'adult at risk' refers to any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, are permanently, or for time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of the church, whether children or adults. We will always maintain confidentiality, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm or abuse.

2. Creating a safer culture

We are committed to creating a safer culture in our church which will help us to prevent harm from occurring and provide an environment in which all can flourish.

In line with Chapter two of Good Practice 6, we will:

- Appoint a Church Safeguarding Coordinator and ensure contact details are available for anyone to report a concern
- Have a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually and updated when necessary
- Practice safer recruitment procedures for paid and volunteer roles
- Ensure all those working with children and/or adults at risk are given copies of relevant Codes of Conduct
- Follow the requirements of the training framework
- Comply with legal requirements in respect of data protection
- Complete the Annual Church Safeguarding Return
- Ensure safeguarding is a regular agenda item for church and Elders' meetings.

3. Ensuring safer activities

Whilst it is not possible to guard against every eventuality, we are committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for activities both on and off church premises.

In line with Chapter three of Good Practice 6, we will:

- Ensure appropriate insurance is in place for buildings and activities
- Consider the implications of data protection and health and safety requirements for specific activities
- Carry out risk assessments for relevant activities or events
- Ensure adequate staffing for activities and that leaders have suitable training, are aware of relevant guidance and agree to follow relevant Codes of Conduct
- Ensure the hirer's agreement is in place for other organisations using church premises
- Seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer for complex or sensitive risks.

4. Recognising and responding to concerns

We acknowledge that, although promoting Safer Culture and Safer Activities will help to protect all those in contact with the church, some concerns will inevitably arise and we are committed to responding well in such circumstances.

In line with Chapter four of Good Practice 6, we will:

- Promote awareness of different kinds of abuse, other vulnerabilities and types of safeguarding concern
- Seek to create a 'listening culture' and help people develop listening skills to respond appropriately in situations where sensitive information is disclosed
- Inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer as a minimum of any situations where involvement from statutory services is/may be required
- Share information with statutory services as appropriate and co-operate with them during any investigations
- Report any serious safeguarding incident to the Charity Commission and notify the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

5. Managing allegations and people who may pose a risk to others

Where allegations are made against individuals within the Church, we are committed to following all required investigative and regulatory procedures. We will work in collaboration with the Synod, wider Church staff, statutory agencies and other relevant organisations.

In line with Chapter five of Good Practice 6, we will:

- Co-operate fully with any investigative or disciplinary procedures
- Inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer immediately on becoming aware of anyone in the church who may present a risk to others
- Work with the Synod Safeguarding Officer and contribute relevant information for risk assessments
- Alert the Synod Safeguarding Officer or statutory agencies to known breaches of a safeguarding agreement.

6. Supporting victims and survivors

The key principle underpinning our policy and practice in this area is that all those who have experienced abuse, whether recently or in the past 'will be listened to and offered the pastoral care and support they deem appropriate and relevant, irrespective of type of abuse, context, or when this occurred' (General Assembly policy statement 2021).

In line with Chapter six of Good Practice 6, we will:

- Recognise that the Elders' meeting has responsibility for provision of pastoral care
- Be aware of local support services that people can be referred or directed to
- Ensure those in relevant roles attend appropriate training
- Seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer about provision of appropriate support when necessary.

7. Key contacts

Church Safeguarding Coordinator

Name and contact details: Mrs Jackie Woodgate

Mobile : 07711948056 e-mail via : trinity.urb.upminster.hall.lets@gmail.com

Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator

Name and contact details: Mrs Christine Hewitt

Mobile : 07906753465 e-mail : chris.hewitt42@ntlworld.com

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Name and contact details: Belinda Herbert

Mobile : 07716640596 e-mail : safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

URC Safeguarding Office (This should only be used if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Office)

Email: safeguarding@urc.org.uk

Local statutory services: Children

Statutory contact in the case of a child

Havering Children's Social Care
01708 433222 (Mon-Fri 0900hrs-1700hrs)
01708 433999 (out of hours)

Local statutory services: Adults

Statutory contact in the case of an adult at risk

Havering Adult's Social Services
01708 433550 (Mon-Fri 0900hrs-1700hrs)
01708 433999 (out of hours)

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, updated as required and adopted by the church meeting.

Date of most recent review: 24/10/2024

Date of next review: October 2025

Signed by: Dr Adam Woodgate

(On behalf of the Trinity URC, Upminster Church Elders)

9. Details of other organisations and support services

Childline

A free 24-hour support and counselling service for children and young people up to age 19:
www.childline.org.uk Freephone helpline for children: 0800 1111

NSPCC

Providing support and advice for keeping children safe from harm and abuse:
www.nspcc.org.uk Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Age UK

Support and advice services for older people: www.ageuk.org.uk
Advice Line: 0800 678 1602

See Resource L1 : Contact details for relevant organisations for other organisations at :
<https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/>

The role of a Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC)

(Good Practice 6 – Supplementary Information – S1)

Context

We believe that children and adults at risk deserve the best possible care that the Church can provide and that the Church should be a safe place for everyone involved. We recognise and give thanks for the time and devotion given by anyone carrying out this role.

Purpose of the role

- To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church
- To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues
- To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church.

Responsibilities

- To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church
 - To familiarise themselves with church policies and procedures and URC good practice guidance in safeguarding and to keep abreast of any changes and developments
 - To ensure that church policies and procedures are reviewed annually, kept up to date, and are fit for purpose
 - To ensure that Elders and others in the church understand church safeguarding policies and procedures, including URC guidance and Charity Commission responsibilities
 - To collaborate with the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator (when there is one), the minister, and the Synod Safeguarding Officer on all matters around safeguarding
 - To act as the DBS / Disclosure Scotland verifier and / or liaise closely with other designated verifiers in the church
 - To ensure safer recruitment practices are operated in the recruitment of all workers
 - (both volunteers and paid) including, but not exclusively, ensuring that the relevant workers have up to date DBS / Disclosure Scotland checks.
 - To follow the measures set out in the Hirer's agreement when any church premises are let to an external organisation, informal group or individual
 - To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues
 - To be a named person that children / adults at risk, church members and outside agencies can talk to regarding any issue to do with safeguarding
 - To be aware of the names and telephone numbers of appropriate departments and teams within Social Care and the Police in the event of a referral needing to be made
 - To be aware of when to seek advice, and when it is necessary to inform the Police or statutory services of a concern or incident
 - To take appropriate action in relation to any safeguarding concerns which arise within the church
 - To ensure safe practice is in place for supporting people who may pose a risk to children and adults at risk at church
 - To cooperate with statutory services and the Police in safeguarding investigations relating to people within the church
 - To ensure that appropriate records are kept by the church, and that information in relation to safeguarding issues is handled confidentially and stored securely
1. To inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer about any referrals made to the statutory authorities, or of any information received from the statutory authorities

- To report safeguarding information annually to the Eldership / Church Meeting and the Synod Safeguarding Officer, as part of the annual returns process, to enable them to monitor safeguarding in the Synod
- To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church
- To promote sensitivity within the church towards all those affected by abuse
- To promote positive safeguarding practice and ensure procedures are adhered to
- To arrange and / or promote opportunities for training in safeguarding to any relevant members of the leadership team and all people involved in regulated activities with children or adults (including Ministers, staff and volunteers), as recommended by the Synod, and ensure that their training is renewed every three years
- To seek appropriate support and advice in carrying out this role (eg, from the SSO)
- To make arrangements for the Deputy CSC (or other suitable person if there is no deputy) to carry out this role when on leave, and to publicise who the substitute is and the dates of the alternative arrangements.

Requirements for the role

- To have knowledge of policy and practice for safeguarding children and / or adults at risk
- Good communication (written and oral) skills
- Be willing to attend appropriate safeguarding training / refresher training and keep updated on matters related to safeguarding
- Be willing to be easily contactable – and prepared to make contact details public to enable direct contact when needed.

URC Training Matrix

(Good Practice 6 – Supplementary Information – S2)

Safeguarding Training Framework

Levels of mandatory training

Note: An Introduction to Safeguarding in the URC is recommended to members of the Church congregation. This is available as e-Learning.

Roles requiring mandatory training:	Foundation Training	Intermediate Training	Advanced Training
Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓	✓	✓
Managers of Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓		
Church Safeguarding Coordinators	✓	✓	
Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator	✓	✓	
Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group (or its successor), Synod Safeguarding Committees and Reference Groups	✓		
Active Ministers and CRCWs (including retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry)	✓	✓	
Synod Moderators	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children’s workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Adult workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Adult workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Managers of Children, Youth and Adults workers	✓		
Pastoral workers/visitors	✓	✓	
Synod Clerks	✓		
Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members	✓		

Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers	✓	✓	
URC Trustees and Synod Trustees	✓		
Elders as local church trustees	✓		

** those helping at a holiday club, assisting occasionally with Sunday school, running a craft activity at Messy Church, running the tuck shop at a youth group, helpers at a craft club/lunch/trip, etc, where it is clear these people are in 'helper' roles, are always working in the presence of, and under the supervision of, a 'leader'.

Roles eligible for DBS/ Disclosure Scotland checks

(Good Practice 6 – Supplementary Information – S3)

URC roles eligible for a criminal record check

	Enhanced with barring information		Enhanced without barring information		Basic check	No checks	To be actioned by
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children			
Ministers, stipendiary/ NSM and Church Related Community Workers – active	✓	✓					Ministries Office
Ministers, stipendiary/ NSM and Church Related Community Workers – non-active						✓	Ministries Office
Ministers of other denominations employed by the URC	✓	✓					Ministries Office
Others in special category ministry posts	✓	✓					Ministries Office
Ministers and CRCWs in training	✓	✓					Ministries Office
URC Assembly accredited lay preachers in England and Wales			✓	✓			Ministries Office
URC Locally recognised lay preachers in England and Wales			✓	✓			Synod
In Scotland: URC Assembly accredited lay preachers URC Locally recognised worship leaders			✓ (using DBS)	✓ (using DBS)			Ministries Office

	Enhanced with barring information		Enhanced without barring information		Basic check	No checks	To be actioned by
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children			
Assembly staff and Church House support staff who undertake regulated activity with children and/or adults	✓	✓					Ministries Office
Synod Safeguarding Officers or other safeguarding designated professionals, including Safeguarding Coordinators, deputy Safeguarding Coordinators and safe church advisers	✓	✓					Synod
Synod recognised lay pastors, local leader and interim ministers	✓	✓					Synod
Interim Moderators						✓	Synod
Children's and youth workers (voluntary or paid), children and youth workers, stewards and drivers in settings with regulated work with children and young people	✓	✓					Ministries Office
Vulnerable adult workers (voluntary or paid), elders and pastoral and personal care visitors where the role includes direct feeding, physical care, assistance with financial matters, bereavement support/ counselling or driving to medical or social care appointments	✓						Local church

	Enhanced with barring information		Enhanced without barring information		Basic check	No checks	To be actioned by
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children			
United Reformed Church Trustees, Elders as local church trustees, trustees of registered charities providing regulated activities for children or adults at risk			✓	✓			Local church
Serving Elders			✓	✓			Local church
Assembly accredited lay preaching and locally recognised worship leaders in training			✓	✓			Ministries Office
Authorised Elders **			✓	✓			Local Church
Church caretaker and cleaners					✓		Local Church
Church Administrators (or equivalent working from a Church Office)					✓		Local church
Church Treasurers					✓		Local Church
Synod Treasurers					✓		Synod

** Authorised Elders – it has been the practice of the United Reformed Church to authorise elders and lay preachers occasionally to preside at the sacraments of communion and baptism

Code of conduct for working with children

(Good Practice 6 – Code of Conduct – C1)

All those working with children in the church (in either paid or voluntary roles) should agree to the following code of conduct. The word 'child' refers to all those under the age of 18.

Training, policies and procedures

- Attend all necessary training which helps to support you in your role
- Have a good awareness of, and comply with, URC policies, procedures and guidance
- Refresh all necessary safeguarding training at least every three years
- Be aware of different types of abuse and the key signs and symptoms of abuse.

Safer ways of working

- Do not spend time alone with children out of sight of other people
- Be aware that it is illegal for an adult in a position of trust to engage in any sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year-old
- Use of physical contact/touch should be: only in public; appropriate to the situation and to the age, gender and culture of the child; in response to the needs of the child, not the adult.

Respectful and inclusive working

- Respect and promote the rights of children to make their own decisions and choices
- Encourage respect for difference, diversity, beliefs and culture
- Make all reasonable adjustments for children with disabilities and additional needs.

Managing behaviour

- Encourage everyone to follow any ground rules and apply sanctions consistently
- Don't show favouritism or encourage excessive attention from a particular child
- Refer to a more experienced or senior worker if a child does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning.

Photos and videos

- All images should be appropriate and, beyond first names, not reveal any personal information about children if uploaded to the Internet. Images should only be uploaded with permission from the parent/carer, as well as the child (for those old enough/able to give their consent)
- Avoid taking images on personal devices. If this is necessary in exceptional circumstances, it should be agreed in advance or reported promptly to the Church Safeguarding Coordinator
- Images of children should be stored securely on the church computer, never on personal devices, including memory sticks.

Reporting concerns

- Know who the Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC) is and how to contact them
- Tell the CSC if you have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Do not promise to keep anything a secret; if a child is being harmed, or is at risk of harm, you will need to share that information but only on a need-to-know basis.

Working with children online

- Make sure that any electronic communication is done with parental consent and is transparent, accountable, recorded and adheres to safeguarding policies.

Approval/consent

- Ensure that all types of online communication and activity you engage with have been formally approved by your line manager/team leader/Eldership
- Inform your line manager or point of contact of your intention to communicate online with families or young people and keep a record of times and dates when you do this
- Ensure that you have parental consent for every type of online communication and activity you engage with – if need be, issue multiple consent forms (as for other activities and events). If signed consent forms are difficult to obtain, confirm emailed consent by phone/video call and keep a register of consent given (when, by whom, for what).

How to engage online

- Ensure that any communication online is done through a work or church account and do not engage with children or young people through your personal social media or mobile account – this may require setting up an extra account for that purpose
- Ensure, where possible, parents or guardians are present in the building or other workers are aware when children are communicating with you via social media. Communication with a child via social media should only ever take place when their parent or guardian and other adult workers are aware of these online interactions
- Where possible, ensure that another adult is present in the room with you if communicating 1:1 via social media with a child or young person, or ensure that a second leader is present online and communicate in a group chat environment
- Do not use private messaging
- Tell the CSC of any attempt by children or young people to contact you through your personal accounts and profiles, and block any further contact.

Use of content generated online

- Ensure any images or videos from online engagement are stored in the safe place designated by the church and not on your personal accounts or equipment
- Ensure you have clear parental and participant consent (for older children) before sharing any content from online engagement more widely, and only use it in the ways agreed, in line with URC good practice guidelines.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with children and young

people. On behalf of : Trinity United Reformed Church, Upminster

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Code of conduct for working with adults

(Good Practice 6 – Code of Conduct – C2)

This code describes the standards of conduct expected of all those working with adults, including adults at risk (p3 provides definitions of 'adults at risk'). It sets out general principles for good practice but cannot cover every type of activity or situation. Further details on specific issues can be found in Good Practice 6 and the accompanying resources.

Training, policies and procedures

- Attend all necessary training which helps to support you in your role
- Have a good awareness of, and comply with, URC policies, procedures and guidance
- Refresh all necessary safeguarding training at least every three years
- Be aware of different types of abuse and the key signs and symptoms of abuse
- Be familiar with your church safeguarding policy and know who to raise concerns with.

Promote the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of people

- Always protect the rights of people and treat them with dignity, respect and compassion
- Ensure that an adult at risk is not treated, without justification, any less favourably than other people would be treated in a comparable situation
- Put people's needs, views and wishes first and ensure they participate as fully as possible in decisions being made, helping them control and choose the help they receive
- Always gain consent before providing help and support. You must respect a person's right to refuse if they can do so, but also report any concerns if you feel that someone does not have the capacity to consent
- Promote people's independence, while helping them maintain existing family and social contacts
- For home visits, follow the guidance in Good Practice 6.

Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion

Treat all adults equally and inclusively and do not discriminate on grounds of age, gender reassignment, ethnicity, race, religion/belief, cultural background, sexual orientation or disability.

Effective communication

- Make efforts to assist and facilitate communication, using whatever method is appropriate to the needs of the individual
- Always explain and discuss any help and support you are offering with the person
- Communicate respectfully with people in an open, accurate, effective and straightforward way
- Maintain clear and accurate records of any help and support the church provides.

Respect people's right to confidentiality

- Treat all information about people you are working with, and their family or carers where applicable, as confidential
- Only discuss or disclose information in accordance with legislation and URC policy, and seek advice from your Church Safeguarding Officer about information sharing

Online engagement

- Ensure you are familiar with your church online safety policy
- Apply the principles of respect, inclusion, clear communication and confidentiality to online work as you would with in-person interaction
- When engaging online with adults at risk, additional care should be taken, for example:
 - Ensure another adult is present, either with you or the other person
 - Use a work or church account rather than a personal one.

Physical contact/touch

- Physical contact should be appropriate to the situation and the age, gender, culture of the other person
- Physical contact should be in response to the needs of the other person, not the wishes of the worker.

Financial matters

- Do not accept offers of loans, gifts or benefits from anyone you are supporting or anyone close to them (unless to do so would cause serious offence, in which case it should be declared to someone at church, eg treasurer or elder)
- Report any concerns about adults who might be subject to financial abuse to the Church Safeguarding Coordinator.

Challenging inappropriate behaviour

- Challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour
- Tell your leader/supervisor or person in charge of safeguarding if you are concerned that another worker is acting outside of this code of conduct.

Feedback and complaints

- Share any feedback received with your leader/supervisor/colleagues to promote learning and continued development of good practice
- Refer any complaints to your leaders/supervisor/elders as appropriate.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with adults, including adults at risk.

On behalf of : Trinity United Reformed Church, Upminster

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Adults at risk

Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. There is specific legislation for England, Wales and Scotland which reflects common themes.

Key principles:

- Adults are empowered and have a voice
- Prevention and early intervention are important
- Adults are supported with an interest in their wellbeing
- Working in partnership is encouraged.

Defining 'adults at risk'

In England, the Care Act 2014 states that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has care and support needs (whether or not the adult is being provided any services from the local authority or other statutory body to meet their needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding Concern Form

(Good Practice 6 – Forms – F1)

If you have immediate concerns about someone's safety, please contact the police or your Local Authority Children or Adult Social Care Services (England) or your Local Safeguarding Board (Wales).

- Please fill in this form with the information available within 24 hours after becoming aware of a safeguarding concern and send it to your Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC) or Synod Safeguarding Officer (SSO).
- Please provide as much detail as you can but don't worry if you can't complete all sections. It is more important to send the form promptly to the CSC or SSO who will then follow it up and obtain more information.

Church name: Trinity United Reformed Church, Upminster

Synod: Thames North

1. What the concern is about

Does the concern relate to: (tick any that apply)

Children

Adult

Adults and children

Current event

Past event

2. Type of concern

If you feel able, please indicate which of these you think apply:

Not sure

Physical abuse

Online abuse

Spiritual abuse

Sexual abuse

Self-neglect

Child sexual exploitation

Emotional abuse

Financial abuse

Adult sexual exploitation

Neglect

Modern slavery

Radicalisation

Domestic abuse

Institutional abuse

Mental Capacity Act

Self-harm

Discriminatory abuse

Other

3. Who is involved

Details of person suspected of causing harm/presenting a risk/causing concern:

Name:

Contact details (if available):

Other relevant information about them:

If there are specific individuals who have been harmed / are at risk of harm, give details:
Name, age, where they live:

Details of other significant people involved (eg family members, carers)

4. What has happened

Please tell us what you are worried about, what happened, when and where it happened:

How did the information come to light?

For example, something you saw or heard, victim disclosure, information from other organisation:

If the events happened in the past, do you think there is an ongoing risk to anyone now?

Y N

If, yes, please give details:

5. Who else knows about the concern

Have any statutory services or other organisations been informed of these concerns?
If yes, please give names and contact details if possible:

Are there other people in the church/family/wider community who know about it?

6. Consent for information to be reported

For children:

Have parents/carers/guardians given consent for this information to be reported?

Y N

If not, reason for no consent:

For adults:

Has the individual given consent for this information to be reported?

Y N

If not, reason for no consent:

7. Any other relevant information

Anything else you think it would be helpful to explain, including any actions already taken:

8. Your details

Name:

Church role:

Signature:

Date:

Email address:

Phone number:

Confidential Self-Declaration Form

(Good Practice 6 – Forms – F2)

This Self Declaration Form must be completed by all those wishing to work or volunteer in roles where they will be in substantial contact with children and / or adults at risk of abuse or neglect. These roles are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended in 2013 and 2020 for DBS disclosures and by the Management of Offenders Act 2019 in Scotland) and you will be required to declare convictions which for other purposes you might not need to disclose.

This form is being completed for the purpose of:

Information disclosed on this form will not automatically disqualify you from a given role. Each situation will be considered individually in light of whether or not the matters revealed could be considered to place children or adults at risk in danger of being harmed. The failure to disclose information may, however, lead to an appointment offer being rescinded.

The information on this form will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be seen by those who need to know as part of the candidating for ministry / recruitment process and, where necessary when content is disclosed, with the Synod Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Secretary for Ministries. An assessment of transferable risk will be carried out at that point, and you will be included as part of the assessment.

Please include all relevant activity within the UK **and in any other country.**

Convictions and cautions		
1.	If you have never been convicted or cautioned for a criminal offence, please mark this box: <input type="checkbox"/> and go on to question 5. Otherwise go to question 2.	
2.	Do you have any unspent convictions or conditional cautions? ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
3.	If you live in England, Wales the Channel Islands or Isle of Man: Do you have any spent convictions or adult cautions that have not been filtered in line with DBS filtering rules? ²	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
4.	If you live in Scotland: Do you have any spent convictions or cautions which must be disclosed? ^{3a} Do you have any spent convictions or cautions which are disclosed according to rules? ^{3b}	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

Barring from regulated activity or regulated work		
5.	Are you: barred from 'regulated activity' (England, Wales, Channel Islands, Isle of Man) or 'regulated work' (Scotland) with children or adults at risk; under consideration for barring or listing; or have ever been prohibited from working with these groups at any time? ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

Other investigations or concerns		
6.	Are you at present, or have you ever been, under investigation by an employer or other organisation for which you worked or volunteered for any offence / misconduct relating to children or adults at risk?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
7.	Have any concerns about you ever been referred to and investigated by the Police / Children's Services / Adult Social Care Services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
8.	If you are working from a manse / home with children ⁵ , is there anyone aged 16 or over living or employed in your household who has ever been charged with, cautioned or convicted in relation to any criminal offence not subject to DBS filtering / Disclosure Scotland rules, or who is at present the subject of a criminal investigation / pending prosecution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

If you have answered yes to any of questions 2-8, please provide details in the 'additional information section' below and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

By signing this form I confirm that:

I understand I will be required to complete a DBS / Disclosure Scotland check and consent to the URC clarifying any information provided on the disclosure with the relevant agencies.

I understand that if I do not disclose relevant information and it subsequently comes to light, my application or role may be withdrawn.

I will inform my place of worship / line manager / Synod Moderator as soon as possible if any of the following circumstances occur:

- I am charged, cautioned or convicted of any offence
- I become subject to a Police / Social Services / Social Work Department investigation
- I am investigated by my employer or any other organisation in relation to concerns about my behaviour with children or adults at risk.

Signature:

Date:

Full name:

Date of birth:

If you have ever been known by any other names, please give details:

Phone number:

Name of Church where URC membership held (if applicable):

Additional information

If an investigation led to no further action being taken, please give details and reasons.

For all other cases / situations:

Give dates and details of charges / court findings / cautions / convictions / barring or listing / other concerns.

Give details of circumstances leading to these outcomes / sanctions: what happened, when, where and who else was involved?

Give details of how these events affected you, lessons learned and changes in your life / conduct since then.

Notes

1. There are different time periods over which offences become spent in England and Wales and in Scotland. For further details see www.bit.ly/4a1oJfu.

For an online calculator that will show if your convictions or cautions are spent (England and Wales only), see www.unlock.org.uk/disclosure-calculator/.

For offences committed in other countries, you should be treated in line with the disclosure rules of the country in which you are now living.

2. Select **No** for convictions where all of the following apply:
 - a. 11 years (or 5.5 years if under 18 at the time of the conviction) have passed since the date of conviction; and
 - b. it did not result in a prison sentence or suspended prison sentence (or detention order) and
 - c. it does not appear on the DBS list of specified offences (eg violence, drug related and / or sexual offences) which can be found here:
www.bit.ly/47WCikS

Select **No** for adult cautions where both of the following apply:

- a) six years have passed since the date of the caution etc and
- b) it does not appear on the DBS's list of specified

offences.² For any other convictions or cautions, select

Yes.

- 3a. Convictions which must be disclosed in Scotland:

Select **Yes** for offences on this list: www.mygov.scot/offences-always-disclosed.

Select **No** if none of your offences are on this list.

- 3b. Convictions which have to be disclosed according to rules in Scotland:

Select **Yes** for offences on this list www.mygov.scot/offences-disclosed-rules and where less than 15 years have passed since the date of conviction (or seven years and six months if you were under 18 at the time). Select **No** for any other convictions or cautions.

4. It is a criminal offence to apply for roles involving 'regulated activity' or 'regulated work' with children or adults at risk if you are barred from working with them.

5. The DBS define home based working as where the applicant for the DBS check carries out some or all of his or her work with children or adults from the place where the applicant lives (this will include all Ministers of Word and Sacraments and Church Related Community Workers).

Template for Local Church Safeguarding Policy Statement

(Good Practice 6 – Policies and Procedures – P2)

This is the safeguarding policy statement adopted by General Assembly in 2021.

The United Reformed Church (URC) is committed to safeguarding in every area of its life and ministry.

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote and protect the well-being and human rights of individuals. This means we will:

- do all we can to create and maintain a safe and caring environment for all people
- respond promptly and effectively to any form of abuse and neglect, including reporting abuse to statutory agencies as necessary
- seek to prevent abuse in any form from occurring.

We will seek to identify individuals who may pose a risk to others and take necessary actions to minimise risk whilst supporting these individuals in our communities when safe to do so.

The URC confirms that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone: to prevent abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults; to act upon concerns of abuse; and to support the wellbeing of each person within all communities in which the Church is placed.

Safeguarding is a requirement and a duty in all Councils of the Church. Safeguarding in the URC is supported with relevant policies, practice, guidance and training.

The Church acknowledges that the wellbeing of the child or adult who is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse, harm and neglect is paramount, and it will always act in their best interests, in line with national legislation, relevant statutory guidelines and good practice guidance. The United Reformed Church believes that all people have the right to be and feel part of this community, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will operate in line with the Human Rights Act 1988, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Equality Act 2010.

Commitments

The URC will adhere to the policy statement above by committing to:

- promote safe and healthy cultures in which good practice standards in safeguarding are updated and disseminated
- ensure everyone in a position of trust is carefully recruited / selected / appointed / elected and trained in safeguarding children and adults at risk
- respond promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding allegation or concern (including reporting any allegations to statutory agencies) including those who may pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk
- care pastorally for all children and adults at risk, and all those who have experienced abuse in the past
- ensure that all those who pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk, and those who are the subject of allegations, receive appropriate pastoral care and supervision
- exercise informed vigilance about risks in all forms of abuse and neglect
- work together with other denominations, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations.

Local church safeguarding checklist

(Good Practice 6 – Policies and Procedures – P5)

Trinity URC, Upminster – Annual Review at Elders Meeting – Date of Review :

	Y/N/P ¹	Notes/action needed/key dates
We have a Safeguarding Policy in place, covering both children and adults at risk, and it is being implemented.		
Our Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and updated in the last 12 months.		
Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda for Elders'/ Church meetings.		
At least one Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC) has been appointed for our church.		
Details of how to contact the CSC are displayed in church, and on our website/Facebook page.		
All elders and church workers (paid and voluntary) working with children and adults at risk have an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at the appropriate level for which they are eligible.		
All church workers (paid and voluntary) working with children, young people and adults at risk have completed URC Safeguarding training at Foundation level as a minimum.		
All those working with children or adults at risk have been given copies of the relevant Code of Conduct.		

¹ P = partial to indicate some progress made/some elements achieved

<p>The minister, CRCW, CSC, all group leaders, Elders and members of church leadership have completed all relevant levels of URC Safeguarding training.</p>		
<p>All our workers (paid or voluntary) know the procedure to follow if harm or abuse is suspected, witnessed or reported to them.</p>		
<p>We have contact information for local services able to provide specialist help (eg domestic abuse, mental health support) that we can link people with.</p>		
<p>Any external organisations using our buildings comply with good safeguarding practices, in line with the Hirer's agreement.</p>		

Policy on the handling, use, retention and disposal of DBS certificates

(Good Practice 6 – Policies and Procedures – P6)

Introduction

All individuals or organisations using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and who are recipients of DBS certificate information must comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice. Amongst other things, this obliges them to have a written policy on the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificates and certificate information. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service we have adopted the following policy.

General principles

The United Reformed Church complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely either on The United Reformed Church database or, in the instances of DBS checks that contain content, on the case management system, with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Safeguarding

Risk assessment recommendations and a safeguarding agreement / risk management plan arising in cases of a DBS disclosure with content will be retained in line with the URC's record retention schedule.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means.

We will not ordinarily keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate unless for safeguarding purpose. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Suggested safeguarding wording for local church websites

(Good Practice 6 – Display Material – D2)

Trinity United Reformed Church, Upminster version for website.

Safeguarding

The United Reformed Church (URC) is committed to safeguarding in every area of its life and ministry. Safeguarding is the action taken to promote and protect the well-being and human rights of individuals.

This means we will:

- Do all we can to create and maintain a safe and caring environment for all people
- Respond promptly and effectively to any form of abuse and neglect, including reporting abuse to statutory agencies when necessary
- Seek to prevent abuse in any form from occurring. We will seek to identify individuals who may pose a risk to others and take necessary actions to minimise risk whilst supporting these individuals in our communities when safe to do so.

If you wish to discuss a safeguarding concern, please contact:

Church Safeguarding Coordinator – Mrs Jackie Woodgate / Mrs Christine Hewitt

Synod Safeguarding Officer – Belinda Herbert

Contact details - Mobile : 07716640596 e-mail : safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk

For information on safeguarding in the URC Synod of Thames North please [click here](#).

For a full statement on the URC's approach to Safeguarding, [click here](#).

To view Good Practice 6, the URC's Safeguarding Guidance document please [click here](#) .

Hyperlinks :

<https://urcthamesnorth.org.uk/safeguarding/introduction>

<https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Paper-T4-SAG-Safeguarding-Policy-Statement.pdf>

<https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/>

Additional Safeguarding Resources

The additional resources listed can be found on the United Reformed Church national website and are referenced here as relevant and may be needed f, but not core, to local church policy :

<https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/>

Supplementary information

S4 : Signs of possible dementia / memory loss

S5 : Signs and symptoms of abuse

Forms

F3 : Church Safeguarding Coordinator Declaration Form

Policies and Procedures

P3 : Model church online safety policy

P4 : Template for church policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

Display materials

D4 : Accessible safeguarding poster

Safer recruitment

SR1 : Volunteer application form

SR2 : Volunteer reference request form

SR3 : Sample questions on safeguarding for interviews and discussions.

SR4 : Role descriptions

Safer activities

SA1 : Risk assessment template (with guidance)

SA2 : Information and consent form

SA3 : Request to administer medication form

SA4 : Sample volunteer driver agreement

SA5 : Template for a support plan

Guidance leaflets

G2 : A guide to adult safeguarding

G3 : A guide to domestic abuse

G4 : Guidance on the involvement in church life of people who may pose a risk to others

G5 : Guidance on responding to allegations of bullying and harassment

G6 : Guidance for staff facing safeguarding allegations

Useful links and external resources

L1 : Contact details for relevant organisations