



Promoting Safeguarding
Preventing Abuse
Protecting The Vulnerable

Safeguarding Policy Children & Adults

St Paul's United Reformed Church

Southern Synod

March 2019

Introduction

St Paul's 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. We believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by all at St Paul's Church.

We will seek to establish a caring environment in which there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse. 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 providing support and supervision, resources and training, to 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

Name	Sue Eardley 020 8688 7933 Home 07971 068887 Mobile 020 7092 6091 Office
Email	Eardleys@virginmedia.com

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, 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 all who are involved with our church, either adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm.

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 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 or appearance.

What to do if you notice indicators of possible abuse?

If indicators of possible abuse give cause for concern, then you should

- Inform the person responsible for safeguarding at the event as soon as possible. This is often the leader in charge of an event. Alternatively inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer directly. Do not discuss with anybody else.
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record and pass this onto the person responsible for safeguarding at the event, who will liaise with the Synod Safeguarding personnel to decide what action needs to be taken. There is a proforma in Appendix 5. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet at the Synod Office.
- If any of the Synod safeguarding personnel are implicated in the allegation, refer to the Synod Moderator.

What to do if there is an allegation of abuse

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). Do not discuss with anybody else.
- 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 of further abuse.

Who to contact in the case of a Child

Contact Croydon's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 020 8225 2888

Or 020 8726 6400 ext 84307 (mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Or out of hours/in an emergency call 0208 726 6400 (24 Hours)

Secure Email: childreferrals@croydon.gcsx.gov.uk

Email: childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk

Who to contact in the case of a Vulnerable Adult

Adult abuse reporting line: 020 8726 6500 (24 hours) or 999 if the person is in immediate danger

For next-day or less urgent alerts use the online Safeguarding adults referral form which can be found in the "Report It" section on www.croydon.gov.uk **Or email** referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk

If the allegation is regarding a member of staff or volunteer

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should 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.

Contact on 020 8255 2889 or lado@croydon.gov.uk.

4th floor, Zone F, Bernard Wetherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

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 link person - children:

Revd Roger Jones Tel. 0208 393 4270 / 07525 410083 rjones@urcsouthern.org.uk

Synod Safeguarding link person - adults:

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

If Southern Synod safeguarding personnel are not available and emergency advice is needed call the URC Safeguarding Officer

Ioannis Athanasiou, Tel. 020 7520 2729, Email: safeguarding@urc.org.uk

Complaints

Should anyone have any concerns or complaints please contact Sue Eardley. Joint Church Secretary 07971 068887 eardeleys@virginmedia.com

It 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 every two years.

Appendix 1

What is abuse and neglect - Children.

These definitions are taken from *Working Together 2013*

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as

involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Appendix 2

What is abuse? Adults in need of protection

The following definitions of abuse are laid down in *'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000):*

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors:

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal 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.

Physical Abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

Sexual Abuse

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

Financial or Material Abuse

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

Neglect, or Act of Omission

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

Discriminatory Abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

Institutional Abuse

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

APPENDIX 3

Signs of Possible Abuse - Children

Emotional abuse

The classic description of Emotional Abuse is "Low Warmth High Criticism" style of parenting.

Signs include:

- Physical, mental and emotional lags.
- Acceptance of punishments, which appear excessive.
- Over reaction to mistakes.
- Continual self-depreciation.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Fear of new situations.
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking).
- Self harm.
- Extremes of passivity or aggression.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Running away.
- Bullying/Aggression
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Overeating or loss of appetite

- Clingy
- Fearful/withdrawn
- Sleep disorders

Physical abuse

Physical Signs include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Injuries that are inconsistent with explanation
- Injuries that reflect an article used e.g. an iron
- Bruising, especially trunk, upper arm, shoulders, neck or finger tip bruising.
- Burns/scalds, especially cigarette.
- Human bite marks.
- Fractures, especially spiral.
- Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs.
- Serious injury with lack of / inconsistent explanation.
- Untreated injuries.

Psychological/Emotional Signs include:

- Unusually fearful with adults.
- Unnaturally compliant to parents.
- Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Aggression towards others.
- Wears cover up clothing.

Fictitious Illness by Proxy

- Psychiatric Illness, whereby a parent or carer deliberately inflicts harm onto a child.
- Normally the child's mother.
- The child has commonly had genuine serious illness in the first year of life (a dependency on medical attention has developed in the mother).
- Very difficult to diagnose/evidence.
- Most common example – Beverley Allet – a nurse convicted of murder and actual bodily harm in the 1980's.

Female Genital Mutilation

A cultural (not religious) procedure whereby parts of female genitalia are removed - also referred to as female circumcision.

- Illegal in UK.
- Normally undertaken on pre pubescent girls.
- Girls either taken abroad for procedure or “practitioners” come to UK.
- There can be no anaesthetic, no sterile equipment, barbaric practice.
- Complications include – serious infection, septicaemia, death, numerous gynaecological problems.

Neglect: Physical Signs include:

- Tired/listless
- Poor personal hygiene.

- Poor state of clothing.
- Emaciation, potbelly, short stature.
- Poor skin tone and hair tone.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Failure to thrive with no medical reason.

Neglect : Psychological/Emotional Signs include:

- Constant hunger.
- Constant tiredness.
- Frequent lateness/non attendance at school.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Low self esteem.
- Neurotic behaviour.
- No social relationships.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging.
- Multiple accidents/accidental injuries.

Sexual abuse; Physical Signs include:

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Unexpected pregnancy especially in very young girls
- Soreness to genitalia area, anus or mouth
- Repeated stomach aches
- Loss of weight
- Gaining weight
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain
- Unexplained gifts/money

Sexual abuse: Psychological/Emotional Signs include:

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age
- Sexualised behaviour in young children
- Sexually provocative behaviour/promiscuity
- Hinting at sexual activity
- Sudden changes in personality
- Lack of concentration, restlessness
- Socially withdrawn
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Poor trust in significant adults
- Regressive behaviour, onset of wetting – day or night
- Suicide attempts, self mutilation, self disgust
- Eating disorders

Appendix 4

Signs of Possible Abuse - Adults

Physical

- A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries
- Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

Sexual

- Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Infections or sexually transmitted diseases
- Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse
- Self-harming

Psychological

- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer
- Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes
- Unexplained paranoia

Financial or Material

- Disparity between assets and living conditions
- Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents
- Sudden inability to pay bills
- Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf
- Recent changes of deeds or title to property

Neglect or Omission

- Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger
- Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores
- Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition
- Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care
- No callers or visitors

Discriminatory

- Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect
- Poor quality or avoidance of care

Institutional

- Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc
- Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids
- Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans
- Public discussion of private matter
- Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

Appendix 5



INCIDENT RECORDING FORM

Basic information

Date and time of incident:

Date on which this report was written:

Your full name:

Full name of child or young person concerned:

Location / Situation:

.....

Other people present:

.....

Record of incident:

- Please ensure you are as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible – do not interpret what was said using your own words.
- Record what you said as well as what the child or young person said.
- Include details such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language.
- If you have formed an opinion please state it, making it clear that it is your opinion and give reasons for forming that opinion.

Record

Who has been spoken to about the incident?

Record below the names of all those who have been spoken to about this incident:

Local Church Safeguarding Coordinator:

Synod Safeguarding Officer:

Children's / Adult Services:

Police:

NSPCC:

Parent/Carer:

Child:

Other (name, role and organisation):

.....

Advice and follow up actions:

Signed: **Dated:**

(Synod Safeguarding Officer)

Appendix 6. Code of Conduct for working with children or young people

Be aware that behaviour in a worker's personal life (including online) may impact upon their work with children and young people. Therefore, all workers agree not to behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model within the United Reformed Church. More specifically, all workers agree to the following code of conduct:

Relating to young people

- Do treat all young people with dignity and respect.
- Don't belittle, scapegoat, put down, or ridicule a young person (even in 'fun') and don't use language or behaviour with sexual connotations (e.g. flirting)
- Do act inclusively, seeking to make all young people feel welcome and valued.
- Don't exclude other young people or workers from conversations and activities unless there is a good reason.

- Do treat people with equal care and concern.
- Don't show favouritism (e.g. in selection for activities, in giving rewards, etc) or encourage excessive attention from a particular young person. (e.g. giving gifts)
- Do encourage young people to follow the code of conduct agreed for the group / event / activity, and do refer to a more senior worker if a young person does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning of possible consequences.
- Don't threaten sanctions which have not been agreed by the team or which you cannot carry out.

- Do seek to diffuse aggressive or threatening behaviour without the use of physical contact.
- Don't use physical restraint (except as a last resort, by a competent person, in order to prevent injury).
- Do relate to young people in public. If a young person wants to talk one-to-one about a serious issue, tell another worker and find somewhere quieter but still in sight of other workers.
- Don't spend time alone with young people out of the sight of other workers.

- Do make sure that any electronic communication with young people is done with parental consent, and in a way which is transparent, accountable and noted / recorded.
- Don't swap phone numbers with young people or add them as 'friends' on social networking website unless this practice has been agreed as part of a church policy on electronic communication with young people.
- Do allow the designated photographer to take and share photos of event activities, in line with parental consent and URC good practice guidelines.
- Don't take photos and video of young people at the event if you are not the designated photographer.

- Do use physical contact wisely - it should be:
 - in public
 - appropriate to the situation and to the age, gender and culture of the young person.
 - in response to the needs of the young person, not the adult.
 - respectful of the young person's privacy, feelings and dignity.
- Don't use physical contact which could be misconstrued as aggressive (e.g. rough games) or sexual.
- Do respect young people's privacy (especially when they are changing, washing or using the toilet).
- Don't walk in unannounced or use washing / changing facilities at times allocated to young people.

- Do listen well to young people and do tell the person responsible for safeguarding if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Don't promise to keep something secret if it is about a young person is at risk of harm but only tell those who need to know.

Working together as a team

- Do work as a team, respecting the different roles, fulfilling your general role and any specific responsibilities, including attending all team meetings.
- Don't undermine other workers in the team.
- Do tell the leader in charge or the person responsible for safeguarding if you are concerned that another worker is acting outside of this code of conduct.
- Don't ignore it or tell other workers in the team.

- Do make arrangements with the leader in charge to take time off if you need to.
- Don't ignore fatigue, but don't take time off without their knowledge and agreement.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with children & young people on behalf of church.

Name:

Signed:

Date: