



DURSLEY TABERNACLE URC

Safeguarding Policy
Children, Young People
& Vulnerable Adults

2025

Renewal Date: December 2026

Please note the policy is based on documents produced by the
United Reformed Church

Safeguarding Policy - Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults 2025

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1 Aim and purpose of this policy

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

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, such as consultants)
- volunteers
- organisations and groups which hire our building with written agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy.

The values and safeguarding principles within the United Reformed Church are described in Appendix A1. The policy and procedures should be interpreted in accordance with these principles and the most recent URC good practice guidance.

Children, parents/carers, adults at risk and those responsible for safeguarding them will be informed of this policy and our procedures. Information on the safeguarding posters around the site and on the website. Copies are available upon request.

2 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.

3 Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of the church, whether adults, children or young people. 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.

4 Preventing abuse

The church will appoint Safeguarding and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator(s) for safeguarding children and adults. A job/role description is attached as Appendix A2.

Activities will be organised in accordance with URC's safeguarding policy and guidance to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimising opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusation. For each event, risk assessments will be carried out, appropriate and accessible consent forms will be used (for children's activities or activities for people with special needs), appropriate records will be kept, and adequate insurance will be in place.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers with emphasis on those in regulated activities. We will treat applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed (see Appendix D for the church policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders) and ensure that all safer recruitment-related procedures are followed, which include:

- asking applicants to complete an application form
- providing workers with job or role descriptions and person specifications
- completion of self-declaration forms

- obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks for eligible roles and positions
- taking up two references (not from family members)
- interviewing candidates
- providing workers/volunteers with written contracts/agreements.

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers will work within a code of conduct (code for workers attached as Appendices A3 and A4 depending on the vulnerable group) and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or the termination of people's service.

If we become aware of someone within our congregation known to have harmed or harm children or adults, we will inform the Church Safeguarding Coordinator or Synod Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory authorities to put in place a plan to minimise the risk of harm to children, young people and adults.

When any church premises are let to an external, informal group or individual, those hiring the premises should hold and abide by their own safeguarding policy. If a hirer does not have a policy, they must abide by the church's own safeguarding policy, a copy of which should be made available. Each hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults at risk are always protected by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.

5 How to recognise abuse

It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Appendix A6: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse provides definitions of different forms of abuse and further help and guidance. Some signs could be indicators of several different categories of abuse.

It is essential to note that these are only indicators of possible abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for these signs and/or behaviour. There might be domestic abuse that requires a different approach (please see Appendix R: A Guide to domestic abuse). The indicators 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.

Church workers and members will also pay attention to online safety and their electronic communications with children and adults. Grooming and abuse of any form can occur offline (both physically and verbally) and online. Where possible, relevant internet filters will be used to protect site users.

Appendix C: Model church online safety policy includes an acceptable use policy in relation to the use of church computers by both workers and children and provides sample forms which children and workers could be asked to sign.

6 What to do if there is a disclosure or allegation of abuse

If a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and have been abused, it is important that the person being told:

- o stays calm and listen carefully
- o reassures them that they have done the right thing in telling
- o does not investigate or ask leading questions
- o explains that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- o does not promise to keep secret what they have been told
- o informs the church Safeguarding Coordinator within 24 hours (if they are implicated in the allegation, inform the Deputy or the Synod Safeguarding Officer)
- o makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record (using the template in Appendix A5). This should be given to the church Safeguarding Coordinator or the Synod Safeguarding Officer and stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.

7 Procedure in the event of a concern of abuse

If there is an immediate threat of harm, the Police should be contacted without delay.

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

- o The concern should be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Coordinator or the Synod Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours and a decision needs to be made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory authorities
- o A confidential record will be made of the conversation and the circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix A5. This record will be kept securely, and a copy passed to statutory authorities if a referral is made
- o The person about whom the allegation is made must not be informed by anyone in the church if it is judged that to do so could place a child or adult at further risk. If the statutory authorities are involved, they should be consulted beforehand
- o The Synod Safeguarding Officer should be kept informed of any serious concerns and referrals to police and statutory authorities.

Prior to any referral to children's services, the child's wishes and rights should be considered when determining what action to take. There should also be a verbal consultation with local authority's children's services to ensure that making a referral is an appropriate action. The parent/carer will normally be contacted to obtain their consent before a referral is made. However, if the concern involves, for example alleged or suspected child sexual abuse, domestic abuse, Honour Based Violence, fabricated or induced illness, or the Synod Safeguarding Officer has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member, nothing should be said to the parent/carer ahead of the referral, but a rationale for the decision to progress without consent should be provided with the referral.

In the case of referrals to adult social care or other services for adults at risk, information should be shared with consent if the adult has capacity within the meaning of the Mental Capacity Act and if this does not place the referrer, them or others at an increased risk. A person's right to confidentiality is not absolute and may be overridden where there is evidence that sharing information is necessary to support an investigation or where there is a risk to others.

8 If the allegation is regarding a church staff member or church volunteer

If someone in the church is alleged or known to harm/have harmed children or adults, it is essential to inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer so that they can offer advice and support.

For any concerns relating to children, the **Designated Officer (Local Authority)** will be contacted. The timing and method of any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the **Designated Officer**. This will cover communication with the worker, suspension, investigation and possible strategy meetings. A decision will be taken by the **Designated Officer** about when to inform the worker and the church will follow this advice. As noted, **Designated Officer** contact details, are included in the Key Contacts section of this policy.

For concerns relating to adults, Adult Social Care will be contacted. Likewise, their contacts are included in the Key Contacts section of this policy.

If you believe the alleged perpetrator of abuse against children or adults at risk, is a worker (paid or volunteer), or a minister, you must immediately contact the Church Safeguarding Coordinator.

If you believe the Church Safeguarding Coordinator has a relationship with the people involved, or other potential conflict of interest, seek the advice of the **Synod Safeguarding Officer**. If you believe the Synod Safeguarding Officer may have a potential conflict of interest, contact the URC Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for advice. This applies whether the concern relates to current or historic abuse. The Synod Safeguarding Officer will agree on the appropriate next course of action, will contact the statutory agencies as appropriate, and consider whether other investigative / disciplinary procedures are needed.

In accordance with the law, a referral needs to be made to the DBS for consideration of barring to share information about any individual in regulated activity where for safeguarding reasons the organisation has either terminated the employment, failed to appoint, or would have terminated the employment had the individual not moved on through resignation, retirement or re-deployment. In such cases, the synod safeguarding officer needs to be advised/informed.

Depending on the seriousness of incidents or allegations, a report to the Charity Commission will also need to be considered at the elders/trustees' meeting, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and require notification.

9 Managing those who may pose a risk to the welfare of people

The use of rigorous and careful supervision is paramount to protect people from the risks associated with known offenders within the congregation, including implementing safeguarding contracts with known or alleged offenders and those who have been assessed as posing a risk. Where it is known that someone has a caution or conviction for committing a sexual offence, the church can play an important role in the prevention of further abuse by helping the offender to live an offence-free life.

If anyone is made aware that a person attending their church has been convicted of an offence against a child or has had an allegation of this nature made against them at any time, we immediately inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer and Minister or Interim Moderator.

It is important to provide known or alleged offenders with a group of people who will offer support, friendship and supervision. Following advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer, when appropriate, a formal safeguarding contract will be drawn up between the church, the person who is considered to pose a risk to the welfare of people in the church, and any statutory agencies when involved.

10 Training

Safeguarding training will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision in their role. All relevant staff members and volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding training from accredited deliverers.

The Safeguarding Coordinator(s) should ensure that trustees/elders and people involved in regulated activities with children or adults (including Ministers, staff and volunteers) have undergone safeguarding training, as recommended by the URC.

11 Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or compliments please contact:

Name : Rod Irvine (church secretary)
Telephone No: 07973 811524
Email : rod.irvine@dursleytab.org.uk

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 working days.

12 Key Contacts: Sources of advice and support

The **Church Safeguarding Coordinator** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations relating to children, young people or adults should be addressed:

Name: Shona Darley
Telephone No: 07780 700786
Email : shona.darley@dursleytab.org.uk

In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the **Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator** can be contacted:

Name: Karen Hall
Telephone No: 07434 720741
Email: kazhall754@gmail.com

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Name Donna Gordon
Telephone No 0121 783 1177 ext 1009 or **07458 304275**
Email safeguarding@urcwestmidlands.org.uk

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

Telephone No 020 7520 2729
Email safeguarding@urc.org.uk

ThirtyOne: Eight

(This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact URC)
24 hour helpline: 0845 120 4550

DESIGNATED OFFICER *(previously called LADO)*

Fill in an Allegations Management Referral Form if you want advice if the behaviour you are reporting meets the Designated Officer criteria or you are unsure. Sometimes behaviours may concern you and make you wonder whether someone is suitable to work with children i.e. there has been a pattern of inappropriate behaviour that has been addressed via disciplinary procedures but the behaviour continues to occur. Please ensure you give as much detail as possible so we are able to make an informed decision on the way forward. Once the Allegations Management Referral Form has been completed, it needs to be returned to amadmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk where it will be read by a Designated Officer, who will then respond with the appropriate advice and information.

Statutory contact in the case of a child

You can call Children and Families Front Door Service on 01452 426565 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). If you need to speak to a social worker outside of these hours because you are worried about yours, or someone else's safety, then you can call our Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01452 614194 to speak to a social worker.

Statutory contact in the case of an adult at risk

If you are a member of the public and are at risk or suspect someone is at risk

 **Phone our Adults Help Desk on (01452) 426868**

NOTE: A list of useful contacts for all forms of abuse of children and adults can be found on Appendix U and be used in this section of the local policy.

13 Review

The Elders will review this policy annually, amending and updating it as required, and informing Church Meeting that this has been done.

Date of the most recent review:

11th December 2025

Date of the next review:

November 2026

Signed:

(on behalf of the church Elders)

The following appendices that are attached to it:

- A1 – Safeguarding policy statement
- A2 – The role of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- A3 – Code of conduct for working with children or young people
- A4 – Code of conduct for working with adults at risk
- A5 – Safeguarding incident recording form
- A6 – Signs and symptoms of abuse
- A7 - The Role of a Church Safeguarding Coordinator
- A8 - Code of Conduct for working with children or young people
- A9 - What is abuse and neglect of children?
- A10 - What is abuse of adults at risk?
- A11 - Signs of possible abuse in children
- A12 - Signs of possible abuse in adults
- A13 – DBS Specification
- A13 - Signed Declaration Form
- A14 - Role Descriptions

A1 - Safeguarding policy statement



The following statement was agreed by the Church Meeting of Dursley Tab URC

Safeguarding is taken seriously by **DURSLEY TAB URC**

We define safeguarding as the promotion of the safety and welfare of children and adults who are at risk of, or experiencing, harm, abuse or neglect in all forms. We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from any form of abuse or neglect regardless of age, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. Therefore, as members and workers of the church, we are committed to:

- the care and nurture of all children and adults,
- the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults at risk,
- the establishment of a loving church environment which is safe and caring for all people and where the dignity of each person is respected,
- an informed vigilance about the dangers of all forms of abuse, harm and neglect within all aspects of work in the Church, and how to respond appropriately,
- ensuring everyone who engages with the life of the Church is responsible for keeping people safe,
- working together with voluntary/statutory agencies and other denominations and faith-based organisations.

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent any form of abuse and neglect of children and adults and to ensure the wellbeing and pastoral care of those who are, or may be, at risk.

We will prevent abuse related to extremism or radicalisation and put all suitable health and safety arrangements in place as well as safeguarding, first aid, fire safety and online safety policies that everyone understands.

We will create and maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all, especially children and adults at risk, in which the dignity and rights of each person are respected.

We believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable, inconsistent with a Christian way of living and it can affect both adults and children.

We will always acknowledge that the welfare of the child and adult at risk is paramount, and that the priority is always to act in their best interests, following legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice guidance to enable them access to support and protection.

We will support everyone to ensure that as a community of Christians we will all work within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy. **The Safeguarding Co-ordinator or the Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator (when available) are the persons to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed for appropriate actions to be taken.** In the absence of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the Synod Safeguarding Officer should be contacted. Their contact details will be always available on our posters, websites, or in other communications with the public.

We will exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of trustees and those who will work with children or adults at risk within the Church, whether paid, volunteers, lay or ordained. We will ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions. We will use DBS checks as part of a wide range of checks on trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure that we have a broad and informed view to assist us in minimising the risk of abuse, harm or neglect.

We will support, supervise, resource and train all those who undertake work with children and adults in need of protection.

We will respond without delay to every concern, incident or complaint which suggests that a child or adult has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, and cooperate with ecumenical partners, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer, Local Safeguarding Boards and Children's and Adult Social Care Services in any investigation, while maintaining the confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We are committed to working with those who have suffered or suffer any form of abuse, offering appropriate pastoral support where possible as well as challenging any abuse of power, especially where it involves someone in a position of trust.

We will manage risks and those who might pose a risk to the welfare of people and the life of the Church and offer support to those known to pose a risk to children and/or adults, including supervision, referral to the appropriate agencies, and implementation of safeguarding contracts, when appropriate.

We are committed to ensuring that any allegations, concerns and complaints about abuse or neglect are recorded accurately, reported promptly and shared safely within and outside of the denomination.

We will review our safeguarding policy, practices and procedures annually, considering lessons learned from safeguarding cases and changes in legislation, statutory guidance and good working practice.

We will ensure processes and practices in all aspects of safeguarding, including discipline, risk management, whistleblowing and bullying/harassment are in alignment with *Good Practice 5* - the United Reformed Church's policy and guidance in safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

Any local policy changes will be formally approved by the local church trustees.

Name: _____
(on behalf of the church leadership)

Signed: _____

Date: _____



A2 - The role of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator

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 guidelines 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 make sure that elders and others in the church aware of the church safeguarding policies and procedures, including URC guidelines and Charity Commission responsibilities.
- To collaborate with the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator (when there is one), the minister, the DBS signatory people and the Synod Safeguarding Officer on all matters around safeguarding.
- 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- To view and ensure other organisations' safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place when any church premises are let to an external organisation, informal group or individual. These policies will sit on the Safeguarding Sharepoint Here

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 Social Care, the Police or the Designated Officer (previously known as LADO).
- 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 pose a risk to children and adults at risk at church.
- To cooperate with Social Care or 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.
- 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 anonymised safeguarding information monthly to the Eldership/Church Meeting
- To report to Synod Safeguarding Officer, using the Appendix H1 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 the impact of abuse.
- To promote positive safeguarding procedures and 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 attend appropriate training for the role, including refresher training every three years, and keep updated on matters related to safeguarding.
- To seek appropriate support and advice in carrying out this role.
- To make arrangements for a suitable person 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 organised by the synod.
- Be willing to be easily contactable – and prepared to make contact details public to enable direct contact when needed.

A3 – Code of conduct for working with children or young people

All workers of the church should agree to the following code of conduct when working with children and young people. The word 'child' refers to all those under the age of 18 throughout this document.

DO

- Do treat all people with dignity and respect
- Respect and promote the rights of children to make their own decisions and choices
- Encourage respect for difference, diversity, beliefs and culture
- Act inclusively, seeking to make everyone feel welcome and valued
- Use appropriate language
- Be a good role model
- Treat people with equal care and concern
- Take all reasonable adjustments for young people with disabilities and special education needs
- Listen to children and tell the Church Safeguarding Coordinator if you have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Refer to a more senior worker if a child does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning
- Encourage everyone to follow any behaviour agreement or ground rules and apply sanctions consistently
- Seek to diffuse aggressive or threatening behaviour without the use of physical contact
- Interact with children in a public place. If a child wants to talk one-to-one about an issue, tell another worker and find somewhere quieter, but still public, to talk
- Make sure that any electronic communication is done with parental consent and is transparent, accountable, recorded and adheres to safeguarding policies. Using church platforms and not private accounts
- Have a designated photographer to take, store and share photos of your group's activities, in line with URC good practice guidelines
- Use physical contact wisely; it should be:
 - 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 of the child's wishes, feelings and dignity
- Respect children's and young people's privacy
- Ensure that any communication online is done through a work or church account – this may require setting up an account specific for that purpose
- Ensure, where possible, parents or guardians are present in the building or other workers are aware when young people 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.
- 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.
- Keep up to date on policies, procedures and training, including safeguarding and health and safety
- Understand that your conduct outside of work including on line can impact on your work with children and young people

DO NOT

- Do not abuse the power and responsibility of your role for example do not belittle, scapegoat, put down, or ridicule a child or young person (even in 'fun') and don't use language or behaviour with sexual connotations (e.g. flirting or innuendo)
- Exclude children or workers from conversations and activities unless there is a good reason
- Overshare about your own situations
- Show favouritism (e.g. in selection for activities, in giving rewards, etc) or encourage excessive attention from a particular child (e.g. gifts)
- Threaten or use sanctions which have not been agreed
- Feel you have to deal with every problem on your own
- Use physical restraint unless they are causing harm to themselves or others
- Spend time alone with children out of sight of other people
- Contact them through private messaging
- Keep communication with children secret, while still respecting appropriate confidences
- Use child/young person's personal data for other purposes than activities consented
- Take photos or videos without consent
- Engage with children or young people through your personal social media or mobile account
- Assume that children should tell you anything you ask just because you are a worker
- Promise to keep anything a secret, it may be that if a child or young person is being harmed or at risk of harm, that you will need to share that information but only on a need to know basis
- Work in ways that puts your needs and interests before those of the children you work with
- Discriminate or leave discrimination or bullying unchallenged
- Interact with children you are working with from personal social media accounts

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

on behalf of

[church name]

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

A4 - Code of conduct for working with adults at risk



This code describes the standards of conduct, behaviour and attitude expected of all church workers working with adults, including adults at risk, to ensure that you are providing a compassionate, caring and supportive environment.

Safeguarding adults at risk means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect (14.7 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014). The 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.

All workers of the church should agree to the following code of conduct when working with adults. You are responsible for and have a duty to ensure that your conduct does not fall below the standards detailed in this code, which are also supported and detailed in the Care Act 2014 (14.1.99)

Be accountable

- Be honest with yourself and others about what you can do, whether or not the adult is being provided with any services.
- Recognise your abilities and limitations.
- Only carry out or delegate tasks agreed in your role description.
- Be able to justify and be accountable for your actions.
- Ask your leader/supervisor for guidance if you feel inadequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your role.
- Tell your leader/supervisor about any issues that might affect your ability to perform your role.
- Always establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in your relationships with people.
- Never accept any offers of loans, gifts or benefits from anyone you are supporting or anyone close to them.
- Comply with United Reformed Church (URC) policies and procedures.
- 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.

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 a vulnerable adult is not treated, without justification, any less favourably than the way in which a person who is not an "adult at risk" would be treated in a comparable situation.
- Always act in the best interest of people, with their present and past wishes and feelings being considered.
- Put the needs, views and wishes of people first, helping them to control and choose the help-and support 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.
- Always maintain the privacy and dignity of people who have help and support, and their carers.

- Promote people's independence, while helping them maintain existing family and social contacts.
- Always make sure that your actions do not harm an individual's health or wellbeing.
- You must never abuse, neglect, harm or exploit anyone.
- Challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour.
- Always take comments and complaints seriously; respond to them in accordance with the latest guidance in *Good Practice 6* and inform your leader/supervisor/safeguarding designated person.

Work effectively with other volunteers/colleagues

- Understand and value your contribution and the vital part you play in the church.
- Recognise and respect the roles of other church workers/colleagues and those from other denominations and agencies; work in partnership with them.
- Work openly and co-operatively with other church workers/colleagues, including those from other denominations and agencies, and treat them with respect.
- Work openly and co-operatively with people who have help and support, including their families or carers, and treat them with respect.
- Honour your commitment to the church and be reliable, dependable and trustworthy.

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/providing with the person; only continue if they give consent.
- Communicate respectfully with people in an open, accurate, effective and straightforward way.
- Communicate effectively with other church workers/colleagues as appropriate.
- Maintain clear and accurate records of the help and support the church provides, as appropriate.
- Recognise both the extent and the limits of your role, knowledge and ability when communicating with people who have help and support.

Respect people's right to confidentiality and decision-making

- Treat all information about people who need help and support, and their carers, as confidential.
- Ensure people participate as fully as possible in any decisions being made, with support in place to help that participation in a way understood by the adults.
- Only discuss or disclose information in accordance with legislation and URC policy.
- Always seek guidance from your leader/supervisor regarding any information or issues that you are concerned about.

Training, policy and procedure

- Attend all necessary training which helps to support you in your role.
- Complete all necessary safeguarding training at least every three years.
- Have a good awareness of URC policy and procedures.

Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion

- Respect the individuality and diversity of all people, including those we encounter and work with.
- Treat all adults equally and inclusively and do not discriminate on grounds of age, gender reassignment, ethnicity, race, religion/belief, cultural background, sexual orientation and disability.
- Promote equal opportunities and inclusion for the people we encounter and work with.
- Report any concerns regarding equality, diversity and inclusion to a leader/supervisor as soon as possible.

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

on behalf of

[church name]

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

A5 - Safeguarding incident recording form

Where a person is in imminent danger of harm or a criminal act may have been committed, the police must be notified immediately on 999. Otherwise, call 101 to report a crime or any other concerns that do not require an emergency response.

- Please fill in this form with the information available within 24 hours after becoming aware of a safeguarding incident or concern. You do not have to fill in all sections.
- Please ensure you are as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible, and do not interpret what was said using your own words.
- Record what you said as well as what the child, young person or adult 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.
- The completed form must be passed on or sent by secure email to the designated safeguarding person, and immediately followed up after sending.

Date on which this form is completed			
Full name of the person reporting the concern/incident			
Relationship to child, young person, or adult concerned of being at risk			
Church details, if known	Synod	Church	Number
Contact details of church or organization, if known	Address	Phone numbers	Email
Full name of child, young person, or adult concerned of being at risk			
Date of Birth, if known			
Contact details, if known	Address	Phone numbers	Email
Has the individual given consent to report? (or report as appropriate)	Yes	No	Reason for no consent:
If under 18, have the parents/carers /guardians of the child been informed?	Yes	No	Reason for no consent:
Please give a summary of the safeguarding incident/concern			
Date/time of incident			

What happened? Please provide detailed information about the circumstances and the person experiencing or being at risk of harm, abuse or neglect (preferably as a timeline)	
When did it happen? (date, time)	
Where did it happen? (specific location)	
What action/s were taken, and by whom?	
Name of anyone involved and in what way, including witnesses	
Other services or agencies involved <u>Note:</u> If referred to statutory authorities, or other services, please include name and contact details	
Next steps or recommendations	
INTERNAL USE	
Date received	
Full name of Designated Person	
Progress	
Conclusion	

A6 - Signs and symptoms of abuse

It is important to be able to recognise the possible signs of abuse. Observing any of the signs or symptoms does not necessarily mean that a person is being abused; there could be a perfectly ordinary explanation. However, the observation of multiple signs and symptoms, together with explanations which are inconsistent or do not 'ring true', should give more cause for concern.

Below is a comprehensive table of definitions, signs and symptoms of some of the types of abuse. The table has been compiled from a number of different sources, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. **Please note:** it is not an exhaustive list, and relates to the abuse of both children and adults.

Physical Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
To inflict pain, physical injury, impairment or suffering	- Hitting, slapping and beating. - Shaking, pinching, throwing and pushing. - Kicking, biting, burning, drowning and hair pulling. - Squeezing, suffocating, poisoning and using inappropriate restraint. - Parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. - Inappropriate use of restraint techniques or other physical sanctions. - Isolation or confinement.	- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them. - Cuts, lacerations, puncture wounds, open wounds, welts. - Bruising and discolouration - particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc. - in unusual places (e.g. around the mouth), in unusual patterns (e.g. symmetrical) or in particular shapes (e.g. fingertip bruising or belt marks). - Black eyes, burns, broken bones and skull fractures. - If the person is seen to have injuries that recur or are in the same place on more than one occasion or are without plausible explanation. - Any injury that has not received medical attention or been properly cared for. - Poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene. - Loss of hair, loss of weight and change of appetite. - Repeated or unexplained tummy pains. - Person flinches at physical contact and/or keeps fully covered, even in hot weather. - Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or people.
Emotional Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The use of threats, fear or power gained by another's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological stress. In children it can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development.	- Mocking, coercing, threatening or controlling behaviour. - Bullying, intimidation, harassment or humiliation. - The lack of privacy or choice, denial of dignity, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation. - Making someone feel worthless, a lack of love or affection or ignoring the person. - Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Emotional abuse may well be indicative of other forms of abuse.	- Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour. - Becoming quiet, clingy or withdrawn or conversely becoming aggressive or angry for no apparent reason. - Denial and hesitation to talk openly. - Excessive fear or anxiety - Behaviour such as rocking, hair twisting or thumb sucking. - Changes in sleep pattern or persistent tiredness. - Loss of appetite. - Low self-esteem, helplessness or passivity. - Confusion or disorientation. - Implausible stories and attention seeking behaviour. - Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults. - Running away, school non-attendance, stealing or lying.

	All forms of abuse have an emotional component.	
Sexual Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
For a child – forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. For an adult - Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour. No one should enter a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.	• Rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting. • Indecent assault, incest, being forced to touch another person in a sexual manner without consent. • Making sexual remarks, suggestions and teasing. • Indecent exposure, being forced to watch pornographic material or sexual acts. • Filming or photographing a child in sexual poses or acts. • Enforced or coerced nakedness or inappropriate photography of a person in sexually explicit ways. • Being spied on while a person is undertaking or receiving personal care activities. • 'Sexting', grooming and using social media to share inappropriate content.	• Emotional distress. • Preoccupation with anything sexual and age-inappropriate knowledge of sexual behaviour. • Mood, attitude or behaviour changes. • Expressions of feelings of guilt or shame. • Itching, soreness, bruises or lacerations, particularly around the genital areas. • Difficulty in walking or sitting, or unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding. • Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections. • A child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults. • Disturbed sleep patterns. • Torn, stained or bloody underclothing. • Significant changes in sexual behaviour or outlook. • A very young girl or a woman who lacks mental capacity to consent to intercourse becomes pregnant. • Underage Pregnancy/Termination.
Neglect	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs (physical and/or psychological) are not met. In a child, neglect is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.	• Failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services. • Failing to provide a warm, safe and comfortable environment. • Ignoring medical or physical care needs, including not providing adequate food or assistance with eating/drinking, or not providing sufficient or appropriate clothing. • Leaving alone or unsupervised. • Failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous (particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess the risks to themselves or to others). • Deliberately withholding medication or aids, such as walking sticks or hearing aids. • Denying social, religious or cultural contacts, or denying contact with the family.	• Person looking unkempt or dirty and has poor personal hygiene. • Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food. • Person is dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions. • Dirt, urine or faecal smells in a person's environment. • Developmental delay in children. • Low self-esteem, socially isolated and poor concentration. • Home environment does not meet basic needs (for example no heating or lighting). • Health and safety hazards in the living environment. • Untreated medical conditions, pressure sores, rashes, lice on the person. • Depression or low mood. • Person and/or carer have inconsistent or reluctant contact with Health and Social Services. • Callers/visitors are refused access to the person. • Prolonged isolation or lack of stimulation. • Person who is not able to look after themselves is left unattended and so put at risk. • Not being helped to the toilet when assistance is requested.

		Change leaving alone to 'child/vulnerable person being left alone or unsupervised'.
Self-Neglect	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
An unwillingness or inability to care for oneself and/or one's environment.	- Hoarding or having no possessions at all. - Living in squalor and neglecting self-care and hygiene. - Failure to provide oneself with adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, healthcare and safety precautions.	- Dehydration, malnutrition or obesity. - Untreated medical conditions and poor personal hygiene. - Unsanitary living conditions. - Inappropriate and/or inadequate clothing and lack of necessary medical aids. - Homelessness. - Not adhering to medical advice. - Not taking medication as advised/prescribed.
Financial Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.	- Theft, fraud or embezzlement of monies, benefits or goods. - Exploitation or profiteering. - Applying pressure in connection with Wills, property or inheritance, or financial transactions. - The abuse of influence, power or friendship to persuade a person to make gifts or change their will. - Being charged excessive amounts for services such as minor building works on a property. - Loans made under duress, threat or dishonestly extracted. - Mate-crime - where vulnerable people are befriended by those who go on to exploit them.	- Unexplained loss of money. - Missing personal belongings such as art, jewellery and silverware. - Deterioration in standard of living, not having as much money as usual to pay for shopping or regular outings. - Unexplained lack of money, inability to pay bills or getting into debt. - Sudden changes in a person's finances or a disparity in assets and living conditions. - Person unable to access their own money or check their own accounts. - Cheques being signed or cashed by other people without someone's consent. - Recent acquaintances expressing sudden or disproportionate interest in the person and their money. - Reluctance on the part of the family, friends or the person controlling the person's funds to pay for necessary food, clothes or other items. - Recent changes of deeds/title of home. - Inappropriate granting and/or use of Power of Attorney. - Sudden change or creation of a will to benefit an individual significantly. - Someone else having possession of money/ bank cards. - Someone else reported making financial decisions. - Fraud.
Discriminatory Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.	- Ageist, racist, sexist, or abuse based on a person's disability. - Abuse linked to a person's sexuality. - Harassment, slurs or similar inappropriate use of language and treatment. - Withholding services without proper justification, or lack of disabled access to services and activities. - Lack of respect towards a person's culture, or deliberate exclusion.	- Low self-esteem. - Withdrawal and social isolation. - Anger. - Person puts themselves down in terms of their age, race, gender identity or sexuality. - Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves. - Preference not to receive care from particular individuals. - Feeling as though there is a lack of control based on age, gender, religion. - Signs of substandard service offered (health/education).

Institutional Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The mistreatment of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.	• The inability of an institution to safeguard people from emotional or even physical harm and neglect. • Having fixed rules and routines by which people are controlled. • People prevented from acting within their rights. • No access to personal possessions or personal allowance. • Inadequate staffing, poorly trained staff and a lack of leadership and/or supervision of staff or volunteers. • Inappropriate use of physical interventions and poor practice in the provision of intimate care.	• Inappropriate or poor care. • Being routinely referred to in a condescending fashion. • Disrespectful language and attitudes. • Adult being spoken to or treated like a child. • A person's privacy and dignity being routinely compromised. • Failure to recognise the individuality of each person and applying a 'one size fits all' approach to support. • No evidence of support services care plans that focus on the individual's needs. • Inadequate staffing levels and the absence of individual care. • Lack of adequate procedures. • Poor record keeping/missing documents.
Domestic Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
Any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults or young people, who are or have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of age, gender or sexuality or social status. Rarely is domestic abuse a one-off incident.	• Physical, psychological, sexual or financial abuse. • Patterns of controlling and coercive behaviour. • Child to parent/carer abuse. • Abuse towards elderly family members. • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). • Honour based violence, committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and community. • Forced marriage. • Children can experience it by seeing and/or hearing the abuse, or seeing the injuries or distress afterwards, as well as being directly targeted.	• Unexplained bruises or injuries. • Unusually quiet or withdrawn. • Fear, anxiety or panic attacks. • Frequent absences from work or other commitments. • Stops talking about their partner/family member. • Is always accompanied by their partner/family member. • Becomes isolated and withdrawn from friends and other family. • Doesn't have control over possessions or money. • Anxious about being away from home and rushes to get back.
Spiritual Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. Coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The abuse of trust or misuse of power by someone in a position of spiritual authority (such as a minister).	• Forcing religious ideas or practices on to people, particular those who may be vulnerable to such practices. • Extreme pastoral interference in personal matters - reducing individual choice and responsibility. • The misuse of scripture or power to control behaviour and pressure to conform. • Oppressive teaching and isolation from others.	It is often difficult for churches to identify spiritual abuse because its definition may be more an issue of personal interpretation of common practices in the church or denomination. • Pastoral practices that 'force' people into accepting religious values or ideas. • A Feeling of confusion and uncertainty as to who, what or why they believe any more. • Deeply scarred - emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. • Feelings of betrayal leading to deep distrust, self-isolation and powerlessness.

The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.	• The requirement of obedience to the abuser, or the suggestion that the abuser has a "divine" position. • Intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in people experiencing emotional, physical or sexual harm. • The denial of the right to have a faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God. • Exclusion of people from the full range of church life (no arrangements for gluten-free wafers or non-alcoholic wine at Communion, or promoting fear of involving those who are HIV positive). • Oversimplification of forgiveness and healing without regard to pain or suffering.	• A changed and damaged view of church - loss of church as a safe space.
Online Abuse	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The use of the internet (via email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, online games, live-streaming etc) to harm or harass in a deliberate manner. It can happen at any time and is not limited to a specific location - can be experienced even when alone. It can affect anyone at any age.	• Communications seeking to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, humiliate. • Threatening earnings, reputation, employment, safety. • Cyberbullying/Harassment - repeated offensive, rude, insulting messages. • Denigration - derogatory information and/or digitally altered photos. • Flaming - posting insults using vulgar/profane language. • Impersonation - hacking accounts and taking on someone else's identity. • Outing/Trickery - sharing someone's secrets or tricking them into revealing embarrassing information. • Cyber stalking - repeated online threats/activity making someone afraid for their safety. • Trolling - online provocations, starting arguments, threats and insults. • Grooming - building emotional connection to gain trust for exploitation/abuse. • Sexting - sharing or coercion into sharing sexual, naked or semi-naked images/videos/	• Withdrawn, time spent alone, exclusion from social events. • Spend a lot more/less time than usual online, texting, gaming, on social media. • Reluctance to let anyone near their phone/ tablet/laptop etc. • Change in personality - anger, depression, anxiety etc • Changing appearance, trying to 'fit in' • Staying away from school/work • Nervous behaviour. • Losing self-confidence. • Distressed/withdrawn.

	messages.	
Modern Slavery	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. Includes human trafficking, where people are moved from one place to another into a situation of exploitation, using deception, coercion and violence.	- Domestic servitude – forced to work in private houses with restricted freedoms, long hours, no pay. - Criminal exploitation – pick pocketing, shoplifting, drug trafficking. - Forced labour – long hours, no pay, poor conditions, verbal and physical threats. - Sexual exploitation – prostitution and child abuse. - Organ removal, forced begging, forced marriage and illegal adoption. - Travel and identity documents removed.	- In a dependency situation, under the control and influence of others. - Malnourished or unkempt, wearing the same clothes all the time. - Travel, identity and financial documents held by someone else, or use of false/forged documents. - Living in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation, living and working at same address, few personal possessions. - In debt to others, low or no pay, excessive deductions made for food, accommodation, transport. - Unfamiliar with the neighbourhood, unsure of home/work address. - Scared, untrusting, withdrawn, anxious, avoiding eye contact. - Showing signs of abuse, having old/untreated injuries and healthcare issues. - In fear of the authorities and in fear of removal or consequences for family.
Radicalisation	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The process that moves a person to legitimise their support for or use of violence. The promise of an ideology which gives purpose and belonging. Can take place over a long time period or happen quickly. The person may not understand that they have been radicalised.	- Exposure to violent and inappropriate material. - Being recruited in person – online or face-to-face. - Joining extremist organisations. - Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues. - Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology. Extremist recruiters speak directly to the vulnerabilities people experience at times in their lives, e.g. sense of not belonging, low self-esteem, issues at home, involvement with gangs/criminal groups or identity crisis with their cultural heritage.	- The expression of extremist views - Accessing extremist websites/social networks or possessing extremist, violent literature. - Behavioural changes, anger and use of inappropriate language. - Becoming disrespectful and intolerant of others. - Using words and phrases that sound scripted, talking about 'us' and 'them'. - Sympathies, admiration or associations with known extremists. - Advocating violent actions or means. - Changing name or friends.
Child Sexual Exploitation	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
A type of sexual abuse. The child is given gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. The tricking or grooming of children to believe they are in a	- The use of violence, coercion and intimidation to force the child into sexual activity. - Invitations to parties where drugs and alcohol are freely given in exchange for sex. - Deceiving children into producing online indecent images/films of themselves.	- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phones etc. they can't or won't explain. - Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour. - Swings and changes in mood or character, being secretive. - Gang-association and/or isolation from friends and social networks. - Relationships with controlling or significantly older individuals or groups. - Sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy. - Being frightened of some people, places or situations.

loving and consensual relationship. Can be both in person or online. The child may not understand that they have been abused. They may seem to be condoning or even encouraging the abusive behaviour.	- Children being used to recruit other children into sexual exploitation. - Children being trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. - Sexual exploitation as part of gang initiation, status, protection or punishment.	- Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area. - Alcohol or drug misuse. - Going missing for periods of time. - Skipping school.
Self-Harm	Includes....	Some of the key indicators
The intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is often used as a way of coping with, expressing or releasing overwhelming emotions and distress. It may also be about converting emotional pain into physical pain, expressing something that is hard to put into words or feeling that they are in control.	- Cutting - Burning - Bruising - Scratching - Hair pulling - Poisoning - Overdosing - Intentionally putting themselves in risky situations - Overeating or undereating - Inserting objects into their own body - Hitting themselves or walls - Exercising excessively - Self-neglect (adults) Some may self-harm to create a reason to physically care for themselves, or to feel something instead of numbness or disconnection.	- Unexplained cuts, bruises and burns, which are likely to be on wrists, arms, thighs and chest. - Keeping themselves fully covered, even in hot weather. - Signs of depression, including low mood, tearfulness and a lack of motivation or interest. - Becoming withdrawn and a reluctance to speak to others. - Weight loss or weight gain due to changes in eating habits, including being secretive about eating. - Low self-esteem, such as an inclination to blame themselves for external problems and expressing that they are not good enough. - Alcohol or drugs misuse. - Bald patches from pulling out hair.

Things to note about abuse:

- It is unlikely that just one type of abuse will occur in isolation from another
- There can be an overlap of the signs and symptoms with different types of abuse
- All abuse involves the misuse of power
- There is an emotional abuse aspect to all types of abuse, including the witnessing of abuse
- If a child witnesses (including hearing) domestic abuse, this is considered to be child abuse
- Any type of abuse committed within the church can also have a negative impact on someone's faith and relationship with God
- It is not our role to determine which type of abuse it may be or to investigate.

For more information about specific forms of abuse, useful contacts of relevant organisations and details about those who are vulnerable to abuse, see:

- Appendix R: A Guide to Domestic Abuse
- Appendix V: Safeguarding and Digital Communications
- Appendix X: Responding to Allegations of Bullying and Harassment
- Appendix E: A Guide to Working with People with Disabilities
- Appendix U: Useful Contacts – For All Forms of Abuse of Children and Adults



A7 The Role of a Church Safeguarding Coordinator

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 procedure 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 procedure in the church

- To familiarise themselves with church policies and procedures and URC good practice guidelines 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 make others in the church aware of the church safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as URC guidelines.
- 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 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks.

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 contacts 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 Social Care, the Police or the Designated Officer (previously LADO) of a concern or incident.
- To take appropriate action in relation to any safeguarding concerns which arise within the church.
- To cooperate with Social Care or 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.
- To inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer at the time of any referrals made to the statutory authorities, or of any information received from the statutory authorities.
- To report summary safeguarding information annually to the Synod Safeguarding Officer 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 the impact of abuse.
- To promote positive safeguarding procedures and 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 congregation, including both paid staff and volunteers.
- To update their own safeguarding training every three years.
- To seek appropriate support and advice in carrying out this role.
- To make arrangements for a suitable person to carry out this role when they are on leave, and to publicise who this is and the dates of the alternative arrangements.



A8 What is abuse and neglect of children?

The below definitions are taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 and apply to England. Please note that there are national variations for Scotland (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014) and Wales (All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008).

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 from 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.



A9 What is abuse of adults at risk?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. 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.

Psychological or emotional abuse

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

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.

Neglect or Act of Omission

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

Financial or material abuse

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

Discriminatory abuse

This is the inappropriate treatment of an adult at risk 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 an adult at risk 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.



A10 Signs of possible abuse in children

Physical abuse

Physical signs include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation
- Injuries that reflect an article being used e.g. an iron
- Bruising, especially the trunk, upper arm, shoulders, neck or finger tip bruising
- Burns/scalds, especially from a 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

Factitious illness by proxy

This is a 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 and a dependency on medical attention has developed in the mother. It is very difficult to diagnose/evidence.

Female Genital Mutilation

A cultural (not religious) procedure whereby parts of female genitalia are removed – also referred to as female circumcision. This is normally undertaken on pre pubescent girls who are either taken abroad for procedure or "practitioners" come to the UK. There can be no anaesthetic and no sterile equipment used. Complications include serious infection, septicaemia, numerous gynaecological problems and in some cases, death.

Emotional abuse

The classic description of emotional abuse is a "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

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

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

Psychological/emotional signs include:

- Sexual knowledge inappropriate for the child's 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



A11 Signs of possible abuse in 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

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

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

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

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

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

A12 Signed Declaration Form



I have read and understand the Dursley Tabernacle URC Safeguarding policy

Role	Name	Signed	Date
Site Administrator			
Development Worker			
Pastoral Care Coordinator			
Church Minister			
Children's Worker			
Youth Worker			
Music Group Leader			
Safeguarding Officer			
Youth & Children's Elder			

A13 DBS Specification



- Everyone who is working with children & young people need to have an ENHANCED DBS
- Leaders and key volunteers of other adult groups need to have a ENHANCED DBS
- DBS must be renewed every three years
- DBS applications for volunteers are free
- DBS applications for paid workers are paid for by the Tab URC



A14 Role Descriptions

Youth Worker Job Description

INTRODUCTION

CHURCH YOUTH & CHILDREN'S WORK

Current Position:

Dursley Tabernacle is a United Reformed Church in the semi rural Cotswold town of Dursley, Gloucestershire. It has been growing steadily from 95 members in 2001 to the present figure of ~120. For the last few years The Tab has delivered youth work session led by church volunteers. We have previously employed a Youth Worker whose key focus for faith-based delivery is the 11-18 age group, delivering Sunday evening provision for our own Church teenagers which was predominantly social but with an explicit faith input. The Church is in partnership with Dursley Town Council and we have the Youth Centre for Dursley on our site. Secular Youth Work is delivered on The Tab site during the week by the Christian organisation The Door and funded by Dursley Town Council.

Our present work with children and young people is as follows:

- TabBeebies for pre-school children, TabToo for primary school age children and Tab Youth for secondary school age young people meet as part of the Sunday morning worship.
- About 30 children and young people are on our roll with about a dozen leaders and helpers on a rota.
- The minister regularly takes assemblies in the local primary and secondary schools.

AIMS FOR THE YOUTH WORKER

To be a dedicated person who supports and develops the faith-based ministry with the young people in Dursley Tabernacle United Reformed Church through the provision of Sunday morning and mid week activities.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Organise and run an evening or afternoon Youth Group in The Vibe Youth Centre for one and a half hours during term time. It may be desirable to skip some sessions and offer extended sessions occasionally; liaise with line manager if this is needed.
- Plan and deliver an appropriate social programme, with a faith emphasis which supports teaching work delivered on Sunday mornings – this can be based on the theme that the church service uses or an alternative theme.
- Liaise where necessary with other church staff and volunteers to ensure that provision fits with the overall church programme and is publicised through the Church's various publicity channels as required. Develop social media threads (facebook/Instagram) which can promote the work of the church and youth programme.
- Manage appropriate contact ratios, maintain registers, permissions and record keeping in line with Church policy and good practice.
- Manage the team of volunteers to support session delivery, recruiting more from within the church community as necessary with the assistance of the church leadership team.
- Devise a team rota and communicate this appropriately with team members to ensure they understand what is required of them and when.

- Communicate safely and appropriately with teenagers and their families through letters, emails and social media about the programme, and in order to support their individual needs
- Refer issues of concern to the Church Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding training will be provided and adherence to safeguarding policy is essential.
- Give general pastoral support to the young people in contact with the church and encourage/support them in organising their own informal meetings and events which take place outside of the above sessions.
- Attend review meetings with line manager and other meetings as appropriate.
- Develop links and co-operation with other Christian youth groups from the other churches of various denominations in the vicinity.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

- Hold a qualification in youth work (desirable)
- Have significant experience in working with young people (essential)
- Have 2 A-levels or equivalent (desirable)
- Have knowledge of and insight into the needs of young people (essential)
- Have experience of working with adult volunteers (desirable)

SKILLS

- Have some knowledge of good safeguarding practice
- Have the ability to engage positively with young people (essential)
- Have the ability to work as part of a team (essential)
- Have the ability to work positively with volunteers (essential)
- Have good communication skills - verbal and non-verbal, written and presentational - with an appreciation of the effective use of appropriate communication tools and social media (essential).

VALUES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Have an active Christian faith, and a desire to grow spiritually
- Be prepared to support the ethos of the United Reformed Church
- Be responsible, self-disciplined, reliable, punctual and accountable
- Have a sense of humour.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- This post currently is for a one year contract and is a fixed term post, term-time only from 4th September 2023. For the successful candidate, the contract will be confirmed after a three-month probationary period.
- Wages are calculated at £12.00 per hour for 6 hours per week with a statutory allowance of 19 hours of paid holiday entitlement.
- The Youth Worker will normally be expected to lead Sunday Morning youth sessions as part of the morning worship each week and deliver a 90 minute session mid week during term time (see

bullet one in Job Description above), and to utilise their remaining time in planning and liaison as necessary.

- The Church will support the appropriate candidate with training, personal development, pastoral and spiritual support.
- There is an expectation that appropriate rota management will ensure delivery from volunteers to cover holiday absences on Sundays in term time.
- Expenses will be subject to agreement.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- The work of this post will be overseen by a Management Committee formed of the Minister and representatives from the Elders.
- The Management Committee will agree the priorities and the work plan in full consultation with the appointed worker.
- The Church will appoint a Line Manager who will be responsible for day-to-day management and supervision.
- A Pastoral Support person, who will not be a member of the Management Committee but will be a church member or elder, will be available for the appointee.



Job Description: Specific Individual Support

This includes:

- Supporting a specific individual CYP during Youth Work Session

Responsibilities:

N.B You will be informed before the session if you are working with a specific child

- Ensure you have seen the individual Risk Assessment and necessary Personal Action Plan
- Make sure you have a mobile number for the child's parent/carer so you can text during the service if necessary.
- At the start of the session introduce yourself to the child and explain you will be spending time with them today and if they need anything or want to ask any questions they can ask you
- Ideally you will support them to join in the session as much as possible, however this will not always be possible with every child and some may wish to choose an activity independently.
- If this is the case encourage the child to choose as quiet an activity as possible to avoid disturbing the rest of the session.
- Support the individual child as much as possible, so that they will feel welcome and valued as much as any other child in the session.
- If the child starts to act inappropriately or attempts to leave the main building and put themselves or others in danger, more assertive responses may be appropriate along with parent/carer intervention, according to their Personal Action Plan

Additional Information:

For your own protection and the protection of children under your supervision, it is good practice not to be in a situation where you do not have immediate access to other responsible adults in the vicinity. Please ensure that you are always accountable to the senior session leader making every effort to have line of sight with another adult.

Under no circumstances should an adult without DBS clearance take a CYP (other than their own) to the toilet. It should be sufficient to point the CYP in the right direction.

Accountable to:

Church Eldership Team

These duties are in addition and compliment any other policies at Dursley Tabernacle Church



Job Description: Support Staff / Volunteer

Maximum Commitment Required: 1-2 hours / week

This includes:

- Session Delivery
- Meetings

Duties include:

- Leading a portion of the session which will be discussed with you and delegated by the session leader before the session.
- Carrying out duties required in order for the session to run effectively
- At the beginning of the session make sure the register is complete (either by parents/careers at TabToo or by young people TabYouth)
- Encourage all Children & Young People (CYP) are ready to start session by encouraging positive behaviour
- Support separation from parents/carers when necessary
- Participate in session debrief which will include recording CYP and staff present, recording any incidents or accidents that occur, if applicable during the session, and making a note of them on the incident report with any action taken and by whom when necessary
- Attend supervision or team meeting at the request of the Youth Worker or the Church Leadership

Additional information:

For your own protection and the protection of children under your supervision, it is good practice not to be in a situation where you do not have immediate access to other responsible adults in the vicinity. Please ensure that you are always accountable to the senior session leader making every effort to have line of sight with another adult.

Under no circumstances should an adult without DBS clearance take a CYP (other than their own) to the toilet. It should be sufficient to point the CYP in the right direction.

Accountable to:

Church Eldership Team

These duties are in addition and compliment any other policies at Dursley Tabernacle Church