



# Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at risk

Abbey Lane United Reformed Church  
incorporating Saffron Walden Methodist Church

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## Review

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

Date of most recent review: 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Date of the next review: April 2025

Signed: H.V.Bowtle (Secretary)

(on behalf of the Church Elders)

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## Introduction

Safeguarding is taken seriously by

### Abbey Lane United Reformed Church

We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity disability, sexuality or beliefs. We consider that the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice in order to protect vulnerable people in our church.

We will seek to establish a caring environment in which there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse.

We will implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in this policy, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to abuse.

We will appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator, who will have specific responsibilities for safeguarding, although we recognise that safeguarding is a whole church responsibility, The Safeguarding Coordinator is the person to whom all concerns, or allegations should be addressed. In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator should be contacted. Their contact details can be found in Key Contacts below.

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 recruitment process for the selection and appointment of people to work with children or adults at risk, whether voluntary or paid, lay or ordained.

We are committed to providing support, supervision, resources and training to those who work with children and adults.

We will use rigorous and careful supervision to protect people from the risks associated with known offenders within the congregation, including implementing contracts with known offenders and those who have been assessed as posing a risk.

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

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the statutory authorities if necessary,

We will co-operate with the statutory authorities in any investigation, will follow multi-agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We will refer concerns about staff - volunteers and paid, lay and ordained - that meet the relevant criteria to the Local Authority Designated Officer

Our Safeguarding Policy Statement is attached as Appendix 1.

## Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised involving children and adults within our church or with 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 those who attend our church, our trustees and staff (both paid and voluntary) and organisations who hire our building with the agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy.

The policy and procedures should be interpreted in the light of the most recent URC good practice guidance. Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy and our procedures.

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

## Duty of care and confidentiality

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

## Preventing abuse

The church will appoint Safeguarding and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator(s) for safeguarding children and adults. A job description is attached as Appendix 2.

Activities will be organised in accordance with URC good practice guidelines so as 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 consent forms will be used (for children's activities), 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 and will ensure that these procedures are followed, which include:

- asking applicants to complete an application form
- providing workers with job descriptions and person specifications
- completion of self-declaration forms
- obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks wherever legally entitled to do so
- taking up two references (not from family members)
- interviewing candidates

Safeguarding training will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision in their role. All roles are required to complete the URC Safeguarding Foundation Training. Depending on the role, additional training may be required. See Appendix 9 for details (URC Safeguarding Training Matrix).

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers will work within a code of conduct (code for workers, attached as Appendix 3) and understand that action may be taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or termination of working with us.

If we become aware of someone within our congregation known to have harmed children or adults in the past, we will inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory authorities 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. If they have their own safeguarding policy, they will be asked to provide a copy. If they do not have their own safeguarding policy, the church will encourage them to adopt one before agreeing to the hire, or may agree that they can follow the church safeguarding policy and procedures.. Organisational Policies will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## What are we protecting people 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 4. The definitions of abuse in relation to adults is attached as Appendix 5.

## How to recognise abuse

It is important to be aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Please see Appendix 6 for those relating to children and Appendix 7 for those relating to adults at risk. Some signs could be indicators of a number of 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. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for a child or adult's behaviour.

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

If a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and / or an allegation of abuse against someone, it is important that the person being told:

- stays calm and listens carefully
- reassures them that they have done the right thing in telling
- does not investigate or ask leading questions
- explains that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- does not promise to keep secret what they have been told
- informs the church Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, informs the Deputy or the Synod Safeguarding Officer)

- makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record (using the template in Appendix 8). This should be given to the church Safeguarding Coordinator and stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.

## 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:

- The concern should be discussed with the church Safeguarding Coordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to the statutory authorities (see Key Contacts below for the relevant statutory contacts)
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and the circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix 8. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory authorities if a referral is made.
- 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 increased risk. If the statutory authorities are involved/ they should be consulted beforehand.
- The Synod Safeguarding Officer should be kept informed of any serious concerns.

If someone in the church is alleged or known to have harmed children or adults we will inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer so that they can offer advice and support, and we will contact the relevant statutory authority.

## If the allegation concerns a church staff member or volunteer

For any concerns relating to children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales will be contacted. The timing and method of any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the LADO. This will cover communication with the worker, suspension, investigation and possible strategy meetings. A decision will be taken by the LADO about when to inform the worker and the church will follow this advice. For LADO contact details, see Key Contacts, below.

For concerns relating to adults, Adult Social Care will be contacted. See Key Contacts, below, for details.

In accordance with the law, a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) if the church withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with children / adults at risk OR would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a different position because the employer believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct, satisfied the harm test, or committed an offence that would lead to automatic inclusion on a barred list.

In such cases, a report will also be made to the Charity Commission, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and therefore require notification.



## Concerns, Complaints and Compliments

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

Alison Jiggins

Email: [safeguarding@saffronwaldenurc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@saffronwaldenurc.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 days.

## Key Contacts: Sources of advice and support

The church Safeguarding Coordinator is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed.

Alison Jiggins

Email: [safeguarding@saffronwaldenurc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@saffronwaldenurc.org.uk)

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

Val Bowtle

Email: [safeguardingdeputy@saffronwaldenurc.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingdeputy@saffronwaldenurc.org.uk)

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Candice Hart

Telephone: 07849 276750

[safeguarding@urceastern.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@urceastern.org.uk)

Nicola Grieves (Children's & Youth Development Officer)

Synod Telephone: 01223 830770

Email: [cydo@urceastern.org.uk](mailto:cydo@urceastern.org.uk)

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) (This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer)

24 hour helpline: 0845 120 4550

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales

Essex Duty LADO

Telephone: 03330139797

Statutory contact in the case of a child

Essex Social Care (Children's Social Care Department)

Telephone: 0845 606 1212 Email: [childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk)

Statutory contact in the case of an adult at risk

Essex Social Care:

Telephone 0345 603 7634, or if out of hours: 0345 606 1212

Essex Police:

Emergency Telephone: 999. If non-emergency crime Telephone: 101. Email: [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk)

## Appendix 1

# Safeguarding Policy Statement

The following statement has been agreed by the leadership of Abbey Lane & Newport United Reformed Church.

This church is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk, and to ensuring their well-being.

- We believe that all children and adults at risk should know that they are valued within the church and safely enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of our church
- We respect the personal dignity and rights of children and adults at risk (for example, as set out in the Human Rights Act 1989 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) and will ensure that our policies and procedures reflect this
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children under 18 years of age
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults at risk
- We recognise that domestic abuse affects both adults and children and believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living
- We will report any abuse of children or adults at risk that we discover or suspect
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police will be contacted as a matter of urgency
- We recognise that Children's Services has responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child, and that Adult Services do so for adults at risk
- We acknowledge that Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales have responsibility for dealing with all allegations and concerns about people working with children, whether paid or voluntary workers, lay or ordained
- We recognise that safeguarding is a whole church responsibility

We are committed to:

- The establishment of a loving environment, which is safe and caring, and where there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse
- Following the relevant legislation, statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk
- Ensuring that we keep up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding
- Building constructive links with the relevant Voluntary and Statutory Authorities
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that as a church, everyone works within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policies
- Supporting the Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults at risk
- Following safer recruitment principles in the appointment and selection of all those who work with children and adults at risk, be they volunteer or paid staff lay or ordained
- Supporting, supervising, resourcing and training all those who undertake work with children and adults at risk

- Ensuring that the children and adults we have contact with know that they are valued and feel empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm
- Reporting any abuse of children or adults at risk that we discover or suspect
- Supporting all those in our church who are affected by abuse
- Supporting and supervising those who pose a risk to children or adults at risk, implementing contracts of behaviour, whilst bearing in mind the overarching principle that the welfare of the child is paramount
- If an assessment is made that someone poses an unmanageable risk to those in need of protection and could not safely attend our church, we will ensure that they continue to be offered pastoral care and will signpost them to appropriate agencies for support.

Name: Helen Valerie Bowtle. (Secretary)

(on behalf of the church leadership)

Signed: H.V.Bowtle (Secretary)

Date: 25/07/2024

## Appendix 2

# 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and 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

## Appendix 3a

# Code of Conduct for working with children

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

### **Training, policies and procedures**

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

### **Safer ways of working**

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

### **Respectful and inclusive working**

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

### **Managing behaviour**

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

### **Photos and videos**

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

### **Reporting concerns**

- Know who the Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC) is and how to contact them
- Tell the CSC if you have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Do not promise to keep anything a secret; if a child is being harmed, or is at risk of harm, you

will need to share that information but only on a need-to-know basis.

### **Working with children online**

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

### **Approval/consent**

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

### **How to engage online**

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

### **Use of content generated online**

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

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

On behalf of Abbey Lane URC:



Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

## Appendix 3b

### Code of Conduct for working with adults

This code describes the standards of conduct expected of all those working with adults, including adults at risk (bottom p2 provides definitions

of 'adults at risk' in England, different legislation for Scotland and Wales). It sets out general principles for good practice but cannot cover every type of activity or situation. Further details on specific issues can be found in Good Practice 6 and the accompanying resources.

#### **Training, policies and procedures**

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

#### **Promote the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of people**

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

#### **Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion**

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

#### **Effective communication**

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

### **Respect people's right to confidentiality**

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

### **Online engagement**

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

### **Physical contact/touch**

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

### **Financial matters**

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

### **Challenging inappropriate behaviour**

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

### **Feedback and complaints**

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

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with adults, including adults at risk. On behalf of Abbey Lane URC

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

**Adults at risk**

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

**Key principles:**

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

**Defining 'adults at risk'**

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

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

## Appendix 4

### 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 (AH Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008).

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

## Appendix 5

### 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 negates 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.



## Appendix 6

### 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

#### Fictitious 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

## Appendix 7

### 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

## Appendix 8

# Safeguarding Incident Recording Form

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

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

Church name:

Synod:

### 1. What the concern is about

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

- |  |                                     |  |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children      | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult      | <input type="checkbox"/> Adults and children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current event | <input type="checkbox"/> Past event |  |

### 2. Type of concern

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

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse  | <input type="checkbox"/> Online abuse         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual abuse           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse    | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-neglect         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child sexual exploitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial abuse      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult sexual exploitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect         | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern slavery       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radicalisation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic abuse  | <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional abuse  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Capacity Act       | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-harm       | <input type="checkbox"/> Discriminatory abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other                     |  |   |

### 3. Who is involved

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

*Name:*

*Contact details (if available):*

*Other relevant information about them:*

*If there are specific individuals who have been harmed / are at risk of harm, give details:*

*Name, age, where they live:*

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

### 4. What has happened

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

How did the information come to light?

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

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

Y  N

*If, yes, please give details:*



**5. Who else knows about the concern**

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

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

**6. Consent for information to be reported**

For children:

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

Y     N

*If not, reason for no consent:*

For adults:

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

Y     N

*If not, reason for no consent:*

**7. Any other relevant information**

*Anything else you think it would be helpful to explain about this situation:*

**8. Your details**

*Name:*

*Church role:*

*Signature:*

*Date:*

*Email address:*

*Phone number:*

## Appendix 9

### URC Safeguarding Training Matrix

#### Safeguarding Training Framework

#### Levels of mandatory training

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

Roles requiring mandatory training:	Foundation Training	Intermediate Training	Advanced Training
Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓	✓	✓
Managers of Synod Safeguarding Officers/Advisors	✓		
Church Safeguarding Coordinators	✓	✓	
Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator	✓	✓	
Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group (or its successor), Synod Safeguarding Committees and Reference Groups	✓		
Active Ministers and CRCWs (including retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry)	✓	✓	
Synod Moderators	✓	✓	✓

Youth and Children workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Youth and Children's workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Adult workers including volunteer leaders	✓	✓	✓
Adult workers (volunteer helpers) **	✓	✓	
Managers of Children, Youth and Adults workers	✓		
Pastoral workers/visitors	✓	✓	
Synod Clerks	✓		
Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members	✓		
Worship Leaders and Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers	✓	✓	
URC Trustees and Synod Trustees	✓		
Elders as local church trustees	✓		

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

