



*Preventing* Abuse

*Protecting* All – children, adults and employees

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

**Woking United Reformed Church**

Wessex Synod

(Last major update October 2022)

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## **Woking URC's Safeguarding Policy and Principles Statement**

- Safeguarding and dealing with one another safely is taken seriously by Woking United Reformed Church (URC). It is not an option but integral to all we do and stand for and is a whole church responsibility. All in our church family have a collective responsibility to share in upholding the rights of the least powerful and protecting the most vulnerable. That means doing what we can to be safe in our buildings, our activities and our fellowship.
- The WURC Charity takes its responsibilities in this respect very seriously.
- We acknowledge both adults' and children's rights to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- We consider that, in accordance with legislation, the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice. That is not to say that we are less concerned about adults. We have a duty of care to ensure all are safe.
- 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 such abuse.
- We will appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator who will have specific responsibilities for safeguarding, although we recognise that safeguarding is always a whole Church responsibility.
- We will organise activities in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to children and adults at risk.
- We will follow a safer recruitment process for the selection and appointment of people to work with children or adults in need of protection, whether voluntary or paid, lay or ordained.
- 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 use rigorous and careful supervision to protect people from the risks associated with known offenders within and associated with the Church, including implementing contracts with such offenders and those who have been assessed as posing a risk, which could include partners of offenders.
- We believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living and can affect both adults and children
- All concerns and allegations of abuse, including domestic abuse, will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the Police and Social Care, Adult or Children's as appropriate.
- We will co-operate with the Police, Children's and Adult Services in any investigation, will follow multi agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

- We will refer concerns about paid employees - lay or ordained - or volunteers that meet the relevant criteria, to the authority Designated Officer.

**This Church is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults in need of protection, and to ensuring their well-being.**

- We believe that all children and adults in need of protection should know that they are valued within the Church and should be able to safely enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of our place of worship.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of children and adults in need of protection (for example as set out in the Human Rights Act 1989 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).
- 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 in need of protection.
- 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 recognise that Children's Services has responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child.
- Adult Services has responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult in need of protection.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Designated Officers (DOs) in local authorities (formerly Local Authority Designated Officers – LADOs) have responsibility for dealing with all allegations and concerns about people working with children and adults in need of protection whether they are interacting with them as paid or volunteer workers and whether they are lay or ordained.

We are committed to:

- Following relevant legislation, statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Building constructive links with relevant Voluntary and Statutory Agencies.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that as a place of worship all will work 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 in need of protection.
- Exercising proper care, following safer recruitment principles, in the appointment and selection of all those who work with children and adults in need of protection, be they volunteer or paid employees, lay or ordained.
- Supporting, supervising, resourcing and training all those who undertake work with children and adults in need of protection.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the children and adults that we have contact with know that they are valued and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- Reporting any abuse of children or adults in need of protection that we discover or suspect.
- Supporting all in our place of worship affected by abuse.
- Supporting and supervising those who pose a risk to children or adults in need of protection, 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 that are vulnerable and in need of protection and could no longer safely attend our place of worship, we will ensure that they continue to be offered pastoral care and will also be signposted to appropriate agencies that could support them

This policy and associated statement of principles have been agreed by the Trustees of Woking United Reformed Church Charity.

Name: Keith Bradley

(Church Secretary on behalf of the Trustees)

Signed:

Date: 4<sup>TH</sup> October 2022.

## Sources of advice, guidance, and support

**Woking URC's Safeguarding Co-ordinator** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed initially. He can be contacted as follows:

Name - Robin Gray

Contact phone number: 01252 54056 or 07975 774221

Email address [robingraylag@hotmail.com](mailto:robingraylag@hotmail.com)

In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator can be contacted as below:

Name – David Tuson

Contact phone number: 07817 007780

Email address [churchcommunity@wokingurc.org.uk](mailto:churchcommunity@wokingurc.org.uk)

### Synod Safeguarding Officer

Sharon Barr

Contact phone number 07776 178246

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

**Churches Child Protection Advisory Service** 24 hour helpline: Tel 0845 120 4550 (N.B. They should only be contacted for urgent advice if the Synod Safeguarding Officer, who works outside ordinary office hours, is not available.)

### Surrey Children's services

Surrey County Council, Children's Social Care Department: 0300 470 9100

Out of hours: 01483 517898

### Surrey Adult services

Surrey County Council, Adult Social Care Department: 0300 200 1005

Out of hours: 01483 517898

### Surrey Police

If an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency. As there is no single point of contact dial 999 and they will connect you with the appropriate officer on duty.



## **Aim and Purpose of this Policy and Guidance**

What follows amplifies what's in the Policy and Principles Statement above and what needs to be in place to ensure that mandatory procedures are being implemented (such as DBS clearance and the consent of young people and their legal guardians to the use of photographs for public display or publicity purposes under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998) and that we are following best practice. Some issues are related to the need to meet Charity Commission requirements or those of our insurers.

Safeguarding is not, however, just about casually adopting policies and principles; it is about ensuring that they are put into practice as a matter of course on a regular basis. This document also offers help and advice in what follows on how to achieve that. Safeguarding policy and procedures play their part in:

- creating and maintaining a safe environment for all, especially children and adults at risk, in which the dignity of each person is respected
- being informed about different forms of abuse, neglect and harassment, and how to respond appropriately, making it clear that they are all unacceptable
- taking seriously any concerns, allegations or complaints of abuse and harassment, responding to them promptly, including reporting concerns to, and cooperating with, the relevant statutory authorities
- caring for those who have been abused in the past
- ensuring accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding
- offering pastoral support for church families in which abuse has been identified
- offering pastoral support to people in the church who have been accused of abuse, and those who are being investigated
- ministering wisely and providing supervision and support to those who have been perpetrators of abuse
- providing opportunities for all to flourish and journey towards healing.

The challenges are to foster and sustain a community of care where everyone – children, adults and, especially, those in greater need – find in our Church a place to seek pastoral care and support. Working collectively enables us to overcome challenges and create safer and more viable environments for all church families and others who use our buildings. It is common to find people who are related to one another, and for individuals to hold more than one responsibility within any church. Therefore, the risks and likelihood of conflicts of interest are higher, and the need for clarity of responsibilities is essential. The greatest opportunity is to establish ways of support that contribute to a lasting healing process for survivors and those affected by abuse, harm or neglect, including perpetrators and offenders.

### **Who this policy applies to**

**The Church's policy has been approved and endorsed by the Trustees and applies:**

- to those who attend our Church/place of worship
- to our Trustees, paid staff and volunteers
- to organisations which hire our building with agreement to operate under the Church's safeguarding policy.

- The policy and procedures are interpreted in the light of the most recent United Reformed Church good practice guidance which in turn reflects changes in legislation and additional guidance from e.g. the Charity Commission.

Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy and our procedures. For the purpose of this policy, children are defined as those under the age of 18.

## **Charity Commission Requirements**

This church, like others, has charity status and falls under the regulatory direction of the Charity Commission. Serving elders and the minister are charity trustees and have what the Charity Commission terms 'the primary responsibility' for safeguarding in their church. This includes a duty to ensure compliance with legislation, policy and procedures. The Commission sets out the duty of trustees as follows:

*“Trustees of charities which work with vulnerable groups and children have a duty of care to their charity which will include taking the necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for them. They must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and protect the reputation and assets of the charity. It is therefore vital that trustees assess the risks that arise from the charity’s activities and operations involving children and adults at risk and put in place appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures to protect them. They must also undertake ongoing monitoring to ensure that these safeguards are being effectively implemented in practice.”*

The Commission believes that having safeguards in place not only protects and promotes the welfare of children and adults at risk, but also enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents, carers and the general public in the charity, protecting its reputation and helping it to fulfil its mission. Trustees must ensure that policies and procedures are in place like those in this document and that protecting people from harm is central to its culture, that they have enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/ trustees for safeguarding and protecting people, and conduct periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.

## **Insurance Requirements**

Some of what we do is also guided by an insurance requirement to take reasonable steps to ensure that children and adults at risk are safeguarded. Insurers require churches to follow legal, government, Charity Commission and internal guidelines. If these steps have not been taken, it is possible that insurance policies could be invalidated and that churches, and even individual trustees, could become liable for losses incurred. In summary, self-evidently, we must therefore have in place appropriate policies, guidelines and procedures:

- to ensure that they meet our duty of care to children and adults at risk and that we do what we can to protect them from harm
- to protect the reputation of the Church (locally and wider)
- to comply with insurance requirements and protect church finances.

Church policies generally cover public liability for standard events. However, if an event involves higher-risk activities, such as rock-climbing or water sports, those concerned should check with our insurance company whether additional cover is required.

## Preventing Abuse

The Church has appointed safeguarding and deputy safeguarding coordinator(s) for children and adults at risk as above. A role description is attached as Appendix 1.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid employees and volunteers and will ensure that these procedures are followed. (See recruitment policies in Appendices 2 and 3).

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

Activities are organised in accordance with URC good practice guidelines (key aspects are included in this document) so as to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships whilst minimising opportunities for harm and misunderstanding or false accusation.

Whenever there are concerns about the safety or welfare of someone, you should

- Recognise the concern
- Respond well, acting in an open and transparent way
- Record what has been seen, heard or said
- Report concerns to the appropriate people.

Then follow the procedure set out in Section B for children and Section C for adults as appropriate. The key is to recognise that something is of concern and respond, don't ignore it even if it turns out to be a false alarm.

## A. Good Working Practice - General

### Preventing harm

**Accessibility** The Church premises should be as accessible as possible to all. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, lighting or heating should be addressed and, where necessary and possible, aids and adaptations put in place.

**Health and safety** The Church has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for its workers and all who use its buildings, and so should take reasonable measures and precautions to minimise the risk of anyone getting hurt. Health and safety should be at the heart of what it does, and proper processes should be in place.

**Risk assessments** Risk Assessments are required to be carried out for all activities. In the case of regular activities, a risk assessment will be drawn up and reviewed bi-annually. A risk assessment is undertaken for individual events such as Holiday Fun Club, Holiday at Home and other special events each time they are organised. Additional advice can be sought from the WURC Health and Safety Adviser.

WURC Risk Assessments will be filed according to the WURC Document Retention Policy, a copy of which can be obtained from the office.

It is not possible to avoid all risks, but it is possible to try and minimise them through careful planning/preparation, and by providing a written record of the processes and actions taken. Risk assessments should be undertaken before any activity takes place and kept securely in case they need to be seen later, for example, as a result of an accident taking place. They can be broken down into five easy steps:

1. Identify the risks / hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed, and how

3. Evaluate the risks (likelihood and impact) and decide on precautions/actions
4. Record findings
5. Regularly review and update

In an activity risk assessment, it is important to take into account:

- the type of activity and the space and setting being used for it
- the ages, abilities and special needs of participants in the group
- the staff ratios
- the staff experience
- emergency planning.

Where activities include trips away or overnight stays, risk assessments should be completed after a site visit where possible.

**Checking for hazards** Before each activity takes place, the rooms and toilets should be checked for hazards, and that they are fit for purpose. For example, a stack of chairs at the side of the hall, which may not be seen as a hazard to a pensioner's lunch club, could be potentially hazardous to a toddler group. Little ones might easily pull over unstable chairs. All equipment should be checked for faults regularly, especially electrical and activity equipment. Faulty equipment should be reported, and any electrical repairs performed by a qualified professional. Trailing leads and cables should be secured, and trip hazards removed.

**Fire safety** The law says that fire risk assessments and fire safety plans must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date. Such reviews would include:

- Checking the building complies with fire safety regulations and guidelines
- Ensuring exits and fire exits are clear and are clearly marked
- Regularly checking and servicing fire extinguishers and smoke detectors, which should be fitted throughout the premises
- Ensuring all users of the building are aware of the fire procedures
- Carrying out fire drills regularly with all groups who use the premises
- Appointing designated fire marshals and providing them with appropriate training
- Keeping accurate records of all checks, drills and tests.

**First aid** The contents of first aid kits must be checked and refilled regularly, should be clearly located and recognisable. A first aid kit should be carried for all off-site events and activities, and in all vehicles used by the church. Where possible, ensure that there is at least one trained first aider on the premises. Regular staff and volunteer first aid training (including renewal training) should be undertaken, and a list of first aiders compiled and kept available.

**Accidents** An accident book should be maintained and be easily accessible. Parents or carers should be notified of any accidents, and of any first aid administered. The Church's Health & Safety Officer should also be notified of any accidents, so they can consider if any action needs to be taken to improve health & safety provisions.

**Driving** If travel arrangements for children, or adults at risk, are organised on behalf of the church, then it becomes the church's responsibility to follow best practice. Where necessary, details of travel arrangements should be included within the consent form for any activity or event, and it should be clearly communicated where the bounds of responsibility lie when transporting children and adults at risk. Those involved should also check things like the driving licence of potential drivers, that minibus drivers have passed a MIDAS test, that vehicles to be used are roadworthy and fitted with seat belts for each passenger, that they have appropriate insurance cover for any driving they do on behalf of the church.

## **People in Positions of Trust**

Most staff work well and safely with children, young people or adults at risk. However, it is a sad fact that some people will harm those they work with. On occasion, this is intentional and, regrettably, a part of their motivation to work with the groups concerned. For others, it may be because of poor attitudes, low standards of care, or inadequate awareness of professional boundaries. For convenience, this document uses the term 'worker' to refer to volunteers, ministers and paid staff members in local congregations. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding harm caused to such groups by workers, is never acceptable. Managing allegations of abuse against church workers can be complex and it is essential that anyone concerned about possible abuse should make their concerns known to the minister or WURC's Safeguarding Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity so that the appropriate steps can be taken. If it's the minister's behaviour that's of concern, it might be more appropriate to go straight to the Synod Safeguarding Officer. Clear guidance is set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018', which emphasises organisational responsibility regarding people who hold positions of trust in faith-based organisations. It details clear criteria for a referral to police or statutory services.

'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' states that a referral must be made directly to the police or the local authority DO within one working day of all allegations that come to a church's attention, where it is alleged a worker has:

- behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- has, or possibly has, committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Concerns which fall outside the above criteria may, nevertheless, amount to inappropriate conduct. In such cases we would seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer to decide whether to handle this by way of advice, supervision, training, disciplinary processes, or a combination of some or all of these.

A record should always be kept of all allegations made.

## **Guidelines on touch**

Church activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and adults, whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour, or the risk of allegations being made. All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the needs of the child or adult at risk, and not the worker and should always occur in public. Giving someone a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. Be sensitive to the individual's reaction to touch. If someone is not happy with physical contact, respect this and find another way of conveying your concern for them.

Touch with children should be age-appropriate and initiated by the child as far as possible. Be aware of the individual's culture, and the meaning that touch has for them. Leaders and helpers should be able to monitor each other's behaviour with regard to touch and physical contact. They should feel safe and confident to check out issues, discuss any concerns and to challenge constructively anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

## **Supporting those with medical needs**

Organisers need to identify any health issues or medical needs when organising activities with children or adults at risk, to enable all to participate fully. Where there are specific instructions from parents/carers about a child's or adult's medical needs, all relevant staff should know what they are, and how to carry them out. The Consent form in Appendix 7 deals with those with medical needs and a model 'Request to Administer Medication' form or seek emergency medical assistance.

## **Terrorism**

Terrorist attacks can happen at any time and in any place without warning. To keep everyone as safe as possible, all key personnel should be made aware of the action to take should worship or some other activity become a target. In the unfortunate event of that happening, the 'Stay Safe' principles should be followed. They are:

- RUN – escape if you can
- HIDE – if you can't RUN, HIDE
- TELL – call the Police.

As well as looking after our own safety should an attack take place, we must remain responsible for those in our care. More advice on increasing protection from terrorist attacks, is in 'Crowded Places Guidance 2017' on the government's website. This document does not deal with other forms of terrorism like hacking into IT systems or threats or hoaxes designed to frighten and intimidate.

## **Conditions for Hirers**

Organisations wishing to hire our building for activities with children or adults at risk 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 sign a statement to that effect and provide a copy. If they do not, the Church will require them to adopt one before agreeing to the hire (e.g. by referring them to [www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/) for guidance). In some cases, the Church may agree to the organisation adopting the Church's own safeguarding policy and procedures.

Each hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring. When church premises are let to an external, informal group or individual, whether or not they pay, a copy of the church safeguarding policy should be loaned to them. When hiring out the church premises or providing space to community groups/organisations whose work involves children and/or adults at risk on one-off or regular bases, it is important to use a written letting agreement. Boys' Brigade or Girls' Brigade groups are required to follow the safeguarding policy of their organisations. Such groups are not hiring, as they have an overarching sponsorship agreement with the Church.

## **B. Safeguarding Children and Young People**

### **Working Alone with Children or Young People**

Leaders should ensure that, as far as possible, an adult is not left alone with a child or young person where there is little or no opportunity that the activity will be observed by others. This may mean groups working within the same large room or working in

an adjoining room with the door left open. This good practice can be as much a benefit to the adult as to the child or young person and should include the following:

- Always have at least two adults present with a group. This is of particular relevance when it is the only activity taking place on WURC premises.
- Always ensure appropriate ratios of leadership to children are observed according to age and gender.
- Never take a group off the premises with fewer than two adults.
- Think about the use of premises. For example, do not expect children or young people to have to walk along a dark unsupervised area to enter WURC.
- It is good practice to keep a record of each activity/session. This record will include a register of children, staff and visitors, and details of any significant incidents. See the section on parental responsibility and consent below and Appendix 8 for best practice on registers and registration forms
- In the normal run where children and young people have to be transported by car or minibus, there should always be more than one passenger in the vehicle and children should be seated in the back seats of the vehicle.
- Ensure that children leaving the premises do so only in the presence of adults known to have permission to take them.
- Where possible, steps should also be taken to avoid giving lifts to children alone. If there is no alternative, as in an emergency, another leader should be made aware of the situation and the reason for it. Such circumstances should always be recorded and reported to the leader of the group or activity as well as the parents/carers

There may be rare occasions when someone has to work alone with a child/young person (e.g. pastoral care or one-to-one mentoring) but it should most **definitely be the exception rather than the rule**. However, if a situation arises, such as a child wanting to discuss a personal matter with a leader or helper, where it was deemed necessary, they should inform the leader or another volunteer about it beforehand, and if possible and safe to do so, obtain the agreement of a parent/carer. **BUT ALWAYS REMEMBER** that, depending on what they wish to disclose, telling a parent/carer might put the child further at risk. Wherever possible meet in a public place, such as a room with an open door with other people present close by. Avoid meeting in a remote/secluded area, carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the child, and record and report to the leader any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry. Let the leader or those with whom you are working know when such a meeting is about to happen and then also when it has come to an end.

### **Good practice with colleagues**

Staff/volunteers should be prepared to speak to another member of staff/volunteer if they see them acting in ways that might be misconstrued or to their senior leadership team if they have serious concerns. All those working with children and young people should encourage an atmosphere of mutual trust, support and care so that they are comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour with one another.

## Adult to child ratios

It is recommended to have at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people even with smaller groups. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- 0 - 2 years, 1 adult to 3 children
- 2 - 3 years, 1 adult to 4 children
- 4 - 8 years, 1 adult to 6 children
- 9 - 12 years 1 adult to 8 children
- 13 - 18 years, 1 adult to 10 children

When young people are helping to supervise younger children, then generally, only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating ratios.

**International trips** The recommended ratio for international trips is:

- up to 10 children, three adults
- 1–10 additional children, one additional adult: for example, 30 children would require a minimum of five adults

However, no fewer than three staff should accompany a group of up to 10 children.

More detailed advice and guidance about such trips can be obtained from the International Relations department at Church House.

## Young helpers

Although the age of 18 marks the legal division between children and adults, it is recommended that there should be a minimum three-year difference between the age of young workers and the age of the children they supervise.

## Insufficient Leaders/Helpers

Ideally, there will be a pool of adults who have been checked under safer recruitment procedures, and who can be called upon at short notice if anyone is suddenly unavailable. However, if no others with all the right checks are available to stand in, the leaders who are present should carry out an informal risk assessment of the activity to decide if it is safe to continue with the number of adults who are available. This might result in changing the planned activities to reduce risks. Decisions and reasons for any such alterations should be recorded in an incident report. If it is decided that the risks to the participants' safety are unacceptable, then the activity should be cancelled. **Note: Under no circumstances should children's groups be run with only one leader.**

## Outdoor activities

Events in the neighbourhood of the building require the same care and attention during the planning stage. The adult/child ratio should be increased.

Working URC operates a behaviour management policy (Appendix 6), which includes an approach with bullying behaviour.

## Overnight stays

When organising overnight stays and residential events, it is important that: there is a nominated safeguarding adult(s), and all participants know who it is. A qualified first



aider should also be in attendance. All church adults involved should have completed safeguarding training, and sufficient criminal record checks carried out on them prior to the event. If using an established residential centre, confirmation should be obtained that it has a suitable safeguarding policy, carries out training and criminal records checks on its workers, and has full risk assessments for health and safety. For mixed-gender groups both female and male leaders are needed. There should be separate sleeping, changing and showering facilities for males and females and adults should not sleep in the same room as children unless there are very exceptional circumstances e.g. where children require supervision. Otherwise, all the normal checks and procedures should be carried out as for any event.

For advice on overnight stays involving a child or young person who is transitioning, or who does not identify as male or female, contact our Synod Safeguarding Officer.

## **Parental consent and responsibility**

WURC recognises the responsibility of parents/carers as defined in the Children Act 1989. A child can only give their own consent from the age of 16.

WURC will obtain approval for attendance of young people and children involved in all regular clubs and activities by way of consent forms (Appendix 7) as follows:

- Annual Consent Forms, signed by parent/carer which should be completed the first time of attendance, and then annually.
- Event Consent Forms, for special events, trips, or “hazardous” activities. This form will include full details (or accompany full details) of the activity/trip. Holiday Fun Clubs are included as a special event.

Consent forms will ask for the information listed in Appendix 7 and will be retained/archived as determined by ‘URC Policy for the Retention of Documents’.

## **Disputes between parents and youth and children work leaders**

WURC appoints a link Elder for all youth and children’s activities whether they take place on a Sunday or a weekday. Their role is to attend the activity from time to time to give encouragement and support to the leaders and provide feedback to the Elders’ meeting. It is not to get directly involved in the day-to-day running of the activity:

In the event of a dispute between parent(s) and staff/volunteers, the first step should be to try and to resolve it with the relevant youth/children’s leader in discussion with the parent/carer, only bringing in the link Elder or Minister as necessary or as appropriate.

## **Use of telecommunications, computers and social media such as Facebook, e-Safety and acceptable use policy**

WURC recognises that social networking is widely used by children and young people and that different platforms will vary in popularity from time to time so that the Church needs to establish and maintain the appropriate links. A model information policy and consent form is at Appendix 7. More detailed information on the issues specifically around the use of social media is set out in Appendix 16.

## Personal networking accounts

Paid staff or volunteers are not barred from using social networking sites, nor does WURC determine whether as individuals they should have under 18 year olds as 'friends' on their personal accounts. However, clear demarcation is required between those individuals we know personally and those we know because of our roles in the Church which carry a particular responsibility.

Careful consideration of all communications in the furtherance of youth and children's work must be taken. There is a need to maintain clear boundaries, to help with transparency and to aid managing of links when they move on, or are asked to step down from their role. It is also important for the safeguarding of both staff/volunteers and young people.

Paid staff or volunteers should not accept young people as 'friends' on their personal accounts who they **only** know through the work they undertake for WURC, and should never accept anyone as a friend if they know their account has been set up fraudulently (such as incorrect date of birth to start an account prior to turning 13 years of age, on *Facebook*).

Staff and volunteers should take care in ensuring that their personal accounts have the security settings set correctly to ensure that the account is not accessible by young people.

## Church organisation social media accounts

In most cases, the 'group' facility (on *Facebook*) should be adequate and used with correct security settings set to private. This requires people to 'ask' to join and all communication within the group is visible. The group is managed by a nominated administrator who can accept and remove people from the group as required.

The 'page' facility (on *Facebook*) should only be used as an open web/notice board facility, remembering it is completely public, unless security settings are set to private.

All WURC communication undertaken through social networking should be open and accountable. All messages should be posted on group wall and not emailed from the site.

Leaders and volunteers should never 'ask' to join any child's or young person's individual account. Paid workers might choose to set up a 'Youth Work' account, but careful consideration needs to be taken to ensure that this is sufficiently transparent (provide a group of individuals with the login details), and that it does not contravene the terms and conditions of the site (most sites do not permit an alias, which a 'youth worker' account would essentially be).

## Use of the internet

When using the internet as part of a group talk/presentation, leaders will make sure that the material being shown is age appropriate. If allowing a group access as individuals or in small groups as part of an activity, it should happen under adult supervision.

Church computers that are available for the use of children and young people will have suitable barring and filtering systems in place to minimise the risk of users accessing sexual and violent images.

No Church information or activity will be uploaded to “*You-Tube*” or similar sites – the only accepted repository is the WURC website - <http://www.wokingurc.org.uk/>. Parents attending events will be advised that they may upload images of their own children, but not of others, without the authority of the relevant parents/carers.

## **Text messaging**

As with social networking sites, caution should be exercised when using text communication with children and young people. There need to be adequate safeguards in place for the leader and the young people. Texting should be avoided, but well recorded if used to ensure transparency.

WURC’s Children’s Worker and Youth Worker are provided with a mobile phone and the account will be in the name of the Church. The account will be billed to the Church and charged to the Youth and Children Work budget.

Text Messaging will be limited to the hours of 08:00 am to 08:00 pm. So far as possible, text messages should not be deleted. They may be archived to PC’s or off-line storage, provided a record is maintained.

## **Photography**

All photography and storage of imagery must comply with Woking URC’s photography policy which can be found in Appendix 10.

## **Extra-curricular activities**

It is not intended that being a member of staff or volunteer, should limit the individual’s non-Church-related social life. However, there are certain circumstances where meeting off-site could be considered unwise and/or make for the creation of special friendships. Such situations should be avoided and the advice of the Synod Safeguarding Officer sought if thought necessary.

All Trustees, paid employees and volunteers work within a code of conduct (see Appendix 11) and understand that action may be taken if this code is not followed. Woking URC will abide by disciplinary procedures as laid out in the Church’s employer’s contract.

If we become aware of someone within our congregation or wider church family activities known or alleged to be a risk to children or adults at risk, we will inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory agencies to put in place a management plan to minimise the risk.

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

**Whenever there are concerns about the safety or welfare of a child if a child trusts an adult enough to disclose abuse it is vital that they are taken seriously. It is equally important that all are aware of how to respond. It is also important to explain to children that, when they make such disclosures, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to get other people to help if they, or someone else, are being harmed.**

It is not always possible to stop children in mid-flow, but when you are listening to children making a disclosure.

### **Do:**

- Stay calm
- Let the child talk and listen attentively, giving the child your complete attention
- Accept what is said without judgement
- Reassure the child that they are right to share these sort of things
- Seek medical attention if necessary
- Reassure the child that you will make sure that they will be supported during the difficult time to come
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for the abuse they have suffered
- Explain what you will do next

### **Do NOT:**

- Panic
- Confront people alleged to be responsible for, or be involved in, the abuse
- Press for information or put words into children's mouths
- Promise confidentiality, but explain that you will tell someone who can help
- Investigate
- Use leading questions, such as '*so it sounds like you have been abused*'. Instead encourage children by saying '*tell me*', '*explain to me*', '*describe to me*', etc
- Ask the child to repeat the disclosure over and over
- Take any action which would undermine any future investigation or disciplinary process
- Say everything will be alright
- Give any reassurance about what is likely to happen to them
- Keep it to yourself

If abuse is discovered, disclosed or suspected:

- Consult WURC's Safeguarding Coordinator or Synod Safeguarding Officer in the first instance (if either of these are implicated, only discuss the matter with the person who isn't implicated). Do not discuss the situation with anyone else

in the Church unless they have a safeguarding remit within the Church, for example, the Minister or Deputy Coordinator

- If the child would be at risk if they were to return home, contact the DO at Children's Services, or the police (keep their numbers handy)
- Record conversations as soon as possible and certainly within 48 hours
- Keep copies of handwritten notes made at the time, even if these have subsequently been typed up
- Do not delay
- Do not act alone
- Do not try to investigate or confront the alleged perpetrator. Leave investigations to the appropriate agencies
- Do not promise to keep secret what you have been told.
- Inform the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, inform the deputy or the Synod Safeguarding Officer)
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record (using the template in Appendix18). This should be given to the Church Safeguarding Coordinator. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.

## **C. Safeguarding Adults**

Adult safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect as set out in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance under the 2014 Care Act.

Safeguarding adults can be complex, reflecting the myriad relationships in which they engage, and the societal, family and wider circumstances, in which relationships evolve and change. The Charity Commission and our insurers are just as concerned that our policies and procedures for the safeguarding of adults appropriate.

### **Mental Capacity, Abuse and the Right to Choose**

A fundamental difference between safeguarding adults and children is that adults are presumed to have capacity for making decisions, and the freedom and right to make choices about their life (unless they are assessed as lacking capacity, or the law restricts them from doing so). This can mean that people at risk of abuse may make choices that others deem unwise, and which may expose them to future harm. This can include situations when a person is harmed, or abused by a friend, paid carer, or family member, but chooses not to press charges. This can be a difficult area for a church congregation, particularly where there are pastoral relationships with either party.

An important aspect to understanding whether an adult can protect themselves from abuse and harm, is to consider the extent to which they can understand information and make decisions i.e. their 'mental capacity'. For example, someone with severe dementia is unlikely to have the mental capacity to make significant decisions that will affect their lives. One of the difficulties associated with mental capacity, is that it can fluctuate; so someone may lack capacity at one moment, and sometime later be fully able to make important decisions by weighing up the implications of a situation, having received and understood information. Some adults may have capacity to make some decisions but not all. Lacking mental capacity is not a permanent or fixed state, even

though the physical or mental symptoms, illness or disability, which reduces capacity, can be of a permanent nature. For this reason, when health or social care professionals test a person's mental capacity it will only ever relate to the decision that is being considered.

## **Understanding Adult Abuse**

Our understanding of 'harm' and 'abuse' reflect societal and cultural norms. Recent investigations have highlighted the pain caused by abuse to adults with learning disabilities in hospitals, how neglect in care homes leaves frail people distressed, without dignity, and the ways in which prominent individuals have used their power and influence to abuse men and women over many years. As we learn more of the extent of adult-to-adult abuse, so we realise the prevalence of the abuse taking place around us. Abuse of adults at risk of neglect occurs in any setting including the person's own home and the very places which should present as safe, such as churches, hospitals and care homes. Most abuse is caused, or inflicted by, a third party. Adult abuse or neglect, like child abuse, involves the misuse of power, authority and status in a relationship. It includes economic abuse like control of bank accounts.

Research shows that a significant proportion of adults who need safeguarding do so because they are experiencing abuse from someone close to them. Adult abuse can include all forms of domestic abuse and this guidance therefore includes references to domestic abuse. Self-neglect is now also recognised as a type of abuse or neglect which is relevant to safeguarding adults in some circumstances.

Concerns about adult abuse can emerge from observations, receiving and passing information, or direct disclosures from individuals. Their severity may range from unintentionally inflicted difficulty or harm to deliberate and calculated abuse of individuals or groups of people. Adult safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Incidents can be one-off events or a pattern of repeated or cyclical or historic abusive behaviours.

### **Adults who misuse substances and alcohol .**

Adults who abuse substances can be subject to abuse, violence or self-neglect. This may be because of chaotic lifestyles, or because their addiction exposes them to dangerous situations. Adults who misuse substances, can experience long term physical, cognitive or mental health issues, as a direct consequence. The cumulative risk to individuals can increase the need for care and support. All of which means that adults abusing substances, including alcohol, can be adults at risk of abuse. There is a strong correlation between the misuse of alcohol and drugs, and incidence of domestic abuse, including violent offences.

Parents, who misuse substances including alcohol, may be placing their child at risk. The concept of 'hidden harm' refers to damage encountered by children whose parents misuse substances. Up to 40% of all child protection cases involve parental substance or alcohol misuse. A large proportion of children whose parents have problematic alcohol or drug use, will be damaged as a result, even where there are mitigating factors such as reliable financial incomes, or a caring and stable adult in their lives who ensures daily routines. Anyone concerned about an adult who misuses substances and who knows they are the parent/guardian of a child or young person under the age of 18, should liaise with the church's Safeguarding Coordinator, or the Synod Safeguarding Officer, for advice.

Definitions of abuse in adults are set out in Appendix 13.

## Responding to an adult who discloses abuse

If an adult discloses abuse, it is essential that their information is taken seriously just as with children and young people.

Some do's and don'ts, very similar to those for children, are set out below.

### Do:

- Stay calm.
- Let the person talk and listen attentively, giving them your full attention.
- Accept what is said without judgment.
- Reassure the person that they are right to share the information with you.
- Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Reassure the person that you will help to support them or arrange for appropriate support to be put in place.
- Tell the person that they are not to blame for the abuse they have suffered.
- Explain what you will do next.

### Do NOT:

- Panic.
- Confront people alleged to be responsible for, or involved in, the abuse.
- Press for information or put words into the person's mouth.
- Promise confidentiality, instead explain the boundaries to this.
- Investigate anything.
- Use leading questions, such as 'so it sounds like you have been abused'.  
**Instead, use open questions such as 'tell me', 'explain to me', 'describe to me'.**
- Ask the person to repeat information unnecessarily.
- Take any action which would undermine any future investigation or disciplinary process.
- Say everything will be alright.
- Give any reassurances about what is likely to happen to them.
- Keep it to yourself.

But it is important to establish: -

- What would the person like to happen next?
- What would be helpful to them?
- Are they safe from harm now?

Make sure you have checked if the person is still in danger or at risk of harm from the individual or people, who have hurt them.

## Responding to abuse which occurred when the adult was under 18

If someone has chosen to disclose historic abuse to you, it can be because they believe that you will hold their information sensitively, trusting you to respond appropriately, and with understanding.

Previous experience of abuse as a child, or young person, can increase the likelihood of being abused as an adult, and/or the risks of mental or physical illness, later in life.

Even though the alleged abuse may have happened many years ago, it is still important that it is reported. Ideally this will be with the consent of those who've experienced the abuse.

Where an incident of alleged abuse occurred in the past, it may be necessary to report the concern if:

- You are aware that more than one person may have been subject to the potential abuse.
- A criminal offence may have been committed.
- The person asks for the situation to be reported.
- No action appears to have been taken, of which you are aware, and someone could still be at risk.
- The perpetrator may still be in a position to inflict harm upon others.

Information can be shared with those who need to know, if others are at risk of harm.

If there are others at risk from an alleged perpetrator, and you believe a criminal offence may have been committed, follow the steps on page 14 above. If you become aware of historical abuse, but not directly from the person who has been harmed, it should be followed up. This is to ensure that all necessary steps were taken at the time, and importantly, that no-one is still at risk from a known or alleged perpetrator. In this situation tell only your Safeguarding Co-ordinator or the Synod Safeguarding Officer. The Synod Safeguarding Officer will be in a position to liaise with appropriate parties, including the local authority, if needed.

It is important that you do not share the information you have, with anyone else. If you are in any doubt about whether to report your concern, your Synod Safeguarding Officer or the URC Safeguarding Officer will be able to give you advice. You may also contact your Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team to seek their advice about whether further steps could or should be taken. You can explain the situation to them without providing further details and they will advise you upon a possible course of action to take.

## **Concerns about domestic abuse**

If you have concerns about domestic abuse it is important that you take it seriously. If someone begins to disclose domestic abuse, ensure you are in a safe place, away from the presence of others and from any children.

If someone tells you they are being abused in their home, and there are no children or adults with care or support needs in the household, advice from Women's Aid [[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)] and domestic abuse partnerships suggest you can be of help in the following ways:

Take the person seriously and believe what they say.

- Be calm and positive.
- Respect their wishes.
- Ask what they want to happen.
- Give them time to tell you what is happening at their own pace. This may be the first time they have opened up, and may be an immense and brave step for them.



- Emphasise that they are not responsible for the abuse, and they are not alone.
- Find out if they need medical help.
- Do not encourage them to do anything they are not ready to do. They will probably be the best person to judge the best way forward and how they can stay safe.
- Help them to access specialist services and sources of professional help and support.
- Help them to keep safe, by making a safety plan.
- Check whether it is safe to contact them and agree how to stay in touch.

**Do not offer to talk to or counsel the alleged perpetrator. You may be perceived as a ‘threat’ to the relationship and inadvertently increase the risk to the victim or indeed the risk to yourself.**

Remember to ask:

- What the person would like to happen next?
- What would be helpful to them?
- Are they safe from harm now?

### **Concerns about domestic abuse, when there are adults with care or support needs in the home**

Adults with care and support needs who are experiencing abuse in their home are also experiencing domestic abuse. A safeguarding response may therefore be appropriate for people in these circumstances.

### **Concerns about domestic abuse, if children are in the home**

Where domestic abuse is taking place in a household with children, or young people under 18 years of age, this will be a children’s safeguarding matter. See the previous section of this policy.

You should ask the same questions as in the paragraphs on domestic abuse above but also ask where are the children?

### **Carers**

Caring for family members with care and support needs can create stress and difficulties which can lead to tensions between a person who is being cared for and their family carer. Such situations are not unusual; they account for a significant number of safeguarding cases and sometimes indicate that the carer is not receiving enough help and support. Although the risk of abuse is most usually from the carer, there are circumstances when the abuse can be inflicted upon their carer or other members of the family by the person being cared for. Difficulties between the carer and the person being cared for can be exacerbated when there is a history of abuse in the relationship. Carers can be entitled to support services in some situations. Encouraging carers to access help can be an important step to preventing harm in the home.

Do not offer to talk to or counsel the alleged perpetrator. You may be perceived as a 'threat' to the relationship and inadvertently increase the risk to the victim or indeed the risk to yourself.

Remember to ask the same questions as set out in the section on concerns about domestic abuse on page 24 above

## **Consent and information sharing**

Ideally in all situations, the person experiencing the abuse will either, contact statutory authorities directly, or give you their consent, to make the contact on their behalf. Sometimes this may not happen. If no consent is given because the person is confused or appears not to understand you and is unable to tell you what they would like to happen next, this could be due to lack of mental capacity. By taking action and reporting your concern, it is likely that you will be acting in the person's best interests, to keep them safe from harm.

Where the person appears to understand that inaction creates further dangers for them, and continues to choose not to take action, you can still share information with the Synod Safeguarding Officer, and church Safeguarding Coordinator if you believe that a crime may have been or could be committed or that a failure to do so would place a child or adult with care needs at risk of abuse. Examples might include:

- The alleged perpetrator is employed in a position of trust (including professionals) which means others may be endangered.
- The alleged perpetrator works with children or adults at risk.
- Others are in danger or at risk.
- A criminal offence may have been committed.
- There is a serious and high risk to the safety or life of the person.
- The alleged perpetrator works for the church, paid or unpaid.

If you become aware that people are in immediate danger of harm, or a criminal offence has been committed, you should contact the police immediately.

If you are in doubt about whether to report the situation, contact your Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Team for advice. You can share the circumstances of the situation without providing the name of the person involved. Consent and information sharing ideally in all situations; the person experiencing the abuse will either, contact statutory authorities directly, or give you their consent to make the contact on their behalf.

## **Confidentiality and information sharing**

If someone starts to make a disclosure to you, find an opportunity, early in the conversation, to explain that you cannot keep secret, any information about a possible criminal offence or risk to others. We all have to share certain types of information if people are in danger or a crime has been committed. You can offer assurance that you will only share information with those who need to be made aware. This makes explicit the importance of what is about to be said. Details of a potential safeguarding situation should remain confidential to those who must be involved and not shared any wider with anyone else.

It is essential to keep any records with personal information confidential and stored securely, with access only to those who need to see them.

It is possible to share generalised details, sufficient to make people aware of an alleged incident. For example: 'A possible safeguarding incident has occurred and our church safeguarding procedures are being followed. Owing to the need to respect everyone's right to confidentiality we are unable to share details. We ask that you respect this and trust that every step is being taken to ensure our church is as safe a place to be as we can make it. If we are able to tell you any further information we will do so. However, we may not be in a position to give any other details for some time. If you have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, please contact Robin Gray the church Safeguarding Coordinator. Please pray for all involved'.

It is not acceptable for the entire congregation to be informed, as this is not considered to be either proportionate or necessary and would be contrary to the offender's human rights. If, however, the information is in the public domain, for instance in local press reports, it may be necessary for the sake of the overall ministry of the Church to have a more open discussion.

## **D. Other General Issues**

Treating one another well, being respectful of our rights as individuals, and respecting the dignity and needs of each other, witnesses to our faith. This universal regard for others requires that we offer a welcome to all. Churches and places of worship are unique: church communities care for those who have been abused, or are at risk, yet trustees need to be clear that we also hold a responsibility for giving pastoral support to perpetrators and people accused of abuse.

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

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults at risk. A copy of the definitions relating to children is attached to this policy at Appendix 12. The definitions of abuse in relation to adults at risk is attached as Appendix 13.

### **How to recognise abuse**

It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. A list of such possible signs and symptoms in relation to children is attached at Appendix 14 and in relation to Adults at Appendix 15. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different things.

It is essential to note that these are only **indicators** of **possible** abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for any such 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.

Do also remember that abuse can take place **ANYWHERE** – at home, at school, at church, on-line, in a car, or in a park or in the countryside.

## Reporting concerns about potential abuse or neglect

If you have a concern you should always report your concern to the church Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will contact the Synod Safeguarding Officer or the URC Safeguarding Officer for advice. They may decide to contact Surrey's Adult Safeguarding Team to seek their advice about whether further steps could or should be taken. The situation can be explained to them without providing further details and they will advise you upon a possible course of action to take.

If the church Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator are not available, speak directly to our Synod Safeguarding Officer whose details are on page 8 of this policy.

Information you may need when contacting the local authority or police.

- The name of the person concerned.
- Their address and date of birth, if you have them.
- Has the person consented to you giving the information? If the answer is 'no', explain why you are calling.
- Why you are concerned.
- What you were told, what you saw, or what you heard.
- Any other relevant details about the situation.
- If there are children or young people aged under 18 involved, their names and ages, if you know them.
- **Who the alleged perpetrator is:**
  - A member of staff (lay or ordained) Involved in the church in an unpaid capacity, as a volunteer,
  - Continues to have access to adults at risk or children,
  - Is in an occupation of trust (e.g. solicitor, accountant, other professional)
  - Known to have a history of safeguarding concerns, for example, is subject to a contract.
- Your contact details.
- The Synod Safeguarding Officer's contact details.

## Procedure in the event of a concern of abuse

Woking URC recognises the need to refer a concern to, and consult with, the Church Safeguarding Officer as set out below. There may be occasions where this is not possible, because of the need for immediate action/decision which will need to be taken by the individual to whom the disclosure has been made. Actions taken/decisions made, will need to be reported to the Church Safeguarding Officer as soon as practically possible.

Actions taken in response to concern of abuse will be in accordance with URC Good Practice Guidelines, so as to work in line with legislation, government recommendations and statutory authority practices. If there is an immediate risk of harm the Police will be contacted.

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

- The concern should be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory agencies (see page 5 for the relevant statutory contacts)
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix 18. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory agencies if a referral is made.
- The person, about whom the allegation is made, must not be informed by anyone involved with the Church, if it is judged that to do so would increase the risk of harm to the child or adult at risk.

## **If an allegation is regarding someone from within the Church**

We will inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer, so that they can offer advice and support, and we will contact the relevant statutory agency.

### **Referral criteria**

Local Churches must know how to manage allegations of abuse against workers. WURC endorses and follow the guidance issued in '*Working together to safeguard children 2015*' which sets out clear criteria for the referral, by churches, of concerns about workers' (paid and unpaid, lay or ordained) conduct with children to the local authority Designated officer (DO) in England - Telephone no in Surrey: 0300 123 1650, email: [DO@surrey.gov.uk](mailto:DO@surrey.gov.uk)

Referrals can also be made direct to the police in urgent cases.

This guidance states that a referral must be made without delay where it is alleged a worker has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child or may have harmed a child,
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

These procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- A person's behaviour in their personal life, which may impact on the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care
- A person's behaviour with regard to their own children

If an allegation requiring immediate attention is received outside normal office hours, the out of hours emergency duty team or police should be contacted and the DO informed the next working day.

### **Concerns outside the referral criteria**

Concerns which fall outside these criteria may nevertheless amount to inappropriate conduct. The Church should seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer to decide whether to handle this by way of advice, supervision, training, disciplinary processes or a combination of some or all of these.

A record should be kept of all allegations made. (See the comprehensive edition of Good Practice 5 for further information).

## **Who should be informed of a referral?**

The Synod Safeguarding Officer should be informed in respect of any referral made to a DO. The Moderator should also be informed if the allegation relates to an ordained minister. The Moderator will inform the General Secretary as appropriate.

Where there is potential reputational risk to the Church, the URC press office should also be informed.

The worker concerned should only be informed as soon as possible after consultation with the DO, but with due regard to protecting evidence. A decision about who should inform the worker will be made in consultation with the DO and the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

Issues such as suspension, investigation, disciplinary proceedings, resignations and compromise agreements will be dealt with by the appropriate authority in each case according to the particular circumstances of the allegations. As will action in respect of false or unfounded allegations, reinstatement or redeployment.

## **Pastoral support for those who pose a risk of harm to children**

The URC believes it is called to share its ministry with all people. As a result, congregations may have people within their membership who have abused children. Not all will have committed sexual offences. Some may have neglected, or physically or emotionally abused, a child. The duty to share God's universal offer of love and forgiveness places a duty on all within the URC to ensure that those who pose a potential risk to children are welcomed to participate in Church Life in ways which do not compromise the safeguarding of children.

## **Caring for convicted sex offenders**

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. We will provide known offenders with a group of people who will offer support, friendship and supervision. The membership will be chosen carefully, and the Synod Safeguarding Officer consulted about its constitution. The members should have training, which can be provided or sourced by the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

Normally, that group will establish and monitor a formal safeguarding contract between the church, the person who is considered to pose a risk, and any statutory agencies involved. This will include a range of conditions which the individual will be expected to meet. For example, it might specify designated areas of the church building where it is, or is not, appropriate for the abuser to enter, either at all or at specific times. This is a highly confidential process involving a select group of people within the church, with advice and support from the Synod Safeguarding Officer. Any information-sharing

should be given careful consideration and be done in consultation with the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

The offender should not be given any official role in the church which gives them status or authority, nor positions where children would invest trust in them by virtue of such a role. For instance, those involved in pastoral ministry of any kind are regarded as trustworthy people of integrity, both by church communities and by the general public. This perception can be used by offenders, if in such a role, to target victims

The various public services are required to establish and monitor the arrangements for managing sexual and violent offenders, known as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). Guidance under MAPPA states that religious communities must put in place effective arrangements which allow them to ensure they are able to protect their community whilst, at the same time, allow sex offenders to maintain their right to worship in as safe a way as possible. The statutory agencies will provide us with guidance when appropriate.

## **Safer Recruitment**

Safer recruitment is a framework which uses a range of measures to both deter and prevent unsuitable individuals from working (either paid or unpaid) with children and/or adults at risk. Mistakenly, some believe that carrying out a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS check - see below and Appendix 17) is all that is needed when recruiting workers. It can be tempting to take short cuts when people are willing to help out, are a familiar face or there are gaps in the rotas. However, it is important to be aware that a DBS/PVG check is only one part of a safer recruitment process that helps to prevent unsuitable or dangerous individuals gaining access to children and adults at risk.

The safer recruitment process includes:

- providing a job description and person specification
- completing an application form
- a self-declaration of criminal history
- a face-to-face interview
- checking references
- completing a DBS check
- a trial period.

This is supplemented by the applicant's agreement to abide by the United Reformed Church (URC) Safeguarding Policy and a commitment to undertaking regular safeguarding training.

Before the filling of a position, paid or voluntary, takes place, it is important to have worked out:

- the role and responsibilities (job description or role profile)
- skills and qualities needed (person specification)
- where and how the position will be advertised (e.g. church notices/news bulletin, local paper, etc...)

- the level and nature of contact with children and adults at risk and whether the work required meets the definition of 'regulated activity' (current or past). If it does, then the applicant would be eligible for a DBS/PVG check, either with or without the barred list check.

## **Safer Recruitment - Volunteers**

Every parent, carer or family member has the right to expect the same standards of recruitment and professionalism irrespective of whether an individual is paid or works voluntarily. The Charity Commission requires safer recruitment for volunteers as well as paid staff. Not doing so could, therefore, invalidate our insurance and potentially incur personal financial liability for elders and ministers. It is therefore important to be rigorous in selecting volunteers.

A potential volunteer's willingness to complete any necessary forms, undertake interviews, etc, shows that they take safeguarding seriously and enables the church to show that the potential volunteer is valued as a person, not to mention the service which they offer. Generally, people will not be put off by paperwork where its importance can be shown. Most voluntary organisations require people to complete application forms, give referees and have some form of interview, so people usually expect such a process. Robust safer recruitment practices will deter and prevent many who are unsuitable from applying in the first place.

We must be satisfied that all appropriate checks have been made and that we have done everything possible to deter and prevent unsuitable candidates from applying and working with children or adults at risk. Every parent, carer or family member has the right to expect the same standards of recruitment and professionalism irrespective of whether an individual is paid or works voluntarily. The Charity Commission requires safer recruitment for volunteers as well as paid staff. Not doing so could, therefore, could invalidate the Churches insurance and potentially incur personal financial liability for elders and ministers. It is therefore important to be rigorous in selecting volunteers. Appendix 3 deals with the process for those working with children and young people, but it should also be applied to those working with adults at risk.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

The URC uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help ensure that those working with vulnerable groups are safe to do so. Criminal record checks are just one part of an effective recruitment process. They reveal any information held on central police databases, such as cautions and convictions, and any mention on government lists that bar an individual from working with children or adults at risk. An applicant who is barred from working with children in one nation is barred across the UK. Individuals and the self-employed cannot apply for a standard or enhanced check from the DBS directly. Due Diligence Checking Ltd has been contracted to provide criminal records checking services for all relevant paid and voluntary roles and positions within the URC. It is a criminal offence for anyone listed and barred by the DBS to work, or apply to work, in the UK with the protected groups for which they are listed and barred (either children or adults). It is also illegal for any local church to employ a listed or barred



person to do regulated activity and work from which they are barred or listed. See also Appendix 17.

In accordance with the law, a referral will be made to the DBS if the Church withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with children or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position that does not involve working with children and because the employer believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct or satisfied the harm test, or has committed an offence that would lead to automatic inclusion on a barred list.

## **Whistleblowing**

To fulfil its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, the URC recognises the importance of creating a culture where there is a mechanism in place for workers to be able to raise legitimate concerns about other workers. This is commonly referred to as whistleblowing. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives workers legal protection against being dismissed or penalised as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. While the Act does not provide the same protection for volunteers, churches should endeavour to adopt the same practice for all. All staff, volunteers and members of a church family should be encouraged to acknowledge and take individual responsibility by bringing matters of unacceptable practice, performance or behaviour to the attention of any of the following:

- Church Safeguarding Coordinator or deputy
- Elders
- Minister or Interim Moderator
- Synod Moderator
- Synod Safeguarding Officer

## **Concerns, Complaints regarding this policy**

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or constructive feedback regarding this policy or its application please contact Keith Bradley (Church secretary), telephone no 01483 727167.

It would be helpful to have comments (complaints or feedback) in writing as it avoids any possible misunderstanding about the issue. However, whether verbal or in writing, all comments will be acted upon and responded to within 10 days.

## **Review of Policy**

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

Date of most recent major review: October 2022

Date of next review: annually each October

Signed:

October 2022

(Church secretary on behalf of the Church Trustees)

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – The Role of a Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator

### Context

We believe that our children deserve the best possible care that the Church can provide. 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 provide a first point of contact regarding safeguarding issues.
- To be an advocate for safeguarding 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 or earlier if there are legislative changes, kept up to date and are fit for purpose.
- To make others in the Church aware of the Charity's safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as URC guidelines.
- To ensure safer recruitment practices are operated in recruitment of all workers, both volunteers and paid, including, but not exclusively, ensuring that relevant workers have up to date Disclosure and Barring Checks

#### To provide a first point of contact regarding safeguarding issues.

- To be a named person that children, Church members and outside agencies can talk to regarding any issue to do with child protection or safeguarding
- To be aware of the names and telephone numbers of appropriate people 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 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 report summary safeguarding information annually to the Synod Safeguarding Officer to enable them to monitor safeguarding in the Synod.

#### To be an advocate for safeguarding in the Church

- To promote sensitivity within the Church towards all those affected by the impacts 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 employees and volunteers.
- To update their own safeguarding training every 2 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 2 – Recruitment and Selection Policy**

### **Introduction**

1.1 Effective recruitment and selection is central and crucial to the successful functioning of Woking URC. It depends on finding people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver the church's strategic objectives and the ability to make a positive contribution to the values and aims of the organisation. This policy should be used alongside the 'Guide to Employment for URC'; produced by Wessex Synod.

### **Advertisements**

2.1 Paid staff vacancies will generally be advertised in an appropriate newspaper or journal, and will **not** be confined to those media which, because they attract a particular kind of applicant, provide only or mainly applicants from that group.

2.2 Advertisements will also be notified to the appropriate local job centre where this is appropriate.

2.3 All vacancies will also be posted on the Church Internet, and internal notice boards. WURC is keen to facilitate internal promotions wherever possible as development opportunities for its staff.

### **Application Form**

3.1 Candidates for all posts will, except on some occasions when a vacancy is restricted to internal recruitment, be asked to complete a standard application form, in order that they can be judged on the basis of comparable information.

3.2 In applying for posts, all candidates will be provided with a job description, personal specifications, details of the appropriate conditions of service and details about the Church. A brief statement about the appointment procedure will also be provided and, if possible, an indication of the date (or week) when interviews will be held. The job description will include a list of the main duties and responsibilities of the post, together with an outline of the qualifications and experience which candidates are expected to possess.

3.3 In drawing up the job description and conditions of service the Charity will ensure that no job applicant receives less favorable treatment than another on the grounds of disability, gender, race, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, caring responsibilities or hours of work, and that no applicant is placed at a disadvantage unjustifiably by requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse effect on a particular group.

3.4 Applicants will be asked to specify whether they have any disabilities, as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and whether there are any reasonable adjustments needed for them to attend an interview. All applicants with a

disability who meet the essential criteria for a job will be interviewed, and considered on their merits.

3.5 Applicants will be required to supply the names and addresses of two people from whom references can be obtained, one of which should normally be the applicant's current or most recent employer.

3.6 Only references for short listed candidates for interview will be obtained. References will normally be sought prior to interview, unless the candidate indicates otherwise.

3.7 References should normally be made in writing or by email, but those received by telephone will be accepted, provided that a note of the conversation is recorded and placed on file.

3.8 All candidates will be asked to declare on the application form whether they have ever been convicted of any criminal offence which cannot be regarded as 'spent' in terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

3.9 For posts that involve working with children and vulnerable adults/law enforcement/legal profession/finance work/licensing work (e.g. security), applicants will be asked to reveal details of 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions. Successful candidates for such posts will be required to provide the necessary documentation in order to complete a standard Disclosure and Barring Service check. Posts, which require such a disclosure, will be clearly indicated in the conditions of service and appointment procedures.

3.10 Applicants will also be required to declare if they are related to any member of the Charity or staff within the Charity. Canvassing of members of the Charity is not permitted. No manager should be put in a position where he or she is asked to interview a person to whom they are related.

3.11 It is the Charity's policy not to communicate further with applicants other than those who are shortlisted. A note to this effect is included in the details sent out to applicants.

3.12 Applicants' details will be recorded at the point of receipt. All information relating to the data collected in the equality and diversity recruitment monitoring form will be hidden from all those involved in the recruitment and selection process. The information collected will be solely used for the purposes of equality monitoring.

3.13 All completed application forms are private and confidential and should only be made available to those directly involved in the recruitment and selection process.

3.14 A shortlist of candidates will be drawn up for interview, based entirely on merit and suitability for the post but taking account of the Charity's responsibilities in relation to the Disability Discrimination and Equalities Acts. Other than in exceptional circumstances, reasonable notice will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time in order to prepare for and make the necessary arrangements to attend the interview.

## **Selection Methods**

4.1 Interviews will be held by a panel comprising ideally of three persons, but a minimum of two persons, gender balanced wherever possible. The interviewers will

encourage candidates to be at ease during the interview, in order that they can give a fair and accurate impression of themselves.

4.2 A set of questions will be agreed by the interview panel in advance and will be developed from the current job description for the post. The panel will seek to develop questions which ask the candidates to give examples of their previous relevant experience, and ensure the assessments of candidates are recorded and are made objectively, with a consistent scoring system, against the requirements specified in the job description and person specification. The panel should only ask questions at interview which are relevant and appropriate to the job. All recruitment documents, including assessment sheets, application forms/CVs etc. of unsuccessful candidates should be kept for 12 months in case of any claims made, such as for discrimination.

4.3 It should be remembered that an interview is a two-way process, and candidates will be given every opportunity to view the offices where they will work and ask questions about the Charity, to ensure that they have a full understanding of the post for which they are applying and the way it operates.

4.4 In addition to interviews, a range of other selection techniques may be used. In such circumstances reasonable notice and relevant information will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time and information to prepare.

4.5 All appointments will be made strictly on merit and related to the requirements of the job.

4.6 All interviewed candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process as soon as possible, either by telephone or letter.

## **Relevant Checks**

5.1 All offers of employment will be made conditional upon satisfactory results from the following:

- two satisfactory references;
- confirmation of the right to work in this country (if appropriate)
- DBS check (if appropriate).

## **Probationary Period**

6.1 All appointments will be made subject to a probationary period of three calendar months. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the appropriate head of section or line manager, employees will be notified in writing that they have successfully completed their probationary period. The probationary period can be extended by a further three months should the individual's line manager consider this appropriate.

## **Recruitment Monitoring**

7.1 WURC seeks to recruit employees on the basis of their ability and the requirements of the post.



## **Appendix 3 – Volunteers: Youth and Children’s Work Recruitment Process**

The following process applies to all WURC youth and children’s work, including the Boys’ and Girls’ Brigades.

The Children’s and/or Youth Worker will have ultimate responsibility for this aspect of the appointment of volunteers and will be assisted by the Office Secretary in keeping track of the process on a day to day basis. She/he will monitor progress with each stage and will try to ensure that they are completed in a timely fashion and in sequence and will record it all on the iKnowChurch system. The Office Secretary will also keep the Children and/or Youth Worker up-to-date with progress on the recruitment process in individual cases.

That will mean liaising with the appropriate church officers e.g. the Church Secretary on any reference to Elders’ or Church Meeting (EM) or the church verifier/Brigade Captain with respect to any DBS clearance. Only after all the stages set out below have been completed should the volunteer be included on any rota. They may, however, attend sessions of the group that they wish to help with on the basis set out in paragraph n. below. It is important that the process outlined in this process is followed and attempts are not made to short circuit it, tempting though that may be because we do not want to fall foul of the Charity Commission, insurer etc should something go badly wrong.

### **Stage 1**

- a. Anyone volunteering to work with children or young people must complete a Volunteer Application Form (VAF). No further action should be taken by anyone until this has been done and Stages 2-4 have all been completed. VAFs are held in the Church Office and copies can be obtained from the Office Secretary, Children and Youth Worker, or the Convenor of the Children’s and Youth Work Committee. On completion, they should be handed to one or the other who will then ensure that they are passed on to the Office Secretary to be logged in to the record.
- b. The application form will contain a history of the recruitment process and of the volunteer’s ‘work’ with children and young people and will be kept in the church office once the process has been completed.

### **Stage 2**

- c. Completed forms will be passed to the Church Secretary for presentation to the next possible Elders’ Meeting (EM).
- d. Provided that there are no other considerations, EM will then arrange for that volunteer to be interviewed by at least two Elders nominated at the meeting and they will take responsibility for the application form at that point.
- e. Only under exceptional circumstances, will the interview not be completed before the next EM, where the two nominated Elders will report back on the outcome of the interview
- f. If the volunteer is not considered suitable, the application form will be destroyed at the meeting. The leader of the relevant organisation will be told and asked to contact the volunteer.
- g. If the volunteer is considered suitable, EM will agree the appointment, subject to the references being taken up and to a DBS check being carried out.

### **Stage 3**

- h. At this stage the form will be returned to the Office Secretary who will up-date the record and liaise with the church’s verifier, or the appropriate Brigade Captain



if it is a Brigade volunteer, in respect of DBS clearance. The Secretary will also take up the references.

- i. The church's verifier/Brigade captain will then contact the volunteer and ensure that either a DBS form is completed and processed or will verify the volunteer's details via the DBS Update List, if appropriate.
- j. Once the DBS clearance has been confirmed, the appropriate verifier will notify the Office Secretary.
- k. The Office Secretary will inform the Church Secretary of the arrival of DBS clearances and of the arrival (or otherwise) of satisfactory references.

#### **Stage 4**

- l. The Church Secretary will then put the name forward for approval at the next following Church Meeting.
- m. Given Church Meeting approval, the leader of the organisation will be advised and the volunteer can be entered into the rota for the relevant area of work.

#### Additional Notes

n. Potential volunteers in non-Brigades organisations may be present at a maximum of two "taster" sessions to assess whether or not they are suitable for the task. They will be recorded as "visitors" on the attendance list. In the case of the Brigades, parents may attend a maximum of three sessions in the section in which their children are members.

o. The various stages and dates are all recorded on the volunteer application form by the Office Secretary and this will serve as the 'employment' record of the volunteer. Any movement between the various children's and youth organisations and DBS renewals will also be recorded on this document.

p. The church verifier will also retain a record of DBS clearances and is responsible for ensuring that if they have expired (after three years) either the DBS Update List is checked, or a new clearance is sought. This list also includes other church volunteers such as Elders, Pastoral Assistants and volunteers working with adult groups. See Appendix 14 for more information about DBS clearance.

Procedures re-adopted by the Elders' Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## **Appendix 4 - Sample Reference Request Form**

Dear [insert name]

[Name of person] has given your name as a referee for the role of [name of role] at [name of church/organisation].

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the role description and person specification. These will give you an idea of what the role will involve, and provide information about the skills and qualities that we are looking for.

All the information you provide will be kept in a secure place and will only be shared with the designated person for safeguarding children/adults at risk and those responsible for recruitment.

You will see that the role involves working with children and young people/adults at risk, so I am sure you will understand that it is important to respond as fully as you can and to be completely open and honest.

If you have any questions about completing this reference, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss: [insert contact details].

The reference should be returned to [insert name/role] at [insert postal or email address].

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this reference; it is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

[insert name]

## **Confidential reference for roles working with children or adults at risk**

**PROVIDED FOR** [Name of person]

**How long have you known this person?** [Years] [Months]

**In what capacity do you know them?**

1. Please can you confirm the applicant's job title within your organisation and how long they have held their current post.
2. How would you rate the applicant's level of work?  
(Outstanding, very good, good, satisfactory or below average. If below average, please state why.)
3. Please can you comment on whether the applicant would be suitable for this type of work, relating your answers to the job description and person specification attached. Please use an extra sheet if required.
4. Is there anything that we should be made aware of that could prevent the applicant from fulfilling the duties of the role?

5. Because the role/job involves work with children, young people and/or adults at risk, do you have any reason to be concerned about this person supporting vulnerable groups and having this responsibility?

**Yes      No**

If you have answered 'Yes', please either provide details below or indicate your willingness to be contacted for further details.

6. Would you employ the individual again?

**Yes      No**

If no, please state why.

7. Please rate the person on the following:

	Poor	Average	Very Good	N/A
Responsibility				
Reliability				
Punctuality				
Ability to keep appropriate boundaries				
Trustworthiness				
Ability to keep their temper when provoked				

Ability to work as a member of a team				
Understanding children's/vulnerable adults' needs				
Awareness of risks to young people/vulnerable adults				
Practical application of policy and procedure				

We would be grateful if you could add any additional information to assist us.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Telephone number: .....

Email address: .....

Thank you for providing this information. We will contact you to confirm that you have written this reference.

## **Appendix 5 – Lone Working Policy**

### **Woking United Reformed Church – Health and Safety: Lone Working Policy and Procedural Guidance (This is not the same as lone working with children or young people)**

#### **Section 1 - Scope**

1. This policy and guidance on lone working sets out:

- the responsible authority for this policy and monitoring its implementation (the Elders of Woking URC)
- the responsibilities that Elders have for carrying out risk assessments to monitor lone working
- the legal background to this aspect of the welfare and safety of employees
- the responsibility that everyone shares to look after themselves, and
- guidance on procedure and implementation.

#### **Section 2 - Policy**

2. Woking URC will do its best to encourage safe practices at work at all times. It is committed to reducing the risk of danger, injury or ill health to its employees caused by workplace activities. It will take all reasonable and practicable steps to manage lone working, ensure that risks are assessed and that suitable precautions, guidance, instruction and training are in place to support its aims. Churches cannot have in place the systems that business does. Woking URC is no different and Elders need to be realistic about what can be put in place, but will always aim to be a good employer.

3. Definition - For the purposes of this policy and guidance document, lone workers are defined as employees who work by themselves in situations where there is no close or direct contact with a colleague for all or some of their working time. It applies equally to employees working from their own home. Lone workers are those who:

- work away from an office base (e.g. visiting)
- work outside normal working hours (e.g. cleaners)
- are sometimes the only person on the premises (e.g. Minister, administrator; cleaner; caretaker; youth worker)
- work in the same building as colleagues, but in a space on their own (e.g. administrator, Church and Community Lay Worker, Youth Worker)

4. Roles – Elders, as Trustees of the Woking URC Charity (i.e. the employer), are responsible for this policy and guidance and for monitoring and implementing it.

#### **Section 3 - The Procedure - Introduction**

5. Lone working and violence/aggression are frequently linked together and all of our employees who have direct contact with members of the Church family, the general

public or hirers/service users, could be exposed to such behaviour when working alone. The very nature of what we do as a Christian community means that it is inevitable that any of our employees could be placed in a position where they do not know in advance that they could be facing a potentially difficult or even dangerous situation. That is particularly so if an employee who cannot avoid working alone on the premises has to deal with a hirer or someone accessing our premises for the first time that is not known to them and then find themselves in a position where it is difficult/impossible to call for help. None of our employees should work alone, however, when there is a known risk or threat to them. In those cases suitable arrangements must be made to ensure their safety is maintained.

6. The Minister is a Trustee and therefore has a joint responsibility with the other Trustees so does not need to be singled out but the guidance below applies equally to him/her in carrying out his/her responsibilities. The Minister, although not employed directly by the local Church, should be considered as an employee for the purpose of the procedures inherent in this policy. In that sense it should apply too, to Elders and Pastoral Assistants, particularly when making home visits alone.

7. Other aspects of lone working that give cause for concern are sudden illness, security breaches, an accident on the premises and a road accident when travelling on Church business. In all cases of expected lone working, a risk assessment must be carried out to determine safe practice and some record must be kept of an employee's meetings, both on the premises and when away from the Church building.

#### **Section 4 – The Legal Requirements**

8. under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, employers have a general duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees whilst they are at work. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers have a duty to:

- Apply the principles of prevention to protect health and safety
- Assess the risks to health and safety
- Ensure employees are capable of carrying out their task
- Provide health and safety training as necessary
- Ensure employees are aware of the potential risks to their health and safety
- Take the necessary preventative and protective measures.

#### **Section 5 - Risk Assessment of Lone Working**

9. To determine whether someone working alone will be safe in their job, a risk assessment of their normal activities should be carried out where it is practicable and appropriate to do so. Where a risk assessment identifies a work-related hazard the first task should be to try and eliminate it at source by avoiding it completely or doing it another way. Where this is not possible, measures should be put in place to minimise the risk. There may, in some lone working situations, be some residual element of

personal danger despite all the best efforts to eliminate or minimise risk. In those cases it will be necessary for the employer to introduce preventative and protective measures to further reduce those risks, again so far as is reasonably practicable. Such measures may include formal instruction, training, supervision or a personal alarm system. In some high risk activities where the risk has been identified in advance it may be necessary to instruct an employee to have at least one other person present or to make arrangements to provide help or back-up, or to prohibit them from doing it altogether.

10. The Health and Safety Executive recommends that a five step approach should be followed for effective risk assessments:

- look for the hazards
- decide who might be harmed and how
- evaluate the risks and decide what needs to be done
- record the results of the assessment in an action plan
- review and revise the assessment and actions taken.

11. The risk assessment should identify any areas where the employer is not doing enough to address problems and those where problems might arise and should consider:

- the layout of and escape routes in the workplace
- the degree of isolation of the employee and ensuring that doors of lone workers' rooms have glass panels in
- any previous knowledge of potential behavioural problems amongst 'clients', other visitors to the premises and/or their family and friends, particularly risks to women or young person's working alone when the Forum is not staffed or in the evenings
- the nature and degree of exposure to any biological or chemical agents (e.g. cleaner, caretaker or housekeeper)
- the nature and use of any work equipment and how it is handled
- the degree and type of supervision that is required
- the method to be adopted for obtaining assistance if required and the extent to which it is possible to have a system in place to enable that to happen
- monitoring arrangements for lone workers
- the extent of health and safety training provided, or found to be necessary
- the state of health of an employee.

## **Section 6 - Information & Training**

12. Elders should ensure that new employees receive appropriate induction training at commencement of employment. They should not commence any duties or workplace activities unless they are suitably supervised by a competent person. All employees who will be lone working must receive instruction and have a full understanding of the lone working arrangements that apply to them. Such instructions should indicate the limits of what can/cannot be done while working alone. The level of training should be appropriate to the needs identified in risk assessments. Records should be kept to show what training individual staff members have received together with any outstanding training needs they might identify.



## **Section 7 - Supervision**

13. Elders must provide an appropriate level of supervision where any work-related activity or task is seen as lone working and risk assessments indicate a need for supervision. The higher the risk the greater the level of supervision may need to be. Although lone workers cannot always receive constant supervision, Elders will need to monitor lone workers by such means as: checking they are following good practice, making arrangements for keeping in contact by telephone, using a monitoring/alarm system that meets the needs of the situation, checking an employee has returned to their base or home on completion of a risky task.

## **Section 8 - Employee Responsibilities & Rights**

14. All employees have a general duty to take care of their own health, safety and welfare and to ensure that they do not put themselves or others at risk. Employees must co-operate by:

- attending relevant training courses
- keeping a readily available diary of their movements
- carrying a personal shriek alarm
- carrying a mobile phone which is always switched on
- using recommended measures, such as safe systems of work, which have been designed for their safety
- being vigilant about what is going on around them
- reporting any concerns regarding their health and safety or equipment
- reporting any medical conditions or health problems (temporary or otherwise) that could affect their ability to work safely, reporting all accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences.

15. In addition, employees have a right to be treated with fairness, equality, dignity and without discrimination, to be supported in managing their workload and to have their health and safety needs recognised, but also to know what is expected of them.

## **Section 9 - Standards**

16. To comply with this guidance, Elders must identify potential risks early when employees work alone. That should involve seeking employee feedback from time to time and by providing them with appropriate information, instruction and training, as required. Elders should also ensure that their employees are aware of their own responsibilities with regard to their own health and safety. Elders should:

- make sure that such employees use any monitoring system for lone workers, ensuring everyone participates properly
- develop response plans to manage alarm calls/emergencies (e.g. missing persons), evaluate the effectiveness of any control measures put in place to manage lone working and review them whenever working practices change, or after a serious incident involving a lone worker

If Elders are unsure about the nature or results of a risk assessment they should seek help and expert advice to ensure risk assessments are suitable and sufficient.

## **Annex to Appendix 5**

### **Summary of Employer's Responsibilities**

In the light of Health and Safety Act requirements, WURC must aim to ensure that lone workers are not at more risk than any other employee. WURC must, therefore

- carry out a risk assessment – this responsibility cannot be transferred to the lone worker
- put systems in place to ensure staff who work alone are safe
- record all assessment and safety measures identified to alleviate risk
- regularly evaluate the systems to ensure that they are still valid
- ensure that if a risk cannot be made safe, two people carry out the task together
- ensure that staff attend appropriate training courses
- know where lone workers are during the day
- ensure lone workers are supervised regularly, even if this is carried out differently from situations where workers do not work alone .e.g. by various nominated people
- ensure that WURC is insured to cover lone working.

### **Summary of Employee's Responsibility**

Employees also have a responsibility under health and safety legislation to:

- take reasonable care of their own and other people's safety
- be involved in assessing risk and identifying safety measures
- leave the working environment if there is imminent danger to their safety
- ensure they take regular breaks to avoid working excessively long hours
- follow WURC's policies and procedures set up to protect their safety
- use equipment in accordance with the training given and not misuse it
- tell Elders when safety measure are not adequate
- tell Elders when they have encountered a near miss or have identified additional risks to their safety that were not previously foreseen
- report to Elders any actual accidents or incidents that occur, including verbal abuse, using the appropriate procedure

## **Appendix 6 – Behaviour Management Policy**

Woking URC uses effective behaviour management strategies to promote the welfare and enjoyment of children attending the church or activities at the church. Working in partnership with parents/guardians, we aim to manage behaviour using clear, consistent and positive strategies. This includes being on the watch for bullying and dealing with it as appropriate, whether by another child/young person or by an adult. The church's designated member of staff responsible for behaviour management is the Children and Youth Worker.

### **Whilst at Church we expect children to:**

- behave in a socially acceptable way
- comply with the church rules, which are compiled by the children attending all Youth and Children's Organisations and activities.
- respect one another, accepting differences of race, gender, ability, age and religion
- develop their independence by maintaining self-discipline
- choose and participate in a variety of activities
- ask for help if needed
- enjoy their time at the church

### **Encouraging positive behaviour**

At WURC positive behaviour is encouraged by:

- staff/volunteers acting as positive role models
- praising appropriate behaviour
- informing parents about individual achievements
- certificates for exceptional accomplishments
- offering a variety of play/learning opportunities to meet the needs of the children attending the church, it is inevitable that as children develop and learn, there are times when they need support and guidance to understand that their behaviour is not acceptable. Staff/volunteers at the church will try to determine the cause or triggers of the inappropriate behaviour to prevent the situation from recurring.

### **Dealing with inappropriate behaviour**

- challenging behaviour will be addressed in a calm, firm and positive manner.
- in the first instance, the child will be temporarily removed from the activity.
- staff/volunteers will discuss why the behaviour displayed is deemed inappropriate.
- staff/volunteers will give the child an opportunity to explain their behaviour, to help prevent a recurrence.
- staff/volunteers will encourage and facilitate mediation between children to try to resolve conflicts through discussion and negotiation.
- if the inappropriate behaviour appears to be because of boredom, staff will work with the child to find activities that more fully engage them.
- staff will consult with parents to formulate clear strategies for dealing with persistent inappropriate behaviour.

- we will not threaten any punishment that could adversely affect a child's well-being (e.g. withdrawal of food or drink).
- if after consultation with parents and the implementation of behaviour management strategies, a child continues to display inappropriate behaviour, the church may decide to exclude the child in accordance with our Suspensions and Exclusions policy.
- the reasons and processes involved will be clearly explained to the child.

### **Physical intervention**

Physical intervention will only be used as a last resort, when staff believe that action is necessary to prevent injury to the child or others, or to prevent significant damage to property. If a member of staff has physically to restrain a child, the manager will be notified and an Incident Record will be completed. The incident will be discussed with the parent or carer as soon as possible. If staff are not confident about their ability to contain a situation, they should call the manager or, in extreme cases, the police. All serious incidents will be recorded on an Incident Record form and kept in the child's file. This may be used to build a pattern of behaviour, which may indicate an underlying cause. If a pattern of incidents indicates possible abuse, we will implement child protection procedures in accordance with our Safeguarding policy.

### **Corporal punishment**

Corporal punishment or the threat of corporal punishment will never be used at the church. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no child who attends our church is subject to corporal punishment from any person who cares for or is in regular contact with the child, or from any other person on our premises.

This policy was re-adopted by: Woking URC on \_\_4th\_\_ October 2022

Date: To be reviewed: [Insert date] October 2023

Signed: [WURC Church Secretary] \_\_\_\_\_ *KR Bradley* \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 7 – Consent Form



Woking URC  
 White Rose Lane  
 Woking, Surrey, GU22 7HA

We want young people under the age of 18 years old to feel secure and protected during their participation in regular activities with our Church. Please understand that children and young people cannot participate in activities unless parental consent has been given. Please return to this form to our Children's or Youth Worker as appropriate

Child's Contact Details <i>(one form per child)</i>			
Full Name:		Date of Birth:	DD / MM / YY
Current Address:			
		Postcode:	
Home Number:		Mobile	
Email Address:			
Parent / Guardian's Contact Details <i>(complete if different from above for use in an emergency)</i>			
Name:			
Current Address:			
		Postcode:	
Daytime Number:		Mobile	
Evening Number:		Email Address:	
Medical Details			
Please give details of any medical conditions, disabilities or allergies that leaders should be aware of (including any medication needed whilst involved with activities organised by Woking United Reformed Church):			
The participant's Doctor	Dr.		
Current Address:			

	Postcode:	
Surgery	Mobile	
The participant's National Health Number is: (if known)		
Date when the participant was last immunised against Tetanus: (if known)		DD / MM / YY

Continued overleaf

Photography & Filming		
<p>Photographs &amp; video footage for display on our premises, on our website and on occasions in the local press may only be taken if permission has been received from parents / guardians of children who may be photographed or filmed (in accordance with the data protection Act 1988).</p>		
<p>Photographs or video footage used publicly will not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show the outside of the building identifiably</li> <li>• Name children</li> <li>• Be of one child alone or close up</li> </ul>		
<p>Photographs or video footage used publicly will only show activities and groups with obvious adult supervision.</p>		
<p>Photographs or video footage used within the building or organisation will be general and will be displayed without surname and identification of home address or contact details.</p>		
<p>Please indicate below if you allow your child permission to be photographed or featured on video footage, following the guidelines above, at any of our groups or events. Please tick any or all of the boxes below. However if you do not wish to, please leave blank.</p>		
<p>I allow my child to be photographed or on video footage on display...</p>		
<p>(please tick boxes)</p>	<p>in the Church building</p>	<p>on our website</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>in the press</p> <input type="checkbox"/>

Activities	
<p>The following list provides an outline to the Children's and Young People's Work programmes of activities currently offered by Woking United Reformed Church. Special events, trips and adventure sports not listed below will require a special Event Consent Form to be completed prior to the event taking place.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services &amp; worship arranged by the Church</li> <li>• Sunday morning children's groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys' &amp; Girls' Brigade - Inc. Battalion competitions (<i>ask for details</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Off the Wall Youth Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooking, crafts, &amp; performing arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music workshops &amp; singing</li> <li>• Indoor &amp; outdoor games inc. <i>team Games, potted sports</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>football, volleyball, uni-hockey</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion groups</li> <li>• Something Different Children's Group</li> <li>• Activity fun days (<i>not inc Holiday Fun Clubs</i>)</li> <li>• Church picnics (<i>varied venues</i>)</li> </ul>	<p><i>pool, table tennis, secure internet access, walks, games &amp; sports in the local parks, orienteering, cross country running, treasure hunts and bowling.</i></p>
--	--

Declaration	
<p>I agree to _____ (<i>child's name</i>) receiving emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.</p> <p>I give my permission for the above named to attend and take part in the Youth &amp; Children's Work activities of Woking United Reformed Church, based on the list provided above.</p> <p>I will undertake to inform the Children and Youth Worker should any of the above information change.</p>	

<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	DD / MM / YY
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The information given on this form will be treated in confidence and only used if necessary.

Inadequate information could put your child's life at risk.

Please return your completed form to the Children's or Youth Worker as appropriate above address.

Thank you.

## **Annex to Appendix 7 – Administration of medication consent form**

Please complete this form to request that a church worker gives medication to a child or supervises a child's self-administration of medication. Please understand that no worker is obliged to do so, though many will be willing.

### **• Event details**

Name of group (or event /activity) .....

Venue: ..... Date (of event/activity): .....

- **Details of participant**

Full name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Gender: ..... Date of birth: .....

Medical condition or illness for which medication is required: .....

.....

- **Details of medication**

Name of medication (as described on the container): .....

Date medication was dispensed: .....

Length of time the participant will take this medication: .....

- **Directions for use**

Dosage - how much should be given and at what time of day? .....

.....

Method - how should the medication be given? .....

.....

Any special precautions? .....

.....

Any known side effects? .....

Please discuss any emergency procedures with the group leader prior to the event.

- **Details of parent / guardian / carer**

Name: .....

Home phone No: ..... Other phone No: .....

Email address: .....

If you do not have parental responsibility (e.g. if you are a foster carer / grandparent, etc) please give details of someone with parental responsibility:



Name: .....

Home phone No: ..... Other phone No: .....

Email address: .....

• **Emergency Contact**

Name: .....

Relationship to the child .....

Home phone No: ..... Other phone No: .....

Email address: .....

• **Declaration of consent**

Please note that these declarations must be signed by the parent of the participant named on this form, or by a person with parental responsibility for the participant.

I request and give consent for an adult worker to administer medication to the participant named on this form, in accordance with the information and instructions provided on this form. If relevant, I have provided written procedures for administering this medication in an emergency and will discuss these with the group leader before the event.

I undertake to give the medication personally to the group leader at the start of the event in a clear plastic bag with the participant's name on it.

Name: .....

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

OR

I give permission for the participant named on this form to carry the medication and administer it themselves, as necessary.

Name: ..... Signed..... Date.....

.....

## Appendix 8 Registration forms/register of attendance

Where the church is running a dedicated service for children or adults at risk, best practice requires that all activities should have a registration form and a register. Registration forms should be updated annually and include the following:

- name
- date of birth
- address
- parent/carer contact details
- emergency contact details
- medical information • details of any additional needs
- any other information relevant to the activities, such as dietary requirements, and who is allowed to collect a child at the end of the activity
- consent for emergency medical treatment • consent for photographs or videos which will be for use within the premises of WURC, or in the local press, or on Church related websites.

Where possible, it is best practice to keep a record of the children and adults in attendance for groups and activities organised by the church. A register of attendance might include:

- the name and type of group or activity
- the date, time and venue of the group or activity • a list of children present (ages may also be helpful)
- a list of adults present.

The church should also record any significant incidents which occur during groups or activities. Any disclosures of abuse should be recorded separately (see Section ,,,, – Responding to safeguarding concerns for more information on recording disclosures of abuse) but cross-referenced in an incident log.

## Appendix 9 -Model On-line safety Policy

# Introduction

This is a model local church online safety policy, which should be used as a starting point to help your church put your own policy in place. It is important to note that this is not a 'catch-all' policy. It covers the broad basics of good practice, but it will need to be adapted depending on the individual circumstances of your church. It is also important to remember that an online safety policy alone is worthless without proper implementation and a church-wide commitment to the policy. We hope that you will find this sample policy useful. If you have any questions about policy, or safeguarding generally, please contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer for support and guidance.

Sample Online Safety Policy – January 2019

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Technology is constantly advancing, bringing with it additional safeguarding considerations. An online safety policy is necessary to safeguard all electronic communications between the church and children/young people (those under 18 years of age) recognising the merging between online and offline worlds and the distinctiveness and difficulties within faith based organisations of defining clear boundaries for everyone.

This online safety policy sets out the roles, responsibilities and procedures for the acceptable, safe and responsible use of online technologies for adults and children within this church, including the use of mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices.

It explains what will happen in the event of unacceptable use of these technologies and details the support that will be provided to support children, parents and others in the safe and responsible use of these technologies beyond the church.

### • **Why we have a policy**

The use of the Internet and mobile devices has become an integral part of church and home life. There are always going to be risks to using any form of communication which lies within the public domain. It is therefore imperative that there are clear rules, procedures and guidelines to minimise these risks and especially when children use these technologies.

It is also important that workers and church members are clear about appropriate procedures so that they are safeguarded from misunderstandings or allegations through a lack of knowledge of potential risks.

This church acknowledges that whilst we will endeavour to safeguard against all risks we may not be able to completely eliminate them. Any incidents that may arise will be dealt with quickly and according to policy to ensure that children are best protected

## Policy Aims

- to ensure the safeguarding of children within and beyond church by raising awareness of appropriate and acceptable uses of online technologies
- to outline the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved
- to have clarity about procedures following the misuse of any online technologies
- to work with parents / carers and to maintain a continued awareness of both the benefits and potential issues of online technologies

### • **Our commitment to online safety**

We will equip children with the skills and knowledge that they need to use the technology in this church safely and responsibly, and to manage the possible risks. We will also ensure that they are aware of where they can go to get help, apart from trusted adults, if they are uncomfortable with anything in the digital world.

### **Children and Young People are expected to make appropriate and safe use of the electronic communication (devices)**

When using a computer or electronic device with internet access at this church, children will be made aware of what is acceptable usage and will agree not to:

- search for and/or enter pornographic, violent, racist or hate-motivated websites
- download, forward-on, copy or burn onto CD any music, images or movies from the Internet where permission has not been granted by the copyright holders
- disclose any personal information eg addresses (postal, email or messenger), telephone numbers, bank details, including personal information about another person
- send or display offensive messages or pictures
- deliberately browse, download, upload or forward material that could be considered offensive or illegal
- use obscene language
- violate copyright laws
- trespass in folders, work or files belonging to others
- retrieve, send, copy or display offensive messages or pictures
- harass, insult, bully or attack others
- damage computers, computer systems or computer networks
- use another user's password
- use computers for unapproved commercial purposes

## Sanctions:

- violations of the above rules will result in a temporary or permanent ban on Internet use
- further action may be taken such as informing parents / carers
- when applicable, police or local authorities may be informed

*Appendix C1 has an example of expectations that children/young people and/or parents/carers could be asked to sign.*

### **We will make appropriate use of any photographic images and/or video footage taken during church activities.**

Clear guidelines will be operated as follows:

- permission will be sought from parents / carers before any images are taken and/or displayed. Images will only be used for the specific purpose agreed by the person photographed
- written consent will specify what purposes the image will be used for, and how it will be stored. For instance if the intention is to use an image on the church website or other forms of publicity, this will be clearly stated at the time that consent is sought
- further written consent will be sought if images are to be used in ways other than originally specified
- if children object, even if parents / carers have agreed, their wishes will be respected
- photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will not enable individual children to be clearly identified
  
- children's full names and/or other details will not be used anywhere in association with photographs or other media
- when using photographs of children, group pictures will be used wherever possible
- any use of images will reflect the diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity
- personal mobiles will not be used to take photographs or other digital media
- except in exceptional cases, which will be agreed, and known about, digital media relating to children will be stored on church computers. Should this not be possible for any reason, where the media is to be stored will be recorded

### **We will ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place, including the use of filtering software on all computers used within this church.**

To ensure that unwanted and unsolicited information, viruses and other malware does not intrude on the use of digital technology, we will ensure all appropriate and reasonable steps are taken to protect computers and the users of them as follows:

- filtering software will be installed on all computers used at this church or as part of any activities operated by the church.
- on our church website/s, details will be prominently displayed as to where to find help online including having the CEOP button on the website

**We will respond appropriately and sensitively to all online safety concerns.**

In the event of concern that there may be an online safety incident, this will be reported to the church's designated safeguarding co-ordinator in the same manner as the reporting of any other safeguarding concern. The safeguarding co-ordinator will then determine if the matter should be reported to the statutory authorities or other appropriate agencies, including CEOP or the Internet Watch Foundation. In case of church's designated safeguarding co-ordinator not being available, the matter needs to be reported to the synod safeguarding officer.

**We will operate safe email communications with children and young people.**

When using email to communicate with children and young people, workers will:

- obtain parental agreement before they use email services to communicate with a child or young person
- use clear, unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation
- ensure that all messages can be viewed if necessary by the worker's supervisor and that this policy is explained to children and young people.

**We will make appropriate use of mobile phones where they are needed.**

Not every child or young person has the use of a mobile phone and, even if they do, parents may not want a worker to have the number. Workers will therefore have alternative means of communication and will ensure that communication goes through parents if this is their preference.

Mobile phones should only be used where necessary and will be guided by the following considerations:

- where appropriate group rather than individual texting will be used
- care will be taken with the language used, avoiding ambiguous abbreviations such as 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love' and always end with people's name.
- any texts or conversations that raise concerns will be saved and passed on/shown to the worker's supervisor
- any images of children taken on a mobile phone will be downloaded to the church computer and kept securely
- workers will not take or keep images of children on their personal mobile phone.
- workers will not give out their personal mobile number to children
- as well as ensuring that calls / texts are not sent after 9pm or before 9am, workers will also ensure that calls and texts are not sent whilst the child is at school / college, as this may be against the educational establishment's rules
- workers will enable a password/lock on all devices to ensure data protection and will prevent unauthorised access being gained

**We will consider the appropriate use of Chat & Messenger Services and whether these are necessary.**

Instant Messenger Services (IM) are internet programmes that allow people to write and receive messages in real time.

As with other forms of online communication, workers will take care with regard to language and content, as well as when and for how long a communication lasts.

Workers will ensure that all communications using IM services adhere to the following:

- communication will not take place between the hours of 9 pm and 9 am [*or alternatives*]
- workers will ensure that they enable settings when using IM services which allow for significant conversations to be saved as text files and will keep a log of when and with whom they communicated
- children/young people will be made aware that conversations will be recorded and kept (via text files or similar)

### **We will make safe and appropriate use of social media platforms when communicating with young people.**

When using social media platforms we will ensure that the following guidance is used by all workers:

- workers will not add young people with whom they work to their personal social media platforms if they are under the age of 18.
- workers will set up a Facebook group / page for the church or church group and invite young people (in the appropriate age group) to be members
- workers will only use an agreed social networking account for contact with young people with whom they are working
- workers will ensure that their personal profiles on any social media platforms are set to the highest form of security to avoid young people accessing personal information or seeing any pictures of a personal nature
- messages sent to young people regarding youth activities will be posted openly and 'inbox' messaging should be avoided. If this is necessary in exceptional circumstances, a copy will be sent to an identified person to assist transparency

### **• Sanctions**

Workers will be made aware that not complying with any of the above will incur sanctions, which could include suspension or dismissal and referral to appropriate authorities.

*Appendix C2 has an example of an Acceptable Use Policy that workers could be asked to sign.*

### **• We will store data securely**

There are a variety of ways that data can be stored. Where data of any form about children is stored this will be password protected and in general be stored securely on the church premises. If this is not possible then a record will be made of where the data is stored.

Where it is necessary for data to be transported, memory sticks will be purchased for

## Appendix C1 Child Agreement

workers so that there is a separation between personal and church information.

Children and young people agree to the following expectations for responsible use of technology:

- Where using a social media platform I will use only use my own login and password which will be kept secret
- I will not deliberately browse, download or forward material that could be considered to be offensive or illegal, for instance pornographic, violent, racist or hate-motivated material
- I understand that I must not bring software into the church/organisation without permission
- I understand that I must not violate copyright laws
- I am responsible for email that I send and for contacts I make. I will only send messages which are polite, appropriate and free from unsuitable language.
- I will not send any attachments which are hurtful, abusive or offensive
- If I receive anything, see anything or come across a website which may be unsuitable or makes me feel uncomfortable I will immediately tell a responsible person [name/title of worker], or report it to The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) or the Internet Watch Foundation
- I understand that I must never give my home address, phone number, send photos, give out personal information, or arrange to meet someone who contacts me over the Internet
- I will not send anonymous messages and I know that chain letters are not permitted.
- I understand that any youth and children's workers (add if others) are not allowed to accept friend requests via social media platforms
- I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I will not be allowed to use the Internet at church and that my parents / carers will be informed

Signed .....

Name [Print] .....

Dated .....



## Appendix C2 Worker Agreement

To ensure that all adults are aware of their responsibilities when using any online technologies they are asked to sign their agreement to specific Acceptable Use Rules. This is both to provide an example to children regarding safe and responsible use and as a safeguard from any potential allegations or inadvertent personal misuse.

These rules apply to all online usage and to anything that may be downloaded or printed.

### General:

I have been given a copy of the church online safety policy to refer to for all online safety procedures I should follow

I know who the church Safeguarding Co-ordinator is

I will only use church equipment in an appropriate manner and for professional uses  
(nb if portable equipment is taken home I will ensure my home insurance covers this)

I will adhere to copyright and intellectual property rights

I will take measures or seek advice to prevent the introduction of viruses to the network.

I will ensure that all devices, including memory sticks, containing information about children are password protected and that I keep my password secure

I will report any accidental misuse

I will report any incidents of concern to the church Safeguarding Co-ordinator

### Photographs & video:

I know that:

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 involved

I should not take images on any personal devices. If in exceptional circumstances such use is felt necessary 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

### Communication & Social Networking:

I will ensure all messages are written carefully and politely

I will not keep communications secret from those in the church to whom I am accountable

I will not communicate with children online without consent from a parent / carer

I realise that I am putting myself at risk of misinterpretation and allegation should I contact children via any systems other than those agreed

I will not accept or request the 'friendship' of children/young people via social media platforms

I understand the value of setting my 'Privacy' settings appropriately on any social networking site

I will keep a record of any online communication with a child

I will not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential by the church, a young person or anyone else

I have read, understood and agree with the online safety policy and the rules specified above and understand my responsibilities regarding safeguarding children when using online technologies.

I also understand that if I fail to follow agreed procedure there will be sanctions that could lead to my being suspended or dismissed, once appropriate procedures have been followed.

Signed .....

Dated .....

## **Appendix 10 – Photography Policy**

### **Introduction**

1.1 WURC will want to celebrate its life and in order to do that we will need to use photographs and other visuals, for example video. Additionally, WURC as a Charity may be involved in the production of photographic or video based art.

1.2 In order to publicise and report on the work of WURC with children and young people the church will also want to photograph or video a variety of activities for use in promotional material. It will be made clear why images or films are being made, what they will be used for, who might see them, and where they will be stored

1.3 Whilst it is not illegal to take photographs of children participating in church activities, photographs and video images of children and young people are classed as personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. Therefore, using such images for publicity purposes will require the consent of children and young people and their legal guardians. This means that the church will not display images on websites, in publications or elsewhere in public space without such consent.

1.4 We will respect people's wishes with regard to their image being used in the Charity's publicity material.

### **Conditions**

2.1 No photograph will be used without the consent of a parent/legal guardian of a child under the age of 18 at the time of the image being taken. For children aged 5-17 years their personal permission will also be required.

2.2 Only images of children in suitable clothing will be used. Some activities, for example swimming and drama, present a much greater risk of potential misuse.

2.3 No personal information, such as name, email address, postal address or telephone number of a child will be included.

2.4 Where possible anyone associated with WURC will avoid using personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children and use only cameras or devices belonging to us.

2.5 The Charity will provide a written copy of our policy to professional photographers or anyone from the media attending or invited to attend an event and will make clear the organisation's expectations of them in relation to imagery.

### **Consent Forms**

3.1 Before the use of any visuals, a general permission form must be completed by the parents/legal guardian of any children or young people involved.

3.2 For specific publicity purposes a separate form, to include a copy of the relevant image, must be signed by the parent and child/young person.

3.3 All completed consent forms should be kept in an individual folder for that child or young person.

### **Storage of Imagery**

4.1 Images and video recordings must be kept securely

4.2 Digital images taken on personal cameras or phones must be transferred to a church external hard drive or transferred to CD and stored in WURC's archive as soon as practically possible. Originals should then be permanently deleted from original equipment.

4.3 Images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

4.4 Any stored imagery should be destroyed when an individual reaches 18 or is no longer attending the church.

This policy was readopted by: Woking URC on \_\_\_\_4<sup>th</sup> October 2022\_\_\_\_

Date: To be reviewed: [Insert date] \_\_\_\_October 2023\_\_\_\_

Signed: [Church Secretary] \_\_\_\_ *KR Bradley* \_\_\_\_

## **Annex to Appendix 9**

### **Consent for photography of under 18's to be used in publicity**

#### **General Principles**

Woking United Reformed Church (URC) will wish to celebrate the life of the Charity and to do this within our own and the wider local community we will need to use photographs and other visual aids. In complying with our safeguarding policy we will:

- only use good quality visual material
- respect people's wishes concerning the publication of their image
- not put individuals at risk through the publication of their image
- seek consent from the legal guardian for an image of an under 18 before publishing
- seek consent from the child/young person in the image if over four years old

#### **Declaration of consent**

I am willing for the attached photograph to be used in church publicity, including use on the website, in accordance with Woking United Reformed Church's Safeguarding policy.

**Signatures**

<b>Child or Young Person's Name</b>	<b>Legal Guardian's Name</b>
<b>Child or Young Person's Signature</b>	<b>Legal Guardian's Signature</b>

**Photograph/Video image**

(Glue, clip or insert the photograph(s), or screen shot of relevant video images intending to be used here)

## Appendix 11 – Code of Conduct

### Code of Conduct for working with children or young people

We should all be aware that behaviour in an employee's or volunteer's personal life (including online) may impact upon their work with children or young people. Therefore, all working with them should agree not to behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model within the United Reformed Church.

More specifically, all workers agree to the following code of conduct:

- Do treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Don't abuse the power and responsibility of your role. Don't 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).
- Do act inclusively, seeking to make all people feel welcome and valued.
- Don't exclude other children or workers from conversations and activities unless there is a good reason.
- Do treat people with equal care and concern.
- Don't show favouritism (e.g. in selection for activities, in giving rewards, etc.) or encourage excessive attention from a particular child (e.g. gifts).
- Do encourage everyone to follow any behaviour agreement or ground rules and apply sanctions consistently.
- Don't threaten or use sanctions which have not been agreed or make empty threats.
- Do refer to a more senior worker if a child does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning of possible consequences.
- Don't feel you have to deal with every problem on your own.
- Do seek to diffuse aggressive or threatening behaviour without the use of physical contact.
- Don't use physical restraint except as a last resort to prevent injury. This should be the use of minimum force.
- Do relate to children in public. If a child wants to talk one-to-one about an issue, tell another adult and find somewhere quieter, but still public, to talk.
- Don't spend time alone with children out of the sight of other people and without the knowledge of someone in leadership.
- Do make sure that any electronic communication is done with parental consent, and in a way which is transparent, accountable and noted / recorded and adheres to safeguarding policies.
- Don't keep communication with children secret, while still respecting appropriate confidences.
- Do have a designated photographer to take, store and share photos of your group's activities, in line with people's consent and URC good practice guidelines.
- Don't take photos and video without consent and stored in a place designated by the Church and only use in the ways agreed in line with Good Practice guidelines.
- Do 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 privacy, feelings and dignity.
- Don't use physical contact which could be misconstrued as aggressive (e.g. rough games) or sexual.
- Do respect children's privacy.
- Don't assume that children should tell you anything you ask just because you are a worker.
- Do respect the right of children to wash, change and use the toilet in private.
- Don't walk in unnecessarily or unannounced
- Do listen to children and do tell the safeguarding officer if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Don't promise to keep something secret if it is about a child at risk of harm, but only tell those who need to know.
- Do respect and promote the rights of children to make their own decisions and choices.
- Don't work in ways that put your needs and interests before those of the children you work with.
- Do respect and encourage respect for difference, diversity, beliefs and culture.
- Don't discriminate or leave discrimination or bullying unchallenged.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with children & young people on behalf of Woking United Reformed Church

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 12 - Definition of Abuse in Children

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection. Therefore, even though we often refer to teenagers who are under 18 years of age as young people, legally they are children.

Forms of maltreatment of a child include abuse or neglect of a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent it. Children may be abused in a family, in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Safeguarding children** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is more all-encompassing than child protection and is preventative as well as reactive. It is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child protection** Child protection is 'part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.'

### What is abuse and neglect

#### Physical abuse

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

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

#### Emotional abuse

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

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

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental



capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

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

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

### **Sexual abuse**

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

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

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

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

A type of sexual abuse. The child is given gifts, drugs, money, status or affection in exchange for performing sexual activities. The tricking or grooming of children to believe they are in a loving and consensual relationship. Can be in person or on line. The child may not understand that they have been abused. They may seem to be condoning, or even encouraging, the abusive behaviour

### **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.

## Sex offenders

Sex offenders are people who commit, or have committed, a crime involving a sexual act. They are often referred to as paedophiles. However, this term is only appropriate when indicating someone who has a sexual interest in pre-pubescent children. The term hebephile is used to denote people who have a sexual interest in children who are in the early years of puberty.

By understanding the behaviour of sexual offenders, we can place obstacles in their way, and develop a greater insight into how best to support them in being offence-free.

Although the following may apply to innocent parties as well as to sex offenders, those who have sexually abused children may:

- be good at making friends with children. They can appear to be kind, trustworthy, caring and helpful. They put on a good act which fools parents, children and other adults who might be protective, such as church members
- appear as both nice and nasty to the abused child: 'I can be loving and kind, but if you don't do what you're told, you'll see another side to me.' They may also be extremely controlling, intimidating and frightening, using fear, threats and violence to get both adults and children to do what they want
- live in or join families in order to abuse children
- look for jobs or volunteer roles which place them in regular contact with children
- spend time around places like arcades, playgrounds, parks and sports venues to get to know children so they are not seen as strangers
- offer a combination of attention, gifts, treats, games, outings, money, toys, bribes and threats to children in order to entrap them. They may threaten the child with physical harm, or with the loss of someone they love, if they don't do what the abuser wants
- seek out and join organisations with unclear boundaries around contact with children, or with poor safeguarding standards generally, in order to avoid attracting concern about their behaviour. This might be a club with no guidance on travelling with a young person, photography, texting, lone working, or where the prevailing culture is to disregard such guidance
- treat a particular child as a favourite, making them feel special compared to other children
- spend most of their time with children, and have little or no interest in spending time with people of their own age
- attempt to prevent a child or children from interacting with other adults or children. Most abusers try to find out as much as possible about the child, and use this information to engage the child, and also to drive a wedge between the child and those who would protect them. The more difficult it is for abusers to come between children and protective adults, the safer children will be.

## Appendix 13 – Definition of Abuse in Adults

For the purposes of this document, an adult is defined as anyone who has reached their 18th birthday. In Scotland it's slightly different.

**Adults at risk** The term 'adult at risk' is increasingly used by professionals involved in safeguarding adults, replacing the previous term 'vulnerable adults'. A general definition for use in the URC recognises adults as being at risk when:

*They are aged 18 or over and, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation are permanently, or for the time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.*

**Safeguarding adults** Safeguarding adults incorporates the concept of prevention, empowerment, and protection to enable them to retain independence, well-being and choice, and to ensure that they can access the support necessary to live a life free from harm and abuse.

### What is abuse? Adults in need of protection.

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

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Adults are more at risk if:

- They are isolated and have little contact with their friends and family or people around them.
- They have difficulties with their memory.
- They have problems communicating.
- They are dependent on a carer (who may be a family member, friend or paid worker).
- If they don't like their carers.
- If the carer abuses alcohol or drugs.
- If the carer relies upon the adult at risk for financial support, a home or emotional support.

### Physical Abuse

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Physical abuse can include assault, being hit, slapped or restrained. Misuse of medication, to subdue or control a person, is also physical abuse, as is denying someone food or water, or failing to help them to keep warm, use the toilet, or conduct their physical care.

### Psychological or Emotional Abuse

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adults 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. It can

involve threatening to hurt someone, to abandon them, preventing access to visitors, friends, and family. Being humiliated, insulted, blamed, controlled, intimidated, bullied, or harassed can constitute emotional abuse. Such abuse can take place face to face, online or in other communications. Being denied access to aspects of life, which are important to a person's emotional wellbeing, is a form of emotional abuse. This may include being denied access to religious or spiritual materials that are important to the person, or in some circumstances, being prevented from attending church or other faith and worship settings. The withdrawal of care services and support which cannot be justified and appear unreasonable may also constitute a form of psychological abuse.

### **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 wellbeing or development is impaired. Neglect occurs when there is a deliberate withholding of help, care or other basic requirements, with the intention of causing harm or abuse. Failure to attend to someone's personal care or to provide the right sort of help, or medical care are all forms of neglect. Examples include not having access to enough food and drink, or the right type of food and drink, or not being provided with warmth or basic hygiene arrangements. Being denied access to medication or the inappropriate use of medication, is also a form of neglect. Although neglect is a form of abuse, it has close overlaps with other types of abuse such as psychological or physical abuse, because the action of omission leads to other harms as a direct consequence.

### **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. This includes any form of sexual harassment, inappropriate touching or looking, indecent exposure, sexual teasing or innuendo, being subjected to pornography, witnessing sexual acts, and any sexual act that the person did not agree to, or felt pressurised into consenting to, as well as rape.

### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions. This occurs when monies and valuables have been stolen, or where someone uses coercion or deception, to gain access to money and possessions, and uses them in ways that the person does not wish. It might involve theft of money or valuables, fraud, scams, gaining access to a bank account, or benefits, providing financial services in full knowledge that someone lacks capacity, or inappropriate use of money by someone appointed to look after financial assets on the person's behalf. Financial abuse is a common form of abuse against adults at risk.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse and/or intimate abuse is when a form of violence, or other type of abuse, is inflicted by a partner or family member. It can be a single incident or a recurring pattern which involves controlling, coercive or threatening actions. It includes economic abuse, where the abuser has total control of all the household financial resources. (Forced Marriage and so called 'Honour Based' Violence are also forms of domestic abuse.)

## **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. This can involve unfair treatment because of a person's race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. It can include some forms of harassment, verbal abuse, and slurs upon the person's character. Physical abuse and other forms of abuse can arise because of discrimination. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

## **Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of adults 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. Or it can be when such an institution fails to address practices known to cause harm and abuse in order to protect adults and/ or limit reputational damage.

## **Trafficking/Modern Slavery**

This is an increasing form of abuse which is prevalent in all areas of the UK. It involves the purposeful movement of an adult for economic benefit to a third party, often involving forced labour, unpaid labour, sexual exploitation, rape or prostitution.

## **Online Abuse**

Cyber bullying, internet fraud and stalking through social media, are all forms of abuse.

## **Self-harm/Self Neglect**

Self-harm is any form of self-inflicted injury or hurt. This can include self-neglect and/or a failure to attend to basic needs. Adults, who harm themselves for whatever purpose, can be adults at risk.

## **Hoarding**

Hoarding is a form of self-neglect, because it can arise from a neglect of home and surroundings and may be illustrative of mental health concerns. Hoarding increases the risk of fire and ill health, as well as financial and other types of abuse.

## **Spiritual abuse**

There are no references to spiritual abuse in The Care Act 2014. However, spiritual abuse is a recognised form of abuse which misuses power and is very relevant to church and faith settings. The term 'spiritual abuse' covers a wide variety of behaviour and can be summarised as the use of spiritual authority or spiritual means in order to demean, manipulate, control or exploit someone. As with any category of abuse, spiritual abuse is most likely to arise when people, often in positions of authority, misuse power.

## **Radicalisation**

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.

## **Appendix 14 - Signs of Possible Abuse - Children**

### **Physical abuse**

#### **Physical Signs include:**

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

#### **Psychological/Emotional Signs include:**

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

#### **Fictitious Illness by proxy**

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

#### **Female genital mutilation**

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

- Illegal in UK.
- Normally undertaken on pre-pubescent girls.
- Girls either taken abroad for procedure or "practitioners" come to UK.
- There can be no anaesthetic, no sterile equipment, barbaric practice.

- Complications include – serious infection, septicaemia, death, numerous gynaecological problems.

### **Emotional abuse**

The classic description of emotional abuse is “Low Warmth High Criticism” style of parenting.

#### **Signs include:**

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

### **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**

### **a. 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

### **b. Psychological/Emotional Signs include:**

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



## **Appendix 15 Signs of Possible Abuse - Adults**

### **Physical**

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

### **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 16 - Guidelines for the use of social media**

### **Introduction**

1. There is no reason why social media should not be used within the church. Used appropriately and wisely it can enhance its work and outreach, **BUT** remember, it is a public space and that rules and etiquette apply here as much as anywhere. The most well known platforms are facebook, twitter and YouTube, but the term, and these guidelines, also cover online forums and blogs as well as less well-known applications such as blipfoto, pinterest and flickr. and to use it effectively and safely you should understand both the benefits and the potential dangers. The official URC facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/URCcommunications>) and twitter feed (<https://twitter.com/urcmedia>) can be used as useful resources for our own social media pages, for sharing all the latest news and information from the denomination. When used well, social media applications are effective communications tools, clearly benefiting the Church by providing an online space for conversations, wider exploration, learning and discussion on issues of faith, church and society and offering opportunities for forming and deepening relationships locally and globally.

2. These guidelines for the use of social media are intended both to encourage its use and to offer good practice guidance for anyone with a representative role within Woking URC. The guidelines are applicable across both church social media accounts and the personal accounts of anyone publicly identified with WURC.

### **Basic principles**

3. The golden rule: Remember you are a representative of the United Reformed Church – therefore it is important that you are a responsible ambassador for Christ, the Church and your part in it. In essence, if you wouldn't say it, in a loud voice, in your local pub on a Saturday night, wearing your dog collar or a very big badge saying: 'I'm a member of Woking United Reformed Church' then don't say it online.

4. If you have any known public role within Woking United Reformed Church (Minister Elder, Member, Youth Worker, Volunteer....) then, when you post, you are posting as a representative of the Church. This applies whether you're posting in an official capacity on a church account or on your personal account – you are representing the church and cannot hide behind statements made on personal social media accounts. What you say privately (and social media is far from being a private forum!) will reflect on you and the denomination.

5. Although it may appear that the internet has little or no regulation, all content is subject to the same laws that apply in the 'real' world. You are completely responsible for the things you post and so could fall foul of the laws relating to libel and defamation.

6. There is an internet code of conduct. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of legally prohibited social media conduct include: posting commentary, content or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or any material that could be seen to create a hostile environment.

7. Remember that any content you post to social media could attract wider media interest – so be prepared for additional publicity, both positive and negative. If you do receive media interest (hopefully positive interest because you have posted some good news about local church life on a social media platform) then do feel free to contact the URC's central press and media office for advice, if you feel you need it. If you have posted something that attracts negative media interest, you should contact the URC's central press office for advice. Call the switchboard on 020 7916 2020 and ask for the press and media office.

8. Social media is fast-paced and if you do decide to enter the arena, then stay present and active – monitor your output, keep it fresh and up-to-date, and regularly review information about our church. Aim to post/update content regularly to encourage people to engage with what you are posting, to whet their appetites and to keep them coming back for more. If you really want to make a splash with social media and find your church has a lot to say, then you might want to explore applications such as hootsuite <https://hootsuite.com/> that allow you to set up social media content (on both facebook and twitter) in advance. Hootsuite is a particularly useful tool if you don't have the time to do daily updates but do want to stay engaged; it allows you to plan ahead – sending out prayers, news and reflections to go out at set times. It is a particularly useful tool for planning social media activity if your church is having a mini campaign on a specific topic, or wanting to post prayers every day of Advent or Lent etc.

9. It is important that you separate your personal social media account(s) from the 'official' church account(s).

10. Double check your privacy settings on social media platforms. Be aware that facebook is particularly prone (especially during updates) for resetting or creating new options for privacy. There are privacy policies and settings on each platform, including explanations of the different levels of privacy. When you post, bear in mind what effect your levels of privacy will have on who will – or could – see your post.

### **Some dos and don'ts**

#### **11. Do:**

- Do appoint at least two people to monitor and manage your church's social media accounts. We recommend that, where possible, these 'account managers' include the minister and an elder. If you have a communications officer they would be a natural choice. Remember that anyone with access to the account(s) becomes the 'public voice' of your church – so take great care to choose trustworthy individuals who understand the power of social media, who can post with authority and who are able to respond quickly and appropriately to any comments. (See the 'Don't' section for more information).
- Do use a code of conduct on your facebook page; setting out what you feel is appropriate facebook behaviour. You can see the URC Communications facebook code here: <https://www.facebook.com/URCcommunications/info> – you are welcome to adapt this for your use.

- Do use an organisation facebook page (as opposed to a personal one) as this will make it very clear that you are an organisation and it will also allow you to better manage your output and interaction.
- Do be respectful of theological viewpoints you do not agree with. Public slanging matches between Christians are never a good thing.
- Do respond to queries quickly – you might find that newcomers to your area are looking for a place to worship. Be welcoming.
- Do be credible, fair and honest.
- Do respect the privacy of your congregation. Discussion of pastoral care in relation to individuals not only contravenes data protection but, for ministers and church employees, could become a disciplinary matter.
- Do make sure you have the child's agreement and the written permission of parents/guardians when posting photographs of children on to church social media sites. See section on 'Using images of children' for more information.
- Do use social media to share good news of church life and church family members – first checking that the particular person/people involved is/are happy for the news of their engagement/pregnancy/ marriage/anniversary/ recovery from illness etc to become public. Before posting ask yourself: 'Is this my story to tell?' And if it's not, then ask permission first!
- Do post or share on facebook and/or retweet appropriate stories, reflections, prayers marking key events in the Christian calendar/life of the church etc.
- Do monitor church community group pages on sites such as facebook – take care to quickly remove posts by others that are visibly offensive, threatening or indicative of bullying.
- Do stay within the legal framework and make yourself aware of safeguarding issues; respect copyright, libel and defamation and data protection laws.
- Do bear in mind that your post has the potential to be misinterpreted or misread: emotions and attitudes are hard to convey in print, so be careful how you phrase things.
- Do be patient. Rome was not built in a day; it takes time to build a following on social media.
- Do expect to get better at it as you go on, check out what others are posting and tweeting, see what works and feel free to try similar things yourself.
- Relax. Enjoy the journey. It's just a conversation and shouldn't be a chore.

## **12. Don't:**

- Don't respond censoriously to every little remark just because you don't like it! Take a judgement call between someone who is expressing a view that you or your church doesn't hold and someone who is writing abusive comments.

- Never make any comments that could be considered racist, sexist, or homophobic, or engage in any other conduct that would be considered unacceptable in a Christian environment or work place of the United Reformed Church.
- Never engage with posters who are being deliberately hateful. Remove the post. (It's helpful to have the code of conduct on your facebook page, which spells out the type of posts that will be removed.)
- Don't neglect the wider community who may be genuinely interested in your church or new to the area and looking for their next place of worship.
- Don't gossip or engage in conversations about personal/pastoral matters that directly relate to individuals. Do not disguise gossip as 'prayer points'. If it's not your story to tell, then don't tell it! Remember here are data protection and safeguarding considerations, and that anything published online is subject to libel laws.
- Don't engage in verbal aggression via social media; it's ugly and has no place on a social media site run by a church. Would Christ say it? No? Then please don't either. You can correct misinformation but do it with grace. Remember, people are entitled to their opinions – but they are not entitled to share abusive or derogatory opinions and comments on your church's facebook page!
- Don't expect overnight success. Social media is all about building relationships and that takes time.

### **To summarise**

13. These guidelines for the use of social media are intended both to encourage the use of social media and to offer good practice guidance for anyone with a representative role within the United Reformed Church (URC). The guidelines are applicable across a range of uses: Church social media accounts, as well as the personal accounts of anyone publicly identified with the denomination.

### **Safeguarding implications of the use of images and videos**

14. Since the Data Protection Act 1998, churches must take care how they take and use photographs or film footage of people. This does not mean that pictures should not be taken or that filming should be prohibited. However, protocols should be followed in order to comply with the legislation and to safeguard children and young people.

15. Using images of children: Ensure that you ask the permission of the child/parent/carer before taking pictures/videos of children and ensure that the parent/carer signs consent forms. It is advisable to use group photographs of children rather than individuals. When captioning photos/videos of children, do not include any personal details about them, including their names.

### **'Friending' children on social media**

16. At the time of writing the United Reformed Church has no overarching policy about individuals using their personal facebook pages to communicate with young people,

however we strongly recommend that, wherever possible, links between young people and adults are only made on a church or youth group organisational page and not a personal page. You should be aware of the following disadvantages and risks of using a personal facebook page:

- Lack of privacy: Always having to be careful what is shared online with 'friends'
- Blurring of boundaries: The role of a church worker shifts from being a role model/mentor/advice-giver to being a more 'equal friend'
- Information on a personal profile can be used against the worker, for example, through teasing and bullying.
- Some social media websites/applications have restrictions on the minimum age of users – do not ignore these. (For example, facebook users must be at least 13.)

17. Having pointed out some potential pitfalls, some young people (those under 18 years old) play a very prominent role in the life of the church.

## **Copyright**

18. It is important that you do not use content that is subject to copyright. Please take great care in all that you publish and never publish items that you don't have permission to publish (e.g. poems, prose extracts, song/hymn lyrics). If you do want to publish something that's protected by copyright, please seek written (or emailed) permission from the copyright holder before you post it on our church website or print it in any kind of newsletter.

19. Don't download images from the web and assume it will be ok, it almost certainly won't be! A good place for free images with no or little copyright stipulations is [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) Select the 'advanced search' option, and search in the 'Creative Commons-licensed content' section. Do acknowledge the photographer/artist, even when the image is copyright free. Of course, you can always take your own photos!

20. The Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) website (<http://ccli.co.uk/copyright/>) is an excellent source of information on copyright law.

## **21. Ideas to get started**

- As well as the church website, an organisational facebook page could be the answer. Such a page could be used to promote our church, give information on service times, events etc and is really easy to update. (And facebook and twitter can also be used in conjunction with our website. You can set up social media feeds to automatically feed any social media posts to your site – and you can also direct people to our website via your social media posts.
- Get on facebook and twitter and report on your community and outreach projects.
- Post Videos of our services to YouTube for everyone to see. If these videos include any images of children/young people please ensure that you have the written consent of a parent/carer. Also remember that if the clip includes any

music you will require a licence from PRS for Music ([prsformusic.com](http://prsformusic.com)) and direct permission from the copyright owner if you present the song/hymn words – please check with CCLI.

- Use a photo-sharing application like Flickr to post a selection of good quality photos of church life (ensuring that you have written parental/carer permission for publishing photos with children in them).
- Share any good news on facebook and twitter – and you will start to build a following/develop relationships.

22. When looking to improve our current church website then you might like to consider the iChurch (<http://ichurch.urc.org.uk/>) website offer developed by the URC's former Windermere Centre.

- Use facebook or twitter to start a discussion about a particular topic or issue at the church or your activities. Remember, social media offers two-way communication (but be prepared for positive and negative feedback, and respond to comments and queries quickly).

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## **Glossary of terms**

**General terms Applications/platforms:** Websites and mobile-phone-operated programs.

**Post:** This term is both a verb and a noun; it is both the process and the product of sharing/publishing content using online platforms.

**Profile:** The public-facing page of a social media website

**Sharing:** The process of sharing a status, image or article from a social media account that is not your own; this is usually done by clicking a 'share' button/icon. Shared content will be displayed to all of your friends.

### **Facebook specific terms**

**Friending:** The process of adding an individual as a friend on facebook. Depending on your settings, and the other person's settings, being a friend allows both parties to see each other's posts, write on each other's facebook timelines and share links, videos and images.

**Liking:** The process of giving a virtual 'thumbs up' by clicking the 'like' button (indicated by a 'thumbs up' icon), showing that you approve of someone's facebook status, image or comment. This term is specific to facebook timelines. Be careful about liking – it's not always appropriate. For example, don't 'like' content about sensitive issues including illness or bereavement.

**Organisation page:** This is a facebook-specific term describing one of the types of page that facebook allows its user to create. A page that is labelled as an organisation page has useful features including easy ways for more than one person to monitor/manage/edit the page activity.

**Tag:** You can 'tag' a facebook friend in your post. Tagging indicates that the post/image is connected in some way with them – perhaps because you and they are in a photo together, or were at an event together. The friend will be notified of the tag.



### **Twitter specific terms**

**Favouriting:** The twitter version of a facebook 'like' Hashtags (#XYZ): Hashtags are a way of signposting topics and themes on twitter. For example, you can search for hashtags to see if any twitter users are talking about the same topic, as well as use them yourself to contribute to a discussion or about an event. #URCGA14 was used for General Assembly, and enabled the communications department to monitor the tweets about General Assembly and find out what people were up to in the different sessions as well as allowing others to easily follow all General Assembly news.

**Mention (@):** You can 'mention' someone in a tweet by placing their handle after the @. The person or organisation mentioned will be notified of the tweet. You can use this feature to draw someone's attention to a tweet, or simply to say you were with him or her at the time of the tweet (e.g. "Just at the cinema with @jo\_bloggs)

**Retweet (RT):** This word is used both as a verb and a noun; it is both the process and the product of sharing someone else's twitter post to your followers/twitter feed by pressing the 'retweet' button. The retweeted post will be published on your own twitter feed.

**Tweet:** Similar to a facebook status, you have 140 characters to convey your message. Images and videos can be added to tweets.

**Twitter handle:** Similar to your name on facebook, you choose your 'handle' when you create your account and it is always preceded by an @ – and allows people to communicate directly with you. The URC communication twitter handle is @urcmedia.

*This appendix is adapted from advice written and published by the Communications Department of the United Reformed Church, 86 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9RT*

## Appendix 17 – DBS Checks

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check enables Woking URC to check the criminal records of workers and potential workers in order to ascertain whether or not they are suitable to work with children and/or adults at risk.

There are three types of DBS check:

- A Standard Disclosure contains any information held on the Police National Computer
- An Enhanced Disclosure contains any information held on the Police National Computer as well as local police information.
- An Enhanced Disclosure plus Barred List check contains any information held on the Police National Computer, local police information & whether the applicant is on the barred list in respect of work with children, adults at risk or both.

Because of the addictive nature of sexual offending, it is the policy of the URC that all those with convictions of a sexual nature against children/adults at risk (considered 'Relevant Offences') will not be placed in any position of responsibility which puts them in contact with these groups

### Which church roles require a DBS check?

The URC advises that DBS checks should always be carried out for any role which is eligible for such checks, as part of a safer recruitment process. In order to identify which roles are eligible for a DBS check, it is important to first be clear about what each role entails. This is best achieved by producing a job description including reference to:

- the type of work
- the frequency and period of time over which the work will be done
- if and how the work will be supervised

### DBS eligibility for those who work with children

For roles which fall within 'Regulated Activity' an Enhanced DBS plus Barred List check must be carried out. It is a criminal offence to appoint someone to such a role if they are on the Barred List. In local churches, such roles would typically include:

- any role which involves teaching, supervising or providing advice and guidance to children on a frequent (weekly) basis (e.g. leaders of weekly children's and youth groups, etc...)
- any role which involves teaching, supervising or providing advice and guidance to children intensively (at least four days in a 30 day period) (e.g. leaders at a children's holiday club lasting four days or more, etc...)
- any role which involves supervision of children overnight, irrespective of how many nights or how often (e.g. leaders staying overnight at a residential event, etc...)
- any role which includes personal care of children on account of their illness, disability or age irrespective of how often this takes place (e.g. leaders helping children with eating, drinking, toileting, washing, bathing, dressing, etc...)
- those who drive children as part of their church role weekly, four or more days in a 30 day period, or overnight (e.g. someone who has been asked by the church to transport children to and from a church activity, etc...)

- on church premises used for Ofsted registered childcare, any role which gives opportunity for unsupervised contact with children during childcare (e.g. church office worker or caretaker in a building where toilets are shared with the children, etc...)
- any role which includes the management or supervision of the above regulated activity

### **Supervised workers**

In most church activities volunteers tend to work as co-workers rather than one supervising the other. Therefore, the above list assumes that the roles are not supervised at all times by a senior worker. The URC's definition of supervision covers situations where the person being supervised is in sight of the supervisor at all times. If one of the above roles is supervised in this way, it no longer falls within the current definition of Regulated Activity, but it is still eligible for an Enhanced DBS check without a barred list check.

### **Regular, but less frequent work**

Those who work in the above roles on a regular basis, but less often than every week, are still eligible for an Enhanced DBS check without a barred list check. For example, leaders on a monthly rota for a children's activity.

### **Helpers who are under 18**

The lowest age at which someone can apply for a DBS check is 16 years old. However, workers under 18 years old should be supervised at all times by an adult and therefore should never be engaged in Regulated Activity and so will not require an Enhanced DBS plus Barred List check. However, if 16 or 17 year olds are doing one of the roles in the above list under supervision, then they are eligible for a DBS Enhanced check without a Barred List check.

### **Activities in which parents/carers are present (such as parent / carer and toddler groups, messy church, etc)**

Any roles which are solely about working with the parents, providing refreshments or providing administrative support are not eligible for a DBS check. If the role of the worker does not involve supervision or personal care of children they do not require a DBS check, but the leader in charge of the group and their deputy should have an Enhanced DBS check without a Barred List check.

If the role of the worker includes supervision or personal care of the children (for example, while parents do other things) then an Enhanced DBS check plus Barred List would be required for the worker (unless supervised at all times, in which case a Barred List check would not be required), as well as for the leader in charge of the group and their deputy.

### **DBS eligibility for those working with adults at risk**

The definition of Regulated Activity is simpler for work with adults at risk. An individual is carrying out 'Regulated Activity' relating to adults only when engaging in:

- healthcare for adults provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional
- personal care for adults involving hands-on physical assistance with washing and dressing, eating, drinking and toileting. This includes prompting and supervising an adult with any of these tasks on account of their age, illness or disability. This also includes teaching someone to do any of these tasks

- social work – provision by a social care worker of social work which is required in connection with any health services or social services
- assistance with an adult's financial transactions, money handling, bills or shopping on account of their age, illness or disability arranged via a third party
- assisting in the conduct of an adult's own affairs under a formal appointment
- conveying adults for reasons of age, illness or disability to, from, or between places where they receive healthcare, personal care or social work arranged via a third party

Even if workers only engage in these activities once, it is still considered 'Regulated Activity'.

A person whose role includes day to day management or supervision of any person who is engaging in Regulated Activity, is also working in 'Regulated Activity'. 'Regulated Activity' excludes any activity carried out in the course of family relationships or private arrangements made outside of a church role (for example, between friends).

Within a church setting, 'Regulated Activity' with adults is likely to be limited to a small number of church roles where the person is involved, as part of their church role, in:

- helping with washing, dressing, eating, drinking, toileting or teaching someone to do one of these tasks
- helping with a person's financial transactions, bills or shopping on account of their age, illness or disability. Posting letters for a housebound person is not 'Regulated Activity' but taking money from them to pay for postage is 'Regulated Activity'.
- driving someone (on account of their age, illness or disability) to/from places in order to receive health, personal or social care

For roles involving the above activities, an Enhanced DBS plus Barred List check must be carried out. It is a criminal offence to appoint someone to such a role if they are on the Barred List.

For other church roles in which a worker has a significant level of involvement with adults at risk, an Enhanced DBS check without a Barred List check should be carried out as a matter of good practice.

### **Obtaining a DBS certificate**

DBS checks are free of charge for volunteers, but there is a charge for paid staff, which is met by WURC.

Applications are submitted via a URC-nominated third party – "DDC". The Church Verifier (or Church Secretary in the case of the Verifier) will initiate an on-line application form, which can be completed by the applicant, or with the support of the Verifier. The applicant will then provide sufficient original documentary evidence of their identity from a list supplied by the DBS and the Verifier will submit the appropriate information on-line. If all is well, the applicant will receive a paper certificate and the Church Secretary and Verifier will be notified of the successful application by e-mail. The Verifier is able to check progress via the DBS's website.

The applicant should present the certificate to the verifier for inspection in case there are "blemishes" (comments) on the certificate, of which WURC should be aware. In

certain cases, where blemishes are thought to be of significant concern by DDC, they are discussed with Synod before being released.”

Volunteers are urged to join the DBS Update Service, which allows for their eligibility to be verified at any time and obviates the need for further applications.”

### **Renewal of DBS checks**

The URC requires them to be renewed at least every 5 years.

## Appendix 18 Incident Recording Form



### Basic information

Date and time of incident:

.....

Date on which this report was written:

.....

Your full name:

.....

Full name of child, young person or adult concerned:

.....

Address, if  
known.....

.....

Date of birth, if  
known.....

.....

Location / Situation:

.....

.....

Other people present:

.....

.....

### Record of incident:

- Please ensure you are as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible – do not interpret what was said using your own words.
- Record what you said as well as what the child, 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.

**Signed:** ..... **Dated:**

.....

(by person who wrote this report)

**Who has been spoken to about the incident?**

Record below the names of all those with whom you have spoken about your concerns:

Local Church Safeguarding Coordinator:

.....

Synod Safeguarding Coordinator:

.....

Children's / Adult Services:

.....

Police:

.....

NSPCC:

.....

Parent/Carer:

.....

Child:

.....

Other (name, role and organisation):

.....

.....

**Feedback and follow up actions:**