

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

We, the Elders of HINCKLEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH accept and abide by the following:

1. Christians are called to recognise the unique status of children and adults at risk. Within the Kingdom of God, children and adults at risk matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously. The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from any form of abuse or neglect regardless of age, gender, reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. As members and workers of the church we are committed to:

- the care and nurture of all children and adults (see Note 1)
- the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults at risk
- the establishment of a loving church environment which is safe and caring for all people and where the dignity of each person is respected
- an informed vigilance about the dangers of all forms of abuse, harm and neglect within all aspects of work in the Church and how to respond appropriately
- ensuring everyone who engages with the life of the Church is responsible for keeping people safe
- working together with voluntary/statutory agencies and other denominations and faith-based organisations

2. We will ensure processes and practices in all aspects of safeguarding, including discipline, risk management, whistleblowing and bullying/harassment are in alignment with **Good Practice 6** – URC's Policy and Guidance in Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults At Risk.

As part of our good practice for working with children and adults at risk, the persons to speak to for further information or with whom to raise issues (the "Designated Persons") for this Church are:

Safeguarding Co-ordinator CHRIS SHARROCK

(Deputy Co-ordinator KAREN JONES)

DBS Verifiers CRAWFORD and MARILYN PAYNE

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

4. All those working or seeking to work with children or adults at risk will be properly recruited and supported, whether paid, volunteers lay or ordained. Training will be available from Synod Office. Applicants will be asked to declare whether they have any unspent criminal convictions and will be required to complete a DBS application form. (see Note 2) The DBS verifiers recorded above will process all such application forms and ask the DBS to undertake all appropriate checks at an enhanced level.

5. In the case of all those seeking to do paid or unpaid work with children or adults at risk, two references will be obtained.
6. A list of groups and their leaders shall be kept appended to this policy and updated annually at the AGM for the purposes of ensuring that appropriate training has been undertaken by all leaders.
7. We will manage risks and those who might pose a risk to the welfare of people and the life of the Church and offer pastoral support to those known to pose a risk to children and/or adults, including supervision, referral to the appropriate agencies, and implementation of safeguarding contracts, where appropriate.
8. Organisations using our buildings must meet all legal requirements in respect of child protection legislation and legislation relating to adults at risk. These organisations should provide evidence of their current policy to the designated safeguarding co-ordinators recorded above. They must confirm that they have the correct DBS cover for the role.
9. We will review our safeguarding policy, practices and procedures annually, considering lessons learned from safeguarding cases and changes in legislation, statutory guidance and good working practice

NOTES

1. The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.
2. A model application form should include questions as to whether the person concerned has any unspent criminal convictions or civil actions made against them or pending which may prevent them from working with children or adults now and in the future. Applicants will be required to complete a self disclosure form to be accessed if successful in their application.

Signed by the Church Secretary on Behalf of the Elders

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History – Issue 5 passed by the AGM on 05/12/2020 (Safeguarding coordinator: The position of deputy has been filled by Karen Jones)
 History - Issue 4 passed by the AGM on 23/11/2020 (Document redrafted)
 History – Issue 3 passed by AGM on 25th November 2019 (No changes since Issue 2)
 Issue 6 – November 2022
 Issue 7 – November 2023 – Good Practice 6 replaces 5