

Cores End United Reformed Church

Safeguarding Policy Statement



Statement of Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding is taken seriously by Cores End United Reformed Church.

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

Therefore, as members and workers of the church, we are committed to:

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

This means that we will:

- ✓ Carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring checks.
- ✓ 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, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- ✓ Seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- ✓ Seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- ✓ Seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or adult.
- ✓ Review our safeguarding policy, practices and procedures annually.
- ✓ Follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

This statement was agreed by the Church Meeting on 7th July 2024

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

Training, policies and procedures

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

Safer ways of working

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

Respectful and inclusive working

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

Managing behaviour

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

Photos and videos

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

Reporting concerns

- Know who the Church Safeguarding Coordinator (CSC) is and how to contact them
- Tell the CSC if you have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Do not promise to keep anything a secret; if a child is being harmed, or is at risk of harm, you will need to share that information but only on a need-to-know basis.

Working with children online

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

Approval/consent

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

How to engage online

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

Use of content generated online

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

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

On behalf of Cores End United Reformed Church:

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Code of conduct for working with adults

This code describes the standards of conduct expected of all those working with adults, including adults at risk. It sets out general principles for good practice but cannot cover every type of activity or situation. Further details on specific issues can be found in Good Practice 6 and the accompanying resources.

Defining 'adults at risk'

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

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

Training, policies and procedures

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

Promote the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of people

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

Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion

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

Effective communication

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

Respect people's right to confidentiality

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

Online engagement

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

Physical contact/touch

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

Financial matters

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

Challenging inappropriate behaviour

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

Feedback and complaints

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

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

On behalf of Cores End United Reformed Church:

Name of worker:

Signed:

Date:

Some suggested organisations who can provide information, advice and support.

- Public sector services
- General support, advice and helplines
- Children
- Older people
- People with additional needs
- Mental health
- Domestic abuse
- Survivors
- Modern slavery
- Services for those considering or displaying harmful behaviour.

Public sector services

Local authority

Every local authority provides services to the community, including statutory services such as Children's Services, Adult Care Services, housing and environment. Your local council will have a website with contact details for your local services: www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council

NHS

The National Health Service can provide advice, guidance, support and signposting to local services for all health issues: www.nhs.uk/service-search

Police

www.police.uk

Telephone: 999 in an emergency.

Telephone: 101 – provides a service for non-emergency issues and will connect you to your local Police service, wherever you call from in the UK.

General support, advice and helplines

Association of Christians in Counselling

Provides a facility to search for Christian counsellors: www.acc-uk.org

Citizens Advice

Providing free general advice and guidance around a range of concerns such as benefits, debt, relationships, housing, law, discrimination, tax, money, healthcare and education:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Premier Lifeline

A confidential telephone helpline offering a listening ear, emotional and spiritual support from a Christian perspective, prayer and signposting: www.premierlifeline.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 0101 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday

Samaritans

A crisis helpline, providing a listening service for any worries or concerns: www.samaritans.org

Telephone: 116 123

Victim Support

Independent charity supporting victims of crime: www.victimsupport.org.uk

Children

Barnardo's

Protecting, supporting and nurturing the UK's most vulnerable children, including campaigning to end child sexual exploitation. Provides leaflets in both English and Welsh for parents, children, young people and professionals, showing how to spot the signs of child sexual exploitation and how to keep safe: www.barnardos.org.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

CEOP is a law enforcement agency which helps to keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online. They provide advice and accept direct reporting from young people, parents/carers or other concerned adults about online abuse: www.ceop.police.uk

Childline

A free 24-hour support and counselling service for children and young people up to age 19: www.childline.org.uk

Freephone helpline for children: 0800 1111

Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Lucy Faithfull Foundation is a UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to preventing child sexual abuse including: young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours, adult male and female sexual abusers, and other family members: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk

NSPCC

Providing support and advice for keeping children safe from harm and abuse: www.nspcc.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Parents Protect

Helping parents and carers to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation: www.parentsprotect.co.uk

Telephone: 0808 1000 900

UK Safer Internet Centre

Helping children and young people stay safe online: www.saferinternet.org.uk

We Stand

Provides a range of support services and information for families affected by child sexual abuse: www.westand.org.uk

Helpline: 0800 980 1958

Older people

Age UK

Support and advice services for older people: www.ageuk.org.uk

Advice Line: 0800 678 1602

Alzheimer's Society

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Telephone: 0333 150 3456

Anna's Chaplaincy

Offering spiritual care in later life: www.annachaplaincy.org.uk

Telephone: 01865 319 700

Faith in Later Life

Providing resources to help churches support older people, including guidance on developing a dementia friendly church:

www.faithinlaterlife.org/fill-resource/developing-dementia-friendly-churches-livability/

Hourglass (previously Action on Elder Abuse)

Provides information and support to an older person or anyone concerned about an older person who is at risk of, experiencing or recovering from any form of abuse or neglect:

www.wearehourglass.org

Helpline: 0808 808 8141

Linking Lives

Helping churches run befriending schemes and reduce loneliness amongst older people:

www.linkinglives.uk

People with additional needs

Additional Needs Alliance

Help churches support and spiritually grow children, young people and young adults with additional needs or disabilities: www.additionalneedsalliance.org.uk

Mencap

Supporting and resourcing people with learning disabilities, their families and carers. The website has specific advice on safeguarding: www.mencap.org.uk

Respond

A national charity providing therapy and specialist support services to people with learning disabilities, autism or both who have experienced abuse, violence or trauma:

www.respond.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7383 0700

Mental health

Hub of hope

UK-wide mental health service database which lets you search for local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support: www.hubofhope.co.uk

Kintsugi Hope

Working in communities through the local church to provide safe and supportive spaces for people who feel or have felt overwhelmed: www.kintsugihope.com

Mind

Providing a range of advice and services on mental health: www.mind.org.uk

Renew Wellbeing

Helps churches open spaces of welcome and inclusion in partnership with mental health teams to improve mental and emotional wellbeing: www.renewwellbeing.org.uk

Rethink

Providing services and advice to those severely affected by mental illness: www.rethink.org

Shout

A free, confidential, anonymous text support service: www.giveusashout.org

Text: 85258

Domestic abuse

Forced Marriage Unit

The unit works both inside and outside the UK. It provides help and support to victims of forced marriage/those at risk of a forced marriage: www.gov.uk/forced-marriage

Telephone: 020 7008 0151

ManKind

Helping men escape domestic abuse: www.mankind.org.uk

Telephone: 01823 334 244

National Domestic Abuse Helpline (for women)

www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 2000 247 (lines free and open 24 hours).

Also options for live chat and British Sign Language interpreter service.

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

Telephone: 0800 999 5428

Refuge

Provides a range of specialist domestic abuse services to women and children.

www.refuge.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7395 7700

Respect: Men's Advice Line

A helpline phone and website service for male victims of domestic abuse:

www.mensadvice.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 801 0327

Restored

A Christian charity working to raise awareness of domestic abuse, support survivors, and equip the church to do the same. They also provide a Survivor's Handbook: www.restored-uk.org

Helpline: 020 8943 7706

Safe in Faith

Providing survivors of domestic abuse, who are part of a faith community, with safe, faith based support and counselling that is tailored to their needs as believers:

www.safeinfaith.org.uk/about

Women's Aid

A national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. Supports a network of over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the UK:

www.womensaid.org.uk

Survivors

Galop

Provides support for LGBT+ people who have experienced abuse and violence:

www.galop.org.uk

MACSAS (Ministry and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors)

A support group for women and men from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by Ministers or Clergy, as children or as adults. They support both survivors who have remained within their Christian communities and those who have left: www.macsas.org.uk

NAPAC (The National Association for People Abused in Childhood)

Provides support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse: www.napac.org.uk

Free confidential support line: 0808 801 0331

One in Four

Specialising in supporting childhood survivors and current survivors of sexual violence, domestic violence, abuse and trauma: www.oneinfour.org.uk

Rape Crisis England and Wales

An organisation supporting the work of Rape Crisis Centres across England and Wales, and raising awareness and understanding of sexual violence and abuse in all its forms:

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 500 2222

SurvivorsUK

Helping men who have been sexually abused and raises awareness of their needs.
Sexual violation includes both childhood sexual abuse and adult sexual assault/rape:
www.survivorsuk.org/ways-we-can-help/

Telephone: 0808 800 5005

The Survivors Trust

An umbrella agency for over 135 specialist voluntary sector agencies providing a range of counselling, therapeutic and support services working with women, men and children who are victims/survivors of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse:
www.thesurvivorstrust.org

Thirtyone:Eight Listening Service

Telephone service which offers the chance for adults with lived experience of abuse to talk about their experiences in detail and in confidence with a sensitive listener:
www.thirtyoneeight.org/safeguarding-services/consultancy/listening-service/

Modern slavery

Clewer Initiative

Seeks to raise awareness of all aspects of modern slavery and help support victims and vulnerable groups by mobilising local churches and communities: www.theclewerinitiative.org

Hope for Justice

Fighting human trafficking and helping victims and survivors all around the world:
www.hopeforjustice.org/church-partners

UK Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline

www.unseenuk.org

Telephone: 0800 0121 700

Services for those considering or displaying harmful behaviour

Respect Phonenumber

A confidential helpline, email and webchat service for domestic abuse perpetrators:
www.respectphonenumber.org.uk

Helpline: 0808 802 4040

Stop it Now!

Confidential helpline for people who are struggling with sexual thoughts and behaviours towards children, or are concerned about someone else's behaviour: www.stopitnow.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 1000 900