

CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSON'S POLICY
FLEET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

As one of its major activities the United Reformed Church, Fleet seeks to serve the needs of young people, promoting holistic development. In doing so, we as a Church take seriously the welfare of all young people and children who come onto our premises or who are involved in its activities.

The church aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring, Christian environment with a friendly and happy atmosphere. The church recognises that it is the responsibility of everyone to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of young people and children regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs and to report suspected or discovered abuse. The church recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with young people and children and to providing supervision. The church is committed to working with the statutory childcare authorities when necessary and to ensure that contact details are up to date.

As part of our commitment to young people and children, the church has appointed two link elders (see Appendix 13) and will have our Safeguarding Policy Agreement (Appendix 16) on permanent display in the church building.

Ratified: June 2012

Reviewed: May 2014/May 2016/June 2018/**May2022**

Next Review Due: May 2018/June 2020/May 2024

Green – Quoted text from a published source.

Amber – Text in need of a general check through on review.

Red*** – Important details that must be thoroughly fact-checked at each review.

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PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSON

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Reformed Church (URC) believes that, *“we all benefit from the corporate life of the Church, as we hear the Bible read and interpreted, as we receive God’s gifts to us through the sacraments (of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper) and as we share life together. This means that being a Christian in the United Reformed Church will involve being part of a local church where these things can happen and where we can learn from other Christians and help one another grow in faith and understanding.”* (Booklet “What is the URC?”)

Fleet United Reformed Church has adopted the “Charter for Children in the Church” which states that, *“Children are equal partners with adults in the life of the church”* (see Appendix 11).

Fleet United Reformed Church believes that all adults who come into contact with children and young people at the church or at church events have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Fleet United Reformed Church has adopted the attached policy and practice guidelines which were originally based upon the Children Act 2004, URC Good Practice *“Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church”*, Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) *“Safe & Secure”* and the advice of practitioners.

Copies of this policy will be available from the Church, through the Church Secretary or from the Church website.

2. CHURCH COMMITMENT

The Eldership, on behalf of the Church undertakes to

- Ensure that the Church has a “Safeguarding Statement” which is read out at every Church AGM.
- *** Ensure that the Church has a Safeguarding Policy for Children and Young People with a Good Working Practice Guide, (see Appendix 6) which is reviewed biannually. Once reviewed, the Elders are to receive an updated copy.
- Nominate two of their number to have particular responsibility for children and young people and publish their contact details (see Appendix 13).
- Nominate a safeguarding co-ordinator and deputy. Provide appropriate support to those people and publish their names and contact details (see Appendix 13).
- Ensure that appropriate checks are made on persons working with or in contact with children and young people (see Appendix 7).
- Ensure appropriate training and support is provided for all people involved with children and young people.
- *** Ensure that the premises are safe to use and that a nominated person can be contacted in case of problems (see Appendix 13).

- ******* Ensure that appropriate processes are in place, which are reviewed every two years and that these processes are available to read along with the necessary contacts (see Appendix 1 & 13).
- Ensure that information regarding child protection is clearly visible for all Church users (see Appendix 16).
- Ensure regular checks are made on the building to ensure that it reaches necessary safety and suitability standards and that a nominated person can be contacted in case of problems (see Appendix 13).
- Ensure all groups using the church building are aware of our Safeguarding Policy Agreement (Appendix 16) via the Room Booking Agreement.
- Ensure that children and young people have access to information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they may have concerns.

3. RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE

3.1 UNDERSTANDING ABUSE & NEGLECT

The Home Office “Abuse of Trust” guidelines outlines that it is unacceptable for a person in a relationship of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues. The legal definitions of abuse and neglect are contained in Appendix 3 as a guide. Signs of Possible Abuse can be found in Appendix 4. It is always better to seek advice if in doubt.

3.2 RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION/SUSPICION OF ABUSE

(See Action Sequence Table in Appendix 1 and Responding to Allegations of Physical Injury, Neglect or Physical Abuse in Appendix 2)

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the designated Safeguarding Coordinator who is nominated by the eldership to act on their behalf in dealing with the suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect, including referring to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, or if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the report should be made to the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator.
- The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion of abuse and pass this information onto the statutory authorities who have a legal duty to investigate.

*****Children’s Services**

Hampshire Children’s Services:

Office Hours (Mon-Thurs: 8.30am-5.00pm & Fri: 8.30am-4.30pm): 0300 555 1384

Out of hours: 0300 555 1373

Email: childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

*****Police** Non-emergencies ring 101 or 999 for all emergency situations.

*****NSPCC:** 0808 800 5000 Mon-Fri: 8am-10pm & Sat-Sun: 9am-6pm

Out of hours email: help@nspcc.org.uk

While allegations or suspicions of abuse should normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the co-ordinator and deputy should not delay reporting and referring to the Children's Social Services, Child Protection Team and/or Police Special Investigations Unit as above. Any elder on duty will deputise in the co-ordinator's absence. The child's well-being must take precedence.

- Under no circumstances should a worker/volunteer carry out their own investigation into allegation or suspicion of abuse. Suspicion must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record using the enclosed template (see Appendix 5) should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- The Eldership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared on a strictly limited need-to-know basis.
- If allegations or suspicions implicate both the Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made to the Synod Children & Youth Development Officer (CYDO) (see Appendix 13) and to Children's Social Services and/or Police as appropriate.
- If the allegations or suspicions implicate the minister, then the co-ordinator or deputy co-ordinator should contact the Synod Moderator immediately (see Appendix 13).
- The helper/leader, about whom allegations have been made, will be suspended from duties until either Social Care/Police or an appropriate person appointed by the eldership to investigate the situation, has undertaken the review and reported back to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Internal investigations will be carried out judiciously. The person about whom the allegation has been made will be regularly updated by the Church Secretary (see Appendix 13).
- Any decision about internal action regarding child protection will be made by the Eldership.
- If the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact the Police or Children's Services direct on the numbers above. Any individual is also free to discuss concerns with the CYDO, as above.

3.3 RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF ABUSE BY A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

If a child or young person makes a comment to a worker or volunteer that gives cause for concern, the following steps must be followed.

The worker or volunteer will:

- React calmly and listen carefully to what the child/young person may wish to tell.
- Reassure the child that they have made the correct decision to disclose.
- Inform the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy Co-ordinator as soon as possible of the details and concerns.
- Produce a written, dated and signed objective record of the disclosure using the Incident Report Form (Appendix 5).

The worker or volunteer will not:

- Promise secrecy, only confidentiality.
- Question the child.
- Ask leading questions of the child/young person.
- Carry out, or attempt to carry out, their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Discuss the matter with anyone other than those nominated above.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- Ensure all information has been recorded on the Incident Report Form (Appendix 5).
- Keep the record of the disclosure in a safe and secured place.
- Pass the information on to the statutory authorities who have a legal duty to investigate.

*****Children's Services**

Hampshire Children's Services:

Office Hours (Mon-Thurs: 8.30am-5.00pm & Fri: 8.30am-4.30pm): 0300 555 1384

Out of hours: 0300 555 1373

Email: childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

*****Police** Non-emergencies ring 101 or 999 for all emergency situations.

*****NSPCC:** 0808 800 5000 Mon-Fri: 8am-10pm & Sat-Sun: 9am-6pm

Out of hours email: help@nspcc.org.uk

If a referral is to be made to the Children's Social Care Services and/or the police department, it will be made and followed up in writing within 24 hours.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will not:

- Inform the parents or carers unless advised by Children's Services to do so.

The Elders will:

- Support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role.
- Accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared on a strictly limited need-to-know basis.
- Make any decision about internal action regarding child protection.

4. PASTORAL CARE

Fleet URC is committed to offering pastoral care to all those within the church who have been affected by abuse. Anyone affected who requires pastoral care should contact the Minister (see Appendix 13)

5. WORKING WITH SEXUAL OFFENDERS, MALE OR FEMALE

When someone attending Fleet URC is known to have abused children or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults, a risk assessment shall be carried out by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Minister and the Synod's Safeguarding Officer (see Appendix 13) in accordance with URC best practise. A précis of the key points is included in Appendix 9.

ACTION SEQUENCE TABLE
(To be read in conjunction with section 3 of this document.)

If a child discloses something of concern to you, you WILL need to refer it on.

1. Listen
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child comes to you and asks if they can tell you something, react calmly, take it seriously and listen carefully.
2. Think
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who else can hear what the child has to say? Take the child to somewhere where they can talk more freely. Always inform someone where you have gone and ensure you are not alone in a room with a child out of sight for any period of time. Do not show shock, distaste or disbelief. The child may ask you to keep it a secret. You should not promise confidentiality. Inform them that you may have to tell someone else about what they have told you. Reassure them that they were right to tell someone.
3. Record
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not ask any leading questions. Do not attempt to investigate or probe. Keep questions open i.e. "What happened?" and to the absolute minimum. Afterwards, make accurate and factual notes of what the child said and make sure you sign, time and date them.
4. Refer
<p>Does the report involve the minister? If Yes – Contact Synod Moderator. If No – Does the report involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator? If No – Contact Safeguarding Co-ordinator. If Yes – Does the report involve the Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator? If Yes – Contact Synod CYDO If No – Contact Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or their Deputy is unavailable, contact any Elder on duty to deputise on their behalf. Complete this referral as soon as possible. Named persons above to complete the following step.
5. Report and follow up within 24 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure completion of Incident Report Form (see Appendix 5).
<p>Refer to ***Children's Social Care Services on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office Hours (Mon-Thurs: 8.30am-5.00pm & Fri: 8.30am-4.30pm): 0300 555 1384 Out of hours: 0300 555 1373 and/or the police. ***NSPCC: 0808 800 5000 Mon-Fri: 8am-10pm & Sat-Sun: 9am-6pm Out of hours email: help@nspcc.org.uk
<i>*If the child is in danger, contact the above services immediately.*</i>

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR PHYSICAL ABUSE

If the child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Contact Children's Social Services. In cases of deliberate injury, or if there are concerns about a child's safety, or if the child is afraid to return home, contact the Police.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised by Children's Services to do so.
- Seek medical advice if needed urgently, informing the paramedic/doctor of any suspicions.
- Encourage the parent/carer to seek help for lesser concerns such as poor parenting, but not if this places a child at risk of significant harm.
- Offer to accompany the parent, where they are unwilling or reluctant to seek help. In cases of real concern, or if they fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct. Trust in your instinct.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- In the event of allegations of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will contact Children's Social Services or Police Child Protection Team direct. The Co-ordinator will not speak to the parent/ carer or anyone else.

WHAT IS ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the 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 the child. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection or 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 cyber bullying), causing the children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- * Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- * Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- * Ensure adequate supervision (including the issue of inadequate care-givers) or
- * Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Reference: *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015.92-93)

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE

A comprehensive table of signs and symptoms of abuse can be found at <https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/> A general summary can be found below.

Physical abuse

Physical signs include:

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

Psychological/emotional signs include:

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

Fictitious illness by proxy

- This is a psychiatric illness, whereby a parent or carer, normally the child's mother, deliberately inflicts harm onto a child. The child has commonly had genuine serious illness in the first year of life and a dependency on medical attention has developed in the mother. It is very difficult to diagnose/evidence.

Female Genital Mutilation

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

Emotional abuse

The classic description of emotional abuse is a "Low Warmth, High Criticism" style of parenting.

Signs include:

- Physical, mental and emotional lags
- Acceptance of punishments, which appear excessive
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-depreciation
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Self-harm
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug/solvent abuse

- Running away
- Bullying/Aggression
- Overly compliant behaviour
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Clingy
- Fearful/withdrawn
- Sleep disorders

Neglect

Physical signs include:

- Tired/listless
- Poor personal hygiene
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation, potbelly, short stature
- Poor skin tone and hair tone
- Untreated medical problems
- Failure to thrive with no medical reason
- Psychological/emotional signs include:
- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Frequent lateness/nonattendance at school
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self esteem
- Neurotic behaviour
- No social relationships
- Running away
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging
- Multiple accidents/accidental injuries

Sexual abuse

Physical signs include:

- Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls
- Soreness to genitalia area, anus or mouth
- Repeated stomach aches
- Loss of weight
- Gaining weight
- Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain
- Unexplained gifts/money
-

Psychological/emotional signs include:

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

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Full Name of Child/Young Person Involved.....

Date of birth..... Sex.....

Address (incl. Postcode).....

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Telephone.....

E-mail.....

Date & Time of incident causing concern.....

Location of incident.....

Record of incident/concern (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

- Please ensure that you are as accurate and detailed as possible. Use quotes wherever possible – do not interpret what was said using your own words.
- Include details such as tone of voice, facial expressions and body language.
- Record what you said as well as what the child or young person said.
- If you have formed an opinion please state it, making it clear that it is your opinion and give reasons for forming that opinion

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WHO HAS BEEN SPOKEN TO ABOUT THE INCIDENT?

Position/Organisation	Name	Email	Telephone Number
Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator			
Synod Safeguarding Co-ordinator			
Children's Services			
Police			
NSPCC			
Parent/Carer			
Other (please state role and organisation)			

Feedback and follow up actions (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).....

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Person ReportingPosition in the Church.....

Address (incl Postcode)

Telephone Email

Signed.....Time/Date.....

Signed (Link Person).....Time/Date.....

GOOD WORKING PRACTICE GUIDELINES

As a church working with children and young people, Fleet United Reformed Church wishes to operate and promote good working practices. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusations.

- Ensure that anyone wishing to work with children is encouraged to be a non-rota helper in the first instance for a period of no less than 3 months.
- Ensure only DBS checked individuals are entrusted to a leadership role.
- Keep an attendance register with names of leaders, recording details of significant events. All expired registers are to be kept indefinitely for safeguarding purposes in accordance with the church Data Privacy Statement.
- Maintain a record of each child regularly attending. This should include allergies, medication, disabilities and issues such as hyperactivity, dyslexia etc. (see Appendix 14). All records are to be kept indefinitely for safeguarding purposes in accordance with the church Data Privacy Statement.
- Always have two adults present with a group, especially when it is the only activity taking place on URC premises. See Appendix 10 for NSPCC guidelines.
- Ensure that individual adult/child interaction is observable by another adult and not taking place in secluded areas.
- Ensure that appropriate consent forms are completed for children's activities and that consideration/consent has been given to the taking, or not, of photographs and videos. Any photographs or videos are to be kept and used in accordance with the church IT Statement.
- Ensure a parent or other adult is present when workers meet a child off site and that two passengers are present when transporting the child in a car or minibus.
- Ensure all leaders and workers are aware that support is available from the Minister and Elders.
- Ensure that an annual risk assessment is carried out each September for typical Sunday morning activities, plus additional risk assessments as required for trips or atypical activities. Risk assessment forms can be found at <https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/>
- Ensure that a behaviour policy/ground rules are in place and on display and that children/young people, parents, carers and leaders are aware of them. These can be reviewed or revisited at any time as appropriate to the changing needs or ages of the group.

Job Descriptions for both Group Helpers and Group Leaders can be found in Appendix 12.

GUIDANCE ON NEED FOR DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS (Further information on [URC.org.uk/safeguarding](https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding).)

N.B. This information will be updated to the latest version once it is available from <https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/> (Appendix K)

A DBS Check through the URC's approved agency is required* for:

- Teaching, training or instruction, care or supervision of children.
- Teaching, training or instruction, care or supervision of vulnerable adults.
- Providing advice or guidance, wholly or mainly for children, which relates to their physical, emotional or educational wellbeing.
- Providing advice, guidance or assistance wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults.
- Any form of treatment or therapy provided to children or vulnerable adults
- Driving a vehicle that is being used only for the purpose of conveying children or vulnerable adults and their carers.
- Working in a specified place e.g. where a nursery or pre-school is taking place. Only child care premises which are regulated by OFSTED count as a specified place.
- The management or supervision of those engaged in the above types of work.
- Other roles where they will have the possibility of unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups or where it is felt that a DBS check is necessary.

If the contact with children or vulnerable adults is incidental, e.g. where the activity is open to the general public and children would normally be accompanied by a responsible adult, then the worker will not be eligible for a DBS check. Roles which will not generally require a DBS check include: Key holders, those serving refreshments, Administrators who have no direct involvement with children/vulnerable adults and who are not working in a specified place, people who are on site before or after operating hours of a regulated activity and when children/vulnerable adults are not present and contractors who come on site to carry out repairs or service equipment. Workers who are not eligible for a DBS check should still be subject to other safe recruitment practices e.g. taking up references, agreeing a job description and undergoing a probationary period.

*Helpers are exempt unless they are in lone contact with children.

***Contact details: safeguarding@urc.org.uk Church House, 86, Tavistock Place, London, WC1H 9RT

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE ON URC ACTIVITIES

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

DO

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

DO NOT

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

WORKING WITH SEXUAL OFFENDERS – MALE OR FEMALE

N.B. This information will be updated to the latest version once it is available from <https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/> (Appendix Z)

An offender needs pastoral care to help him or her deal with the emotional and spiritual aspects of their life. Meanwhile, children, young people and vulnerable adults need to be protected from the extremely addictive sexual behaviour, where the offender's sex drive is so strong that it is not easily turned off, even although s/he may be repentant, have undergone treatment and received prayer ministry.

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) places a duty on the police, probation and prison authorities to assess and manage risks posed by offenders. This includes working in partnership with places of worship, to enable religious leaders to be provided with sufficient information to protect their congregation, while maintaining the right of the offender to worship but in a safe way, if that is possible with the physical restraints of the church premises. (National Offender Management Service 2009)

Details of any known child sex offender who wishes to attend Fleet URC will be made known to the Minister, Church Secretary, and the Synod's Safeguarding Officer. They will keep this information confidential and will be responsible for providing pastoral care for the offender, including minimising the risk to reoffend plus ensuring the safety of the children and young people.

An offender wanting to change will need people around them who will love and accept them, offer care and protection with the assurance that God does not reject them. Alongside this, the people supporting the offender will need to:

- Challenge risky or wrong behaviour.
- Not allow themselves to be manipulated.
- Be relied upon to be supportive and maintain self-control.

The offender will be required to agree behavioural boundaries to help her/him to feel secure and less at risk of false accusations, while protecting children and vulnerable adults. The behavioural contract should include:

- The offender should not be allowed to get close to children either physically or emotionally.
- S/he should never be allowed to work with children and young people.
- S/he should not sit in the vicinity of children at church or attend meetings where there are other children.
- S/he should not hold positions of leadership or responsibility within the church because a child or vulnerable adult may see them as someone they can trust. The additional stress that leadership brings could also increase the temptation to offend.

Confidentiality is an important principle in any dealings with people in pastoral situations. However, where children's safety may be compromised, confidentiality has to take second place to protecting children. Open communication with the person who has offended and sharing information with police and probation services is vital.

In liaison with MAPPA, the risk assessment may find that Fleet URC cannot provide appropriately for a dangerous offender and alternative arrangements may be required to be made with another church, ministry outside public meetings or attendance at an all-male cell group.

Reference - *Help ... A Sexual Offender has joined my church* CCPAS (2010)

NSPCC GUIDELINES – ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS (APRIL 2019)

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors. We've put together some best practice guidance to help other organisations work out how many adults are needed to supervise children safely.

We recommend having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- **0 - 2 years** - one adult to three children
- **2 - 3 years** - one adult to four children
- **4 - 8 years** - one adult to six children
- **9 - 12 years** - one adult to eight children
- **13 - 18 years** - one adult to ten children

Depending on the needs and abilities of the children, and the nature of the activity, you may need to have more adults than the minimum.

We recommend having at least two adults present, even with smaller groups.

If young people are helping to supervise younger children only people aged 18 or over should be included as adults when calculating adult to child ratios.

Children with additional needs or disabilities

If you are working with children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) you may need more supervision than the minimum ratios above.

For each activity you should undertake a risk assessment to help you decide on supervision ratios. The assessment should take into account children and young people's behaviour, ability and mobility. As far as possible, include input from children and young people and their parents and carers in risk assessments to ensure children's needs are met.

Toilet ratios

If the group has both boys and girls there should be at least one male and one female responsible adult supervising visits to the toilet.

Adults who haven't previously volunteered and haven't had the necessary vetting checks shouldn't be left alone with children or take them to the toilet unaccompanied.

In larger groups of children, encourage groups to take a comfort break together with one responsible adult while the other adult(s) supervises the remaining children and keep a head count.

First aid ratios

We recommend that at least one adult is trained in first aid.

If you're running one-off events you will need to carry out a first-aid and medical risk assessment. Many organisations provide medical services but ensure the organisation you select is competent, trained in first aid and able to cope with the demands of your event.

Travelling ratios

When travelling with children and young people the recommended adult to child ratio can vary depending on:

- size of the group
- age of the children, their behaviours and needs
- size of the vehicle that you are travelling in.

If you are travelling in a vehicle it is recommended that there is one adult driving and one adult supervising the children. Larger groups and vehicles will require more adults to ensure adequate supervision. Think about having one adult driving and at least one adult supervising the children, depending on the size of the group.

CHARTER FOR CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH

1. Children are equal partners with adults in the life of the church.
2. The full diet of Christian worship is for children as well as adults.
3. Learning is for the whole church, adults and children.
4. Fellowship is for all - each belonging meaningfully to the rest.
5. Service is for children to give as well as adults.
6. The call to evangelism comes to all God's people of whatever age.
7. The Holy Spirit speaks powerfully through children as well as adults.
8. The discovery and development of gifts in children and adults is a key function of the church.
9. As a church community we must learn to do only those things in separate age groups which we cannot in all conscience do together.
10. The concept of "The Priesthood of all Believers" includes children.

Updated Version as written by the young people at Fleet URC – Autumn 2017

1. Children and adults are just as important as each other at church
2. Children and adults can join in with all aspects of church life.
3. All people, young and old, can learn at church.
4. All people, young and old, belong equally to the church community.
5. All people, young and old, can help and serve each other.
6. The call to share God's love and the Christian message comes to all people, whatever their age.
7. The Holy Spirit can speak to and through people of all ages, young and old.
8. All people, young or old, can discover and develop their skills and talents at church.
9. At church, people of all ages, young and old, should do as many things together as they can.
10. All people, young or old, can talk directly to God through prayer.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Group Helper

This role *will* involve...

- Being a regular church attendee.
- Being able to supply availability dates to assist with the rota.
- Sharing ideas and working as part of a team.
- Assisting the Children and Young People with their crafts and activities.
- Assisting with the development of the faith of the Children and Young People.
- Some supervision.

This role *may* involve...

- Helping with setting up and/or tidying up.
- Taking the attendance record if requested.
- Assisting leaders by reading stories (following the current resources).
- Attending Group Meetings when invited.
- Assisting with special events related to the Children's and Young People's Group e.g. Harvest, Easter, Christmas and Children's Services.

The role of Group Helper is on a voluntary basis and as such, helpers are encouraged to become involved with as much as they feel comfortable with.

Group Leader

This Role will involve:

- Being a regular church attendee.
- Having been a helper on a regular basis.
- Supplying information for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Details will be supplied by the Church Secretary.
- Being able to supply availability dates to assist with the rota.
- Sharing ideas and working as a team with the Minister, fellow leaders and helpers.
- Working from the current Resources provided.
- Planning, organizing and providing materials for activities and crafts suitable to the story or theme.
- Working with the Children and Young People to develop their faith.
- Setting up before the session and tidying up afterwards, leaving the meeting room clean and tidy.
- Taking the attendance record.
- Keeping administration up to date e.g. the Annual Consent Form (see Appendix 14).
- Attending Young Peoples Group meetings.
- Encouraging the Young People to be involved with special events e.g. Harvest, Easter, Christmas and Children's Services.
- Working with the other children's groups and leaders to ensure that the children are comfortable and familiar with any of the leaders, including during joint sessions.
- Making the Minister aware of children who are moving between groups so that they may be given their badge during a welcome ceremony.
- To undertake basic First Aid training as appropriate.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator is nominated by the Eldership to act on their behalf in dealing with the suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect, including referring to the statutory authorities.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is to:

- Act on behalf of the Eldership in dealing with the suspicion or allegation of abuse or neglect.
- Act as a point of contact for the statutory authorities.

Our Good Working Practice Guidelines can be found in Appendix 6 and our Code of Conduct for Working with Children or Young People on URC Activities can be found in Appendix 8.

CONTACT DETAILS

Church Secretary

Margaret Armes 01252 650994 07768 223873
b.arnes@live.com

Elders responsible for children and young people (Link Elders)

Margaret Armes 01252 650994 07768 223873
b.arnes@live.com

Moray Henderson 01252 659569 07761 416210
moray.henderson@ntlworld.com

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Grace Bagshaw 01252 625751 07796 366091
gracebagshaw@yahoo.co.uk

Deputy Co-ordinator/Health & Safety Contact

Moray Henderson 01252 659569 07761 416210
moray.henderson@ntlworld.com

Synod Moderator

023 8067 8570
moderator@urcwessex.org.uk

Synod Children & Youth Development Officer (CYDO)

Phil Ray 07787 171678
cydo-n@urcwessex.org.uk

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Sharon Barr 07776 178246
safeguarding@urcwessex.org.uk

Minister

Helen Everard 07716 647288
helen.everard158@gmail.com

Fleet URC Footsteps Annual Consent Form

We want young people under the age of 18 years to enjoy activities to the full and to feel secure and protected during their participation in them. Please understand that children and young people cannot participate in activities unless a parental consent form has been completed and returned.

This permission slip covers the time from leaving worship until the end of the service only. Prior to and after these times, responsibility for any child or young person lies with the adult who brought them to the service.

Child's Details (*one form per child*)

Full Name:		Date of Birth:	DD / MM / YY
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Current Address:

Postcode:	
-----------	--

Home Number:		Mobile Number:	
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Email Address:	
----------------	--

Parent /Guardian's Details (*where different from above - for use in an emergency*)

Name:	
-------	--

Current Address:

Postcode:	
-----------	--

Daytime		Mobile	
---------	--	--------	--

Evening		Email	
---------	--	-------	--

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 Fleet United Reformed Church):

continued overleaf

Photography & Filming

Photographs & video footage for display on the premises, on our website and on occasions in the local press may be taken only if, under the data protection Act 1988, permission has been received from parents/guardians of children who may be photographed or filmed.

Photographs or video footage used publicly will not:

- show the outside of the building identifiably
- Name children
- Be of one child alone or close up

Photographs or video footage used publicly will only show activities and groups with obvious adult supervision.

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.

I do/do not give my permission for photographs or video footage to be used, following the guidelines above, for use

in the
building

☐

on our
website

☐

in the press

☐

Activities

The following list provides an outline to the Youth and Children's Work program of activities currently offered by Fleet 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.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services & worship• Sunday morning children's groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooking and crafts• Music workshops & singing |
|---|--|

Declaration

I agree to _____ (*child's name*) receiving emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

I give my permission for the above named to attend and take part in the Youth & Children's Work activities of Fleet United Reformed Church, based on the list provided above.

I undertake to inform the leader should any of the above information change during the following twelve months, at which point I understand a new annual consent form will be required.

Signed:

Date:

DD / MM / YY

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. Thank you.

Fleet URC Footsteps Consent Form (Visiting Children)

We want young people under the age of 18 years to enjoy activities to the full and to feel secure and protected during their participation in them. Please understand that children and young people cannot participate in activities unless a consent form has been completed.

This permission slip covers the time from leaving worship until the end of the service only. Prior to and after these times, responsibility for any child or young person lies with the adult who brought them to the service.

Child's Details (*one form per child*)

Name:

Attending Adult's Details

Name:

Contact Number:

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 Fleet United Reformed Church):

Photography & Filming

We will not take any photos or films of visiting children.

Activities

The following list provides an outline to the Youth and Children's Work program of activities currently offered by Fleet United Reformed Church.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services & worship • Sunday morning children's groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking and crafts • Music workshops & singing |
|--|---|

Declaration

I agree that I am responsible for the child or young person named above at all times except during their attendance of Footsteps, which ends at the end of the service. I understand that in an emergency I will be required to leave the service in order to take responsibility for them.

I give my permission for the above named child or young person to attend and take part in the Youth & Children's Work activities of Fleet United Reformed Church, based on the list provided above.

Signed:

Date:

DD / MM / YY

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.
Thank you.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The following statement has been agreed by the leadership of Fleet United Reformed Church and will be on display in the church at all times***.

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

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

We are committed to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the church leadership by:

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Deputy Co-ordinator

Date:

Date: