

Abbey United Reformed  
Church Romsey  
**Safeguarding policy**



**GOOD  
PRACTICE 6**

## Contents

Section	Page
1. Aim and Purpose of This Policy	1
2. Creating a Safer Culture	1
3. Ensuring Safer Activities	2
4. Recognizing and Responding to Concerns	2
5. Managing Allegations and People who may Pose a Risk to Others	2
6. Supporting Victims and Survivors	3
7. Key Contacts	3
8. Details of other organizations and support services	4
9. Review	7

## **1. Aim and Purpose of This Policy**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that protecting people from abuse, harm or neglect is central to our culture. It provides procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, adults at risk and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised.

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

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Elders and applies to:

- a. All members of our church
- b. All those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- c. Our Trustees and Elders
- d. Paid staff (both internal and external eg contractors or consultants)
- e. Volunteers

### **Principles underpinning the policy**

- f. Our theology and values
- g. Our commitment to put the welfare of children and adults at risk first
- h. A willingness to be open and listen
- i. A commitment to comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

### **Definitions**

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

The term 'adult at risk' refers to any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, are permanently, or for time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

### **Duty of care and confidentiality**

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

Sections 2-6 below follow the structure of Good Practice 6 and each section lists the 'key responsibilities' for local churches outlined in the corresponding chapter of GP6. You may wish to add extra material from these chapters or highlight particular topics according to your local needs and circumstances.

## **2. Creating a Safer Culture**

We are committed to creating a safer culture in our church which will help us to prevent harm from occurring and provide an environment in which all can flourish.

In line with Chapter two of Good Practice 6, we will:

- a. Appoint a Church Safeguarding Coordinator and ensure contact details are available for anyone to report a concern
- b. Have a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually and updated when necessary

- c. Practice safer recruitment procedures for paid and volunteer roles
- d. Ensure all those working with children and/or adults at risk are given copies of relevant Codes of Conduct
- e. Follow the requirements of the training framework
- f. Comply with legal requirements in respect of data protection
- g. Complete the Annual Church Safeguarding Return
- h. Ensure safeguarding is a regular agenda item for church and Elders' meetings.

### **3. Ensuring safer activities**

Whilst it is not possible to guard against every eventuality, we are committed to providing as safe an environment as possible for activities both on and off church premises.

In line with Chapter three of Good Practice 6, we will:

- a. Ensure appropriate insurance is in place for buildings and activities
- b. Consider the implications of data protection and health and safety requirements for specific activities
- c. Carry out risk assessments for relevant activities or events
- d. Ensure adequate staffing for activities and that leaders have suitable training, are aware of relevant guidance and agree to follow relevant Codes of Conduct
- e. Ensure the hirer's agreement is in place for other organisations using church premises
- f. Seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer for complex or sensitive risks.

### **4. Recognizing and responding to concerns**

We acknowledge that, although promoting Safer Culture and Safer Activities will help to protect all those in contact with the church, some concerns will inevitably arise and we are committed to responding well in such circumstances.

In line with Chapter four of Good Practice 6, we will:

- a. Promote awareness of different kinds of abuse, other vulnerabilities and types of safeguarding concern
- b. Seek to create a 'listening culture' and help people develop listening skills to respond appropriately in situations where sensitive information is disclosed
- c. Inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer as a minimum of any situations where involvement from statutory services is/may be required
- d. Share information with statutory services as appropriate and co-operate with them during any investigations
- e. Report any serious safeguarding incident to the Charity Commission and notify the Synod Safeguarding Officer.

### **5. Managing Allegations and People who may Pose a Risk to Others**

Where allegations are made against individuals within the Church, we are committed to following all required investigative and regulatory procedures. We will work in collaboration with the Synod, wider Church staff, statutory agencies and other relevant organizations.

In line with Chapter five of Good Practice 6, we will:

- a. Co-operate fully with any investigative or disciplinary procedures
- b. Inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer immediately on becoming aware of anyone in the church who may present a risk to others
- c. Work with the Synod Safeguarding Officer and contribute relevant information for risk

assessments

d. Alert the Synod Safeguarding Officer or statutory agencies to known breaches of a safeguarding agreement.

## **6. Supporting Victims and Survivors**

The key principle underpinning our policy and practice in this area is that all those who have experienced abuse, whether recently or in the past 'will be listened to and offered the pastoral care and support they deem appropriate and relevant, irrespective of type of abuse, context, or when this occurred' (General Assembly policy statement 2021).

In line with Chapter six of Good Practice 6, we will:

- a. Recognise that the Elders' meeting has responsibility for provision of pastoral care
- b. Be aware of local support services that people can be referred or directed to
- c. Ensure those in relevant roles attend appropriate training
- d. Seek advice from the Synod Safeguarding Officer about provision of appropriate support when necessary.

## **7. Key Contacts**

### **Church Safeguarding Coordinator**

Mrs. Ruth Page

email [abbeyurcsc@gmail.com](mailto:abbeyurcsc@gmail.com) tel. 07982 501301

### **Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator**

Steve Parnell

Email [sjp.twenty@gmail.com](mailto:sjp.twenty@gmail.com)

### **Synod Safeguarding Officer**

Sharon Barr

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

**URC Safeguarding Office** (This should only be used if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Office)

Sharon Barr

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

### **Local statutory services: Children**

Local Authority Designated Office

Hampshire 01962 876364 (excluding Southampton)

Southampton 02380 915535

### **Local statutory services: Adults**

Emergency Contact: 0300 555 1386

Out of hours Contact: 0300 555 1373

**Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** (responsible for managing allegations against adults who work with children)

Hampshire County Council MASH: 0300 555 1384

Hampshire County Council MASH: Out of hours service 0300 555 1373

Southampton City Council MASH: 023 8083 2300

## 8. Details of other organizations and support services

### Association of Christians in Counselling

Provides a facility to search for Christian counsellors: [www.acc-uk.org](http://www.acc-uk.org)

### 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](http://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](http://www.samaritans.org)

Telephone: 116 123

### Victim Support

Independent charity supporting victims of crime: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk)

### NSPCC

Providing support and advice for keeping children safe from harm and abuse:

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://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](http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk)

Telephone: 0808 1000 900

## **We Stand**

Provides a range of support services and information for families affected by child sexual abuse:

[www.westand.org.uk](http://www.westand.org.uk)

Helpline: 0800 980 1958

## **Older people**

### **Age UK**

Support and advice services for older people:

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Advice Line: 0800 678 1602

### **Alzheimer's Society**

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Telephone: 0333 150 3456

### **Anna's Chaplaincy**

Offering spiritual care in later life:

[www.annachaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.annachaplaincy.org.uk)

Telephone: 01865 319 700

### **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](http://www.wearehourglass.org)

Helpline: 0808 808 0141

### **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](http://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](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

Helpline: 0808 801 0327

### **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](http://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](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

## **Survivors**

### **Galop**

Provides support for LGBT+ people who have experienced abuse and violence:  
[www.galop.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://www.napac.org.uk)

Free confidential support line: 0808 801 0331

### **One in Four**

Specializing in supporting childhood survivors and current survivors of sexual violence, domestic violence, abuse and trauma:

[www.oneinfour.org.uk](http://www.oneinfour.org.uk)

### **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/](http://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](http://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/](http://www.thirtyoneeight.org/safeguarding-services/consultancy/listening-service/)

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, updated as required and adopted by the church meeting.

Date of most recent review: 9<sup>TH</sup> February 2026

Date of next review: 9 February 2027

Signed by: 

(On behalf of the church Elders)