



***Promoting*** Safeguarding  
***Preventing*** Abuse  
***Protecting*** The Vulnerable

# ***Safeguarding Policy*** ***Children & Vulnerable Adults***

*City United Reformed Church*  
*Windsor Place, Cardiff CF10 3BJ*

*National Synod of Wales*

April 2016

## **Introduction**

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City United Reformed Church agrees that children, young people and adults have a right to live in a way that does not cause them harm or impede their human rights. We therefore acknowledge their right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs. We consider that, in accordance with legislation, the welfare of children is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by all at City United Reformed Church Church and all concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the Police and Social Care if necessary, either Adult or Children's.

We will co-operate with the Police, Children's and Adult's Services in any investigation and follow multi agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers and will ensure that these procedures are followed, which include

- Asking applicants to complete an application form
- Providing workers with role/job descriptions and person specifications
- Obtaining Disclosure and barring checks where legally entitled to do so
- Taking up two references (not family) and
- Interviewing candidates

Training in safeguarding will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision.

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers work within a code of conduct and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or termination of working/volunteering with us.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinators are the people to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed.

They can be contacted as follows:

**Nici Gittens**  
**07816 582948**  
**Nicigittens@hotmail.com**

**Viv Davies**  
**029 2076 2782**  
**vividavies@hotmail.com**

The aim of this policy is to provide a procedure for implementing appropriate action following the raising of safeguarding concerns involving children, young people and vulnerable adults within our Church, or those who attend our activities and events.

## **Who this policy applies to**

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This policy applies to those who attend our Church/place of worship, our trustees, staff (both paid and volunteer) and those who hire our building. It is approved and endorsed by the Elders.

Children and parents/carers will be informed of this policy, and our procedures.

## **Duty of care and confidentiality**

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We have a duty of care to beneficiaries of the charity, either vulnerable adults or children. We will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk.

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

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The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. A copy of the definitions relating to children is attached to this policy at Appendix 1. The definitions of abuse in relation to vulnerable adults is attached as Appendix 2

## **How to recognise abuse**

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It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. A list of such possible signs and symptoms in relation to children is attached at Appendix 3 and in relation to Vulnerable Adults at Appendix 4. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories.

It is essential to note that these are only **indicators** of **possible** abuse. There may be other, innocent, reasons for any of these signs and/or behaviour. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for a child or vulnerable adult's behaviour.

## **What to do if there is an allegation**

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If a child, young person or vulnerable adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Do not investigate or ask leading questions
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else
- Do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret
- Inform your Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record. Any such records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet
- Report concerns to the relevant authorities, either Social Care (Adults or Children) or the Police

## **Procedure in the event of concern**

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If there is an immediate threat of harm we will contact the Police.

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

- The concern will be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory agencies.
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and circumstances surrounding it using the template at Appendix 5. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory agencies if a referral is made.
- The person about whom the allegation is may not be informed by anyone in the Church if it is judged that to do so would place a child or vulnerable adult at increased risk.

## **Who to contact in the case of a Child**

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**Cardiff County Council, Children's Access Point - 029 2053 6490  
(Out of Hours: 029 2078 8570)**

## **Who to contact in the case of a Vulnerable Adult**

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**Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) team - 029 2053 6436  
(Out of Hours: 029 2078 8570)**

## **If the allegation is regarding a member of staff or volunteer**

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The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted. A decision will be taken about when to inform the member of staff or volunteer. The timing and method will be discussed and agreed with the LADO.

**Local Authority Designated Officer – 029 2053 6490  
(Out of Hours: 029 2078 8570)**

## **Complaints**

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Should anyone have any concerns or complaints please contact **the Secretary, City United Reformed Church, Windsor Place, Cardiff CF10 3BZ**

If would be helpful to have complaints in writing as this avoids any possible misunderstanding about what the issue is. However, whether verbal or in writing complaints will be acted upon.

Any written complaint will be responded to within 10 days.

## **Review**

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The Elders will review this policy annually.

## **Appendix 1**

### **What is abuse and neglect - Children.**

These definitions are taken from *Working Together 2013*

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 in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. 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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

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

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

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

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

#### **Sexual abuse**

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

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

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

#### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

## **Appendix 2**

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

The following definitions of abuse are laid down in *'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health 2000):*

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

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

#### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

#### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

#### **Neglect, or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well being or development is impaired

#### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

#### **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

#### **Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.





## Appendix 5

### INCIDENT RECORDING FORM

**Date and time of incident:** .....

**Date on which this report is written**.....

*(N.B. This should preferably be immediately or no later than up to 48 hours of the incident taking place)*

**Your name:** .....

**Name of Child, Young Person or Vulnerable Adult:**

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**Date of Birth**.....

**Address if known**.....

#### **Recording:**

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

Record what you said as well as what the child, young person or Vulnerable Adult said.

Include details such where the conversation took place and who else was present, if anyone.

If you have formed an opinion please state it, making it clear that it is your opinion and give reasons for forming that opinion. It would assist, where possible, to also include descriptions of tone of voice, facial expression and body language.

Record

Who have you spoken to about your concerns?

Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator

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

Social Services

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

Police

Name \_\_\_\_\_

NSPCC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child \_\_\_\_\_

Other

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow up work:**

**Signed:**.....

**Dated:** .....

## **Appendix 6.**

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

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

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

- Do treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Don't abuse the power and responsibility of your role. Don't belittle, scapegoat, put down, or ridicule a child or young person (even in 'fun') and don't use language or behaviour with sexual connotations (e.g. flirting or innuendo).
  
- Do act inclusively, seeking to make all people feel welcome and valued.
- Don't exclude other children or workers from conversations and activities unless there is a good reason.
  
- Do treat people with equal care and concern.
- Don't show favouritism (e.g. in selection for activities, in giving rewards, etc.) or encourage excessive attention from a particular child (e.g. gifts).
  
- Do encourage everyone to follow any behaviour agreement or ground rules and apply sanctions consistently.
- Don't threaten or use sanctions which have not been agreed or make empty threats.
  
- Do refer to a more senior worker if a child does not respond to your instructions despite encouragement and warning of possible consequences.
- Don't feel you have to deal with every problem on your own.
  
- Do seek to diffuse aggressive or threatening behaviour without the use of physical contact.
- Don't use physical restraint except as a last resort to prevent injury. This should be the use of minimum force.
  
- Do relate to children in public. If a child wants to talk one-to-one about an issue, tell another worker and find somewhere quieter, but still public, to talk.
- Don't spend time alone with children out of the sight of other people and without the knowledge of someone in leadership.
  
- Do make sure that any electronic communication is done with parental consent, and in a way which is transparent, accountable and noted / recorded and adheres to safeguarding policies.
- Don't keep communication with children secret, while still respecting appropriate confidences.
  
- Do have a designated photographer to take, store and share photos of your group's activities, in line with people's consent and URC good practice guidelines.
- Don't take photos and video without consent and stored in a place designated by the church and only use in the ways agreed in line with Good Practice guidelines.
  
- Do use physical contact wisely - it should be:
  - in public
  - appropriate to the situation and to the age, gender and culture of the child.
  - in response to the needs of the child, not the adult.
  - respectful of the child's privacy, feelings and dignity.
- Don't use physical contact which could be misconstrued as aggressive (e.g. rough games) or sexual.
  
- Do respect children's privacy.

- Don't assume that children should tell you anything you ask just because you are a worker.
- Do respect the right of children to wash, change and use the toilet in private.
- Don't walk in unnecessarily or unannounced/
- Do listen to children and do tell the safeguarding officer if you have any concerns about a child's welfare.
- Don't promise to keep something secret if it is about a children at risk of harm, but only tell those who need to know.
- Do respect and promote the rights of children to make their own decisions and choices.
- Don't work in ways that put your needs and interests before those of the children you work with.
- Do respect and encourage respect for difference, diversity, beliefs and culture.
- Don't discriminate or leave discrimination or bullying unchallenged.

I agree to abide by the above code of conduct while working with children & young people on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ [church name].

Name of worker:

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

