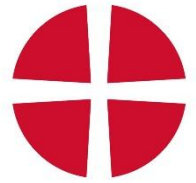




CHRIST CHURCH LEWES

UNITED REFORMED and METHODIST

Prince Edwards Rd, Lewes BN7 1BL



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This policy is based on the URC's safeguarding procedures and guidance as set out in Good Practice 6.

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 Church Council and applies to:

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

Principles underpinning the policy

- Our theology and values
- Our commitment to put the welfare of children and adults at risk first
- A willingness to be open and listen
- 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.

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:

- Appoint a Church Safeguarding Coordinator and ensure contact details are available for anyone to report a concern
- Have a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually and updated when necessary
- Practice safer recruitment procedures for paid and volunteer roles
- Ensure all those working with children and/or adults at risk are given copies of relevant Codes of Conduct
- Follow the requirements of the training framework
- Comply with legal requirements in respect of data protection
- Complete the Annual Church Safeguarding Return
- Ensure safeguarding is a regular agenda item for Church Council 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:

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

4. Recognising 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:

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

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

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

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

7. Key contacts

Church Safeguarding Coordinator

Name and contact details:

Name	Claire Bell
Telephone	07725 592658
Email	cebell9@gmail.com

Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator

Name and contact details:

Name	Alison Byrne
Telephone	07506679079
Email	alison.vance@gmail.com

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Name and contact details:

Name	Natalie Van Camp
Telephone	07483 994 590
Email	safeguarding@urcsouthern.org.uk

URC Safeguarding Office

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

Email: safeguarding@urc.org.uk

Local statutory services: Children

Single Point of Advice (SPoA)

Telephone	01323 464 222
Out of hours	01273 335 905
Email	webspoa@eastsussex.gov.uk

Local statutory services: Adults

East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board

Telephone	0345 6080191
Out of hours	0345 6080 191 and select option 2 for the Emergency Duty Service
Email	hsc@eastsussex.gov.uk

8. Review

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

Date of most recent review: November 2025

Date of next review: November 2026

Signed by: [Neil Fisher]

(On behalf of the Church Council)

9. Details of other organisations and support services

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**

Adults

Age UK

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

Advice Line: **0800 678 1602**

Alzheimer's Society

Website: 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