



Grange United Reformed Church (URC) Safeguarding Policy

Children and Adults at Risk



This policy has been written following guidance issued in [Good Practice 6](#) by the United Reformed Church. It has been adapted to Grange URC's particular circumstances.

Sample policy and guidance documents issued by the URC relating to safeguarding and all of the section below may be found [HERE](#).

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:

- All members of our church
- All those who attend and serve our church/place of worship and its services
- Our Trustees and Elders
- Paid staff (both internal and external e.g. contractors or consultants)
- Volunteers
- Organisations and groups which hire our building with written agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy.

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

The church has appointed a Safeguarding Coordinator, *Martin Morris*, and a Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator, *Charlotte Luke*, for safeguarding children and adults. A job/role description is attached as Appendix A2; however, the responsibility for safeguarding lies with everyone.

All activities at Grange URC, Higher Bebington will be organised in accordance with our safeguarding policy and guidance to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimising opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusation. For each event, risk assessments will be carried out, appropriate and accessible consent forms will

be used (for children's activities or activities for people with special needs), appropriate records will be kept, and adequate insurance will be in place.

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 & Deputy 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 and Manager/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:

- 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 hirers 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 Elders' 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.

Training

- Safeguarding training will be provided where required and volunteers will be given support and supervision in their role.
- All relevant volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding training delivered by synod or on-line.
- A copy of URC Good Practice 6 is available at all times in the Elders Vestry bookcase.
- The Safeguarding Coordinator(s) should ensure that trustees/elders and people involved in regulated activities with children or vulnerable adults have undergone safeguarding training, as recommended by the URC.

Key Contacts: Sources of advice and support

The **Church Safeguarding Coordinator** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed:

Name: Martin Morris
Phone: 07518 775658
Email: safeguarding@grangeurc.org.uk

In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the **Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator** can be contacted:

Name: Charlotte Luke
Phone: 07518 775658 (ask for the Deputy Safeguarding Officer)
Email: safeguarding@grangeurc.org.uk (mark FAO Deputy if required)

Synod Safeguarding Officer

Name: Julie Rafferty
Phone: 07964 981262
Email: safeguarding@urcmerseysynod.org.uk

- **Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)** (*This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer*) 24-hour helpline: 0845 120 4550
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Name: Pamela Cope, Wirral Safeguarding Children Board, Hamilton Building, Conway Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 4FD

Email: safeguardingunit@wirral.gov.uk

- **Statutory contact in the case of a child (Wirral Integrated Front Door Team)**

Telephone No: **0151 606 2008** (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)
outside of these hours **0151 677 6557**.
In an emergency always dial **999** or **101** for non-emergency issues

- **Statutory contact in the case of an adult at risk**

Telephone No: **0151 606 2006** (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)
outside of these hours **0151 677 6557**.
In an emergency always dial **999** or **101** for non-emergency issues

Review

The Elders and Church Safeguarding Coordinator will review this policy annually, amending and updating it as required, and informing the Church Meeting that this has been done.

Date of the most recent review: January 2024 and accepted February 2024.

Date of the next review: January 2025.

Signed (on behalf of the Church Elders & Grange URC)



John Hughes
Church Secretary
28 February 2024



Martin Morris
Safeguarding Coordinator
28 February 2024

APPENDICIES

The following policies: A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 are specific to Grange URC, Higher Bebington. Other URC policies followed by Grange URC may be found [here](#).

Appendix A1: The values and safeguarding principles within the United Reformed Church and Grange URC

The following statement was agreed by the Church Meeting of Grange United Reformed Church (Grange URC) 21 February 2024.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by Grange URC.

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

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

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent any form of abuse and neglect of children and adults and to ensure the wellbeing and pastoral care of those who are, or may be, at risk.

We will prevent abuse related to extremism or radicalisation and put all suitable health and safety arrangements in place as well as safeguarding, first aid, fire safety and online safety policies that everyone understands.

We will create and maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all, especially children and adults at risk, in which the dignity and rights of each person are respected.

We believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable, inconsistent with a Christian way of living and it can affect both adults and children.

We will always acknowledge that the welfare of the child and adult at risk is paramount, and that the priority is always to act in their best interests, following legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice guidance to enable them access to support and protection.

We will support everyone to ensure that as a community of Christians we will all work within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy. The Safeguarding Coordinator or the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator (when available) are the persons to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed for appropriate actions to be taken. In the absence of a Safeguarding Coordinator, the Synod Safeguarding Officer should be contacted. Their contact details will be always available on our posters, websites, or in other communications with the public.

We will exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of trustees and those who will work with children or adults at risk within the Church, whether paid, volunteers, lay or ordained. We will ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions. We will use DBS/Disclosure Scotland checks as part of a wide range of checks on trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure that we have a broad and informed view to assist us in minimising the risk of abuse, harm or neglect.

We will support, supervise, resource and train all those who undertake work with children and adults in need of protection.

We will respond without delay to every concern, incident or complaint which suggests that a child or adult has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, and cooperate with ecumenical partners, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Local Safeguarding Boards (in Wales), Children's Partnership Boards and Children's and Adult Social Care Services in any investigation, while maintaining the confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We are committed to working with those who have suffered or suffer any form of abuse, offering appropriate pastoral support where possible as well as challenging any abuse of power, especially where it involves someone in a position of trust.

We will manage risks and those who might pose a risk to the welfare of people and the life of the Church and offer support to those known to pose a risk to children and/or adults, including supervision, referral to the appropriate agencies, and implementation of safeguarding agreements when appropriate.

We are committed to ensuring that any allegations, concerns and complaints about abuse or neglect are recorded accurately, reported promptly and shared safely within and outside of the denomination.

We will review our safeguarding policy, practices and procedures annually, considering lessons learned from safeguarding cases and changes in legislation, statutory guidance and good working practice.

We will ensure processes and practices in all aspects of safeguarding, including discipline, risk management, whistleblowing and bullying/harassment are in alignment with Good Practice 6 – the United Reformed Church's guidance on safeguarding children and adults at risk (a copy is available for reference in the bookcase in the Elders Vestry).

Any local policy changes will be formally approved by the church Elders and recommended to the next available Church Meeting.

Appendix A2: Roles of the Safeguarding and Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator

Context

We believe that children and adults at risk deserve the best possible care that the church can provide and that the church should be a safe place for everyone involved. We recognise and give thanks for the time and devotion given by anyone carrying out this role.

Purpose of the role

- To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church.
- To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues.
- To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church.

Responsibilities

To coordinate safeguarding policy and procedures in the church.

- To familiarise themselves with church policies and procedures and URC good practice guidelines in safeguarding and to keep abreast of any changes and developments.
- To ensure that church policies and procedures are reviewed annually, kept up to date, and are fit for purpose. To make sure that elders and others in the church are aware of the church safeguarding policies and procedures, including URC guidelines and Charity Commission responsibilities.
- To collaborate with the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator, the minister, the DBS/PVG signatory people and the Synod Safeguarding Officer on all matters around safeguarding.
- To ensure safer recruitment practices are operated in the recruitment of all workers (both volunteers and paid) including, but not exclusively, ensuring that the relevant workers have up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) / Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme (PVG) checks.
- To review and ensure others' safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place when any church premises are let to an external organisation, informal group or individual.

To be the first point of contact for safeguarding issues.

- To be a named person that children/adults at risk, church members and outside agencies can talk to regarding any issue to do with safeguarding.
- To be aware of the names and telephone numbers of appropriate departments and teams within Social Care and the Police in the event of a referral needing to be made.
- To be aware of when to seek advice, and when it is necessary to inform Social Care, the Police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the equivalent in Scotland and Wales of a concern or incident. To take appropriate action in relation to any safeguarding concerns which arise within the church.
- To ensure safe practice is in place for supporting people who pose a risk to children and adults at risk at church.
- To cooperate with Social Care or the Police in safeguarding investigations relating to people within the church.

- To ensure that appropriate records are kept by the church, and that information in relation to safeguarding issues is handled confidentially and stored securely.
- To inform the Synod Safeguarding Officer about any referrals made to the statutory authorities, or of any information received from the statutory authorities.
- To report safeguarding information annually to the Eldership/Church Meeting and the Synod Safeguarding Officer as part of the annual returns process, to enable them to monitor safeguarding in the Synod.

To be an advocate for good safeguarding practice in the church.

- To promote sensitivity within the church towards all those affected by the impact of abuse.
- To promote positive safeguarding procedures and practice and ensure procedures are adhered to.
- To arrange and/or promote opportunities for training in safeguarding to any relevant members of the leadership team and all people involved in regulated activities with children or adults (including Ministers, staff and volunteers), as recommended by the synod, and ensure that their training is renewed every three years.
- To attend appropriate training for the role, including refresher training every three years, and keep updated on matters related to safeguarding.
- To seek appropriate support and advice in carrying out this role.
- To make arrangements for a suitable person to carry out this role when on leave, and to publicise who the substitute is and the dates of the alternative arrangements.

Requirements for the role

- To have knowledge of policy and practice for safeguarding children and/or adults at risk.
- Good communication (written and oral) skills.
- Be willing to attend appropriate safeguarding training/refresher training organised by the synod.
- Be willing to be easily contactable – and prepared to make contact details public to enable direct contact when needed.

Appendix A3: Code of Conduct for working with children and young people

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

Training, policies and procedures

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

Safer ways of working

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

Respectful and inclusive working

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

Managing behaviour

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

Photos and videos

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

Reporting concerns

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

Working with children online

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

Approval/consent

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

How to engage online

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

Use of content generated online

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

Appendix A4: Code of Conduct for working with adults

This code describes the standards of conduct expected of all those working with adults, including adults at risk ([C2](#) provides definitions of 'adults at risk'). It sets out general principles for good practice but cannot cover every type of activity or situation. Further details on specific issues can be found in Good Practice 6 and the accompanying resources.

Training, policies and procedures

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

Promote the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of people

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

Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion

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

Effective communication

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

Respect people's right to confidentiality

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

Online engagement

- Ensure you are familiar with your church online safety policy
- Apply the principles of respect, inclusion, clear communication and confidentiality to online work as you would with in-person interaction

- When engaging online with adults at risk, additional care should be taken, for example:
- Ensure another adult is present, either with you or the other person
- Use a work or church account rather than a personal one.

Physical contact/touch

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

Financial matters

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

Challenging inappropriate behaviour

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

Feedback and complaints

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

Appendix A5: Online Safety Policy

Technology is now a major part of daily life for most people and recent developments have enabled many new initiatives in the way churches use technology as part of their ministry.

This opens up new and welcome opportunities to engage with people, but we recognise there are also risks associated with this. We should therefore all pay attention to how we can safeguard children and adults at risk to help ensure their online safety.

This policy is based on the guidance provided in Good Practice 6 and is used alongside our Safeguarding Policy and our [Data Protection Policy](#).

Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to safeguard children and adults at risk when we are ministering on behalf of the church through the internet, social media, or mobile devices, and to provide guidance on our approach to online safety.

Who this policy applies to

- All those in the church working with children and adults at risk
- Those involved in managing IT systems within the church
- All those engaged in any form of online ministry, including group activities.
- All those working with children and/or adults at risk will be given, and asked to sign, copies of the relevant *Codes of Conduct* which include guidance about working safely online.

Scope of the policy

The policy covers the following areas:

- IT systems and resources
- electronic communications and use of social media
- video conferencing
- livestreaming and use of recorded video
- appropriate use of images online
- responding to online safety concerns.

Definition of online abuse

Abuse that is facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices. It can happen anywhere that allows online digital communication.

Examples can include:

- bullying/cyberbullying
- sexting
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial exploitation
- sexual exploitation
- scamming
- grooming and harassment.

It is possible that victims may not always understand that they are being abused in this way. The impact can be significant however, particularly in the way it may create fear and isolation.

We will maintain and use our IT resources to support good safeguarding practice

This covers both the hardware and software used within the church, along with decisions about the use of particular apps, services or websites. This policy does not try to cover all aspects of IT use but highlights actions we will take to support safer practice.

This will include:

- reviewing and updating the security of our IT systems regularly
- risk assessing any emerging new technologies before they are used within the church
- installing filtering software on devices owned and used by the church as appropriate
- reminding staff and volunteers of the need keep login and password details secure.

If the church runs activities (e.g. after-school club or a group helping adults get back into employment) where children or adults will be using church-owned devices, they will be made aware of what is acceptable usage and will agree not to:

- search for and/or enter pornographic, violent, racist or hate-motivated websites
- retrieve, send, copy or display illegal or offensive material
- use obscene language
- violate copyright laws
- trespass in folders, work or files belonging to others
- harass, insult, bully or attack others
- damage devices, systems or networks
- use another user's password
- use computers for unapproved commercial purposes.

We will promote safe use of electronic communications and social media

This will include:

- using clear unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation
- keeping copies of messages
- obtaining parental/carer consent for email or text contact with children
- avoiding communication outside of specific hours e.g. after 9pm
- using church accounts where possible instead of personal ones
- all social media interaction between workers (paid or voluntary) and children or adults at risk will be limited to church-administered groups
- all participants to be above the minimum age limit for the social media platform being used
- workers will take care with their social media privacy settings to prevent participants seeing personal information which is not linked to communication within the group.

We will create safe online spaces when using video conferencing or video calls

We will follow the guidance outlined in Good Practice 6 (section 3.11) regarding use of video calls.

One-to-one calls

One-to-one communication via video with a child or adult at risk is the equivalent of meeting that person in a room alone with no one around. We will put appropriate boundaries and safeguards in place, depending on the age or needs of the child or adult at risk, for example:

- have an additional adult in the room with the caller
- ask a parent or carer to be present with the child or adult at risk
- keep a record of when meetings take place, length of meetings, frequency.

Group video calls

We will take appropriate measure to ensure the safety of participants in our group activities via video call or video conferencing. This will include:

- communicating expectations around appropriate behaviour to participants
- ensuring there are at least two adults on a call before a child or adult at risk joins
- using organisational profiles and devices wherever available rather than personal accounts
- not recording group calls unless there is a compelling reason to do so
- terminating a call if necessary (eg problematic behaviour by uninvited visitors).

We will apply appropriate safeguards when livestreaming or using recorded video

We will follow the guidance outlined in Good Practice 6 (section 3.9) and regarding livestreaming and recordings. This will include:

- ensuring anyone appearing in livestream or recorded video has given appropriate consent
- ensuring people know if an event is being recorded and giving them an opportunity to move to the designated area where they will be out of camera shot
- using group shots of the congregation and not singling out any individual.

We will ensure appropriate use of images online

We will follow the guidance outlined in Good Practice 6 (section 3.8) regarding the use of images taken during church activities. In relation to online use of images, this includes:

- ensuring appropriate consent is obtained before posting any images online
- ensuring that children or adults at risk cannot be individually identified by any personal details provided alongside the images
- discussion with parents and children about appropriate use of images eg where children may take pictures of each other during an activity.

We will respond appropriately and sensitively to all online safety concerns

In the event of concern that there may be an online safety incident of any kind, we will follow the process set out in chapter 4 of *Good Practice 6* for responding to safeguarding concerns. If anyone is in immediate danger, this will be reported to the police or other statutory services straightaway.

Other concerns will be reported to the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator (CSC), or their deputy, who will seek advice on what action is needed. If the CSC is unavailable, the matter will be reported to the Synod Safeguarding Officer (SSO). We will provide support to those affected, seeking advice from the SSO or other specialist services as required.

Grange URC Safeguarding Poster for display



The
United
Reformed
Church

www.urch.org.uk/safeguarding



**GOOD
PRACTICE 6
D1**

Safeguarding for everyone

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church

Good Practice 6 Safeguarding Guidance

If you are concerned

that someone you know is at risk of, or is being harmed, or presents a risk to others, please contact one of the people listed below:

Name **Martin Morris**
Role **Church Safeguarding Coordinator**
Tel **07518 775658**
Email **safeguarding@grangeurc.org.uk**

Name **Charlotte Luke**
Role **Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinator**
Tel **07518 775658 - Request to speak to Deputy**
Email **safeguarding@grangeurc.org.uk**

Name **Julie Rafferty**
Role: **Synod Safeguarding Officer**
Tel **07964 981262**
Email **safeguarding@urcmerseysynod.org.uk**

Local Authority Social Services:

Childrens Services - 0151 606 2008 or 0151 677 6557

Adult Services - 0151 606 2006 or 0151 677 6557

**If there is immediate risk or danger,
please contact the Police on 999**

Our commitments

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility relating to children or adults at risk
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for those who have experienced abuse
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse
- Responding to those who may pose a risk to others.

Helplines

- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- Samaritans: 116 123
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247
- Stop It Now: 0808 1000 900
- Hourglass (Safer Ageing): 0808 808 8141
- National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC): 0808 801 0331

Grange URC Lone Working Policy for display

Lone Working Policy – Grange URC

We have developed a Lone Working Policy Statement which legally under the HSW Act only applies to paid employees but is good practice for anyone who is in the building on their own. If you have any questions please talk to Martin Morris (Manager & Safeguarding Coordinator) or one of the Management Committee.

Grange URC takes seriously its responsibilities towards volunteers and/or visitors who might be working alone in its premises, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations 1999.

Avoid lone working, if possible, to reduce risk by arranging working patterns to coincide with other people being in the building. If lone working cannot be avoided then the lone worker should take reasonable precautions to ensure their safe working in (and entering & leaving) the building. This could include ensuring another person knows when someone is lone working in Grange URC and when they are due home.

Specific Risk Assessment should be made for higher risk activity, such as lone working later in the evening or when undertaking work at height or with tools.

Lone workers should familiarise themselves with this policy statement and assess risk in accordance with the steps of risk assessment:

1. Identify Hazards	2. Consider what could go wrong or be considered dangerous
3. Consider and act where needed to make the situation safer	4. Record their findings
5. Carry out the activity	6. Review the assessment and update if needed

The details of any incident or accident a lone worker experiences on the premises (inside/outside) must be recorded in the Accident Log Book (hall kitchen or small church kitchen) and notified to the Management Committee ASAP.

Grange United Reformed Church has considered the general practice of lone working and advises against it if possible, but understands it is possible to lone work in the building if some basic precautions are in place, for general activity.

Potential hazards

- Tripping down steps or stairs
- Actual or potential aggravation or intimidation by a member of the public outside the premises (e.g. at night)
- Someone gaining unauthorised access to the premises with malicious intent
- Slipping on spillages that have not been properly cleared up

Who might be harmed

- Any Hirer, Volunteer or Group Leader carrying out welcoming, administrative or caretaking duties in connection with the letting of, or working in parts of Grange URC premises.

The risks and precautions

- If it is dark, lights must always be used in the building
- Entry and final exits should be made through well-lit routes (leave as early as possible in the evening not late at night)
- If in a group the last person to leave should ask for another member of the group to help them lock up rather than leave alone
- Handrails should be used where available
- Lone workers should be alert to unusual activity or gatherings around the premises and if uncomfortable with a situation should ring Merseyside Police non-emergency number 101 (or 999 in an emergency)
- Lone workers should in advance advise a family member, friend or colleague of their estimated arrival time home
- Lone workers should lock themselves inside the Building and not leave external doors open

Implementation of findings

- Anyone working alone in the premises should be aware of the above risks and take appropriate measures
- Should any lone worker or member of Grange URC become aware of additional risks or faults within the building they should bring them to the attention of the Management Committee as soon as possible.

Safeguarding Policy Version Amendments:

Date	Version	Amendment	Approved By Elders
April 2017	1	URC Policy created, adopted and adapted to Grange URC	5 April 2017
February 2024	2	Grange URC Policy updated to include revisions in URC Good Practice v6	28 February 2024