



*Promoting* **Safeguarding**

*Preventing* **Abuse**

*Protecting* **The Vulnerable**

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

*Emmanuel United Reformed Church*  
*West Wickham*

*Southern Synod*

March 2019

## **Introduction**

Emmanuel United Reformed Church, West Wickham (referred to throughout this Policy as Emmanuel) agrees that children 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 and vulnerable adults is paramount. We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice.

Safeguarding is taken seriously by all at Emmanuel.

We will organise activities in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to children and adults.

We will follow a safe selection process for the appointment of people to work with children or vulnerable adults.

We are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and vulnerable adults.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the Police and Social Care if necessary, whether involving children or vulnerable adults

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

**If abuse is suspected or a child or vulnerable adult reports abuse, contact must be made with one of the church's Safeguarding Coordinators: –**

Name: Alan Kienlen                      Tel. 0208 460 2523                      [akie679387@aol.com](mailto:akie679387@aol.com)

OR

Name: Jan Kienlen                      Tel. 0208 460 2523

OR

Name: Janet Pickering                      Tel. 0208 777 0701                      [samjanpick@hotmail.com](mailto:samjanpick@hotmail.com)

## **Aim and purpose of this Policy**

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting the vulnerable, both children and adults. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action following the raising of safeguarding concerns involving children and vulnerable adults within our Church, or those who attend our activities and events.

## **Who this policy applies to**

This policy applies to those who attend our Church, trustees, staff (both paid and volunteer) and, as far as possible, to 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.

Children refers to those under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable adults and their carers will be informed of this policy and our procedures.

Vulnerable adult refers to anyone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or be unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

## **Duty of care and confidentiality**

We have a duty of care to all who attend our church activities whether children or adults. We will maintain confidentiality except in circumstances where to do so would place an individual or individuals at risk.

## **Preventing abuse**

Activities will be organised in accordance with URC good practice guidelines so as to promote a safe environment and minimise opportunities for harm. Risk assessment will be carried out, appropriate consent forms will be used for activities with children and young people, appropriate records will be kept (see URC Record Keeping policy for further details), and adequate insurance will be in place for each event.

## **URC Good practice guidelines for church activities**

1. Activities will be planned to minimise situations where the possibility of abuse of children may occur. As far as possible an adult will not be left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of being observed by others. Every group, no matter how small, should have at least *two* leaders. Small groups with single leaders may meet in a large room, or in adjoining rooms with an open door between. If a child is interviewed alone there should be another adult nearby. This good practice can be as much benefit to the adult as to the child or young person.

2. There should be one male leader if possible when boys are present and always at least one female leader when girls are present.
3. No person under the age of 18 should be left in charge of children of any age. No child should be left unattended at any time.
4. A register of children and helpers attending any activity must be kept. The register should also include details of any significant incidents. Records will be kept indefinitely in case of queries at a later date.
5. Parental contact/consent forms should be renewed annually. For an event taking place outside the Church building a specific parental consent form must be completed and returned.
6. Parents or guardians are to be informed if their child is to be transported in a car or other vehicle. Those transporting children in their vehicles are to ensure that:
  - 6.1. their insurance covers transportation on this basis (usually by a phone call to the insurance company)
  - 6.2. Wherever possible, have more than one passenger in the vehicle.
  - 6.3. Legal requirements are followed regarding seat belts, child seats, booster seats and booster cushions and the seating of children in the rear seats.
  - 6.4. Even if it is not a legal requirement, wherever possible children are seated in the back seats of the vehicle.
7. Ensure that children up to the age of 11 leaving the premises do so only into the care of parents or other adult known to be responsible for them
8. When children go on outings a list of names and contact details of next of kin of everyone, including helpers, should be made. The group leader should have a copy of this list and a copy must be left with a pre-arranged contact person who is available by phone in case of emergencies and whose contact details are provided to the parents and guardians.

## **Recruitment and Training of Staff and Volunteers**

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

- Requiring applicants to complete an application form
- Requiring documentary evidence of identity and, for employees, the right to work in the UK
- Providing workers with role/job descriptions and person specifications.
- Obtaining Disclosure and Barring checks where we 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 in their role.

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.

If we become aware of someone known to have harmed children or vulnerable adults who use our church, we will inform the Synod Safeguarding personnel and co-operate with them and the relevant statutory agencies to put in place a plan to minimise the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults.

### **Managing those alleged or convicted of abuse**

Emmanuel may be approached by someone who has been accused or convicted of abuse, asking to be a member of our Church Community. This situation must be handled with great care and sensitivity. An individual convicted of an offence continues to be a risk to children with whom he or she comes into contact.

The Safeguarding Coordinator and another person (either their Deputy or the Church Secretary) will meet with the person making the request. It is always appropriate to seek help from the Synod link.

If it is felt appropriate for this person to join the Church Community a written agreement will be drawn up with the person. This will explain what they must do to be a part of the Church Community and will include where they can go on the premises and at what times. It is likely this will be limited to Church services. If the person wishes to attend any other events, e.g. the Harvest Lunch this would need to be discussed separately with the Safeguarding Coordinator or Church Secretary and a further written agreement would be used.

### **Organisations using our Church Premises**

Organisations wishing to hire or use our premises for activities with children or vulnerable adults must, as a condition of the letting agreement, ensure that they have

in place a safeguarding policy at least as robust as this policy or that they will follow the principles of this safeguarding policy.

They must also undertake to provide one of our Safeguarding Coordinators or the Church Secretary with brief details of any reported abuse. We undertake to treat such notifications in strict confidence and follow the same record keeping regime as for incidents reported directly to us.

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

The definitions of abuse differ between children and vulnerable adults. The definitions relating to abuse of children form Appendix 1 of this policy. The definitions relating to abuse of vulnerable adults form Appendix 2 of this policy.

### **How to recognise abuse**

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 forms Appendix 3 and those in relation to Adults form 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 adult's behaviour.

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

If a child or vulnerable adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child, 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 a Safeguarding Link Person as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, refer to the deputy or to Synod safeguarding personnel)
- Make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and sign and date this record. Any such records will be stored securely.

In all cases, we will inform one of the Synod Safeguarding personnel, so that they can offer advice and support (see the section below entitled 'Involving the URC Southern Synod').

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

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 Coordinator 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 made must 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.

## **If it is decided that a statutory agency should be involved**

If you feel a crime has taken place call Bromley Police on Metcall 101 or in an emergency 999, otherwise:

If a local authority safeguarding agency is to be informed:

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

If the child lives in the London Borough of Bromley, contact the Bromley Children's referral and assessment team:

[mash@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:mash@bromley.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 020 8461 7373 / 7379 / 7026

(Out of hours 0300 303 8671)

**Address:** Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH

If the child lives in the London Borough of Croydon, contact Croydon Children's Services Child Protection Team:

Telephone: 020 8726 6400 (24 hours)

0208 2552888

Email: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

If the child lives elsewhere than the boroughs of Bromley or Croydon, make contact with the Bromley team and request their advice.

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

If the Vulnerable Adult lives in the London Borough of Bromley, contact the Bromley's Adult and Community Services team;

Telephone 020 8461 7777 (Monday to Friday)

0300 303 8671(Out of hours)

**Email:** [adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk)

If the Vulnerable Adult lives in the London Borough of Croydon, contact Croydon's Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator:

Telephone: 020 8726 6500

Email: [referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:referral.team2@croydon.gov.uk)

Address: Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CR0 1EA

If the Vulnerable Adult lives elsewhere than the boroughs of Bromley or Croydon, make contact with the Bromley team and request their advice.

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

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or a volunteer, then the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted. The LADO's role is to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases of allegations of abuse made against those who work with children.

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.

The Bromley LADO contact details are:

General Enquiries: [lado@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:lado@bromley.gov.uk)

0208 461 7669 0208 313 4325

### **Involving the URC Southern Synod**

When someone at Emmanuel is alleged or known to have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, we will inform one of the Synod Safeguarding personnel mentioned below, so that they can offer advice and support.

Synod Safeguarding Link Person – children & young people: **Revd Roger Jones**

Tel. 07525410083, Email [rjones@urcsouthern.org.uk](mailto:rjones@urcsouthern.org.uk)

Synod Safeguarding link person(s) – adults:



**Colin Telfer**, Tel. 01843 448705, Email [colinctelfer@gmail.com](mailto:colinctelfer@gmail.com)

### **URC Safeguarding Officer**

If the Southern Synod safeguarding personnel are unavailable and you need advice urgently, you can try the URC Safeguarding Officer:

**Ioannis Athanasiou**, Tel. 020 7520 2729, Email: [safeguarding@urc.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@urc.org.uk)

CCPAS 24 hour helpline

The Churches Child Protection Advisory Service run a 24 hour helpline: Tel 0845 120 4550

Please note that out of office hours this helpline should only be used when a decision needs to be made about a safeguarding case which cannot wait until the next day.

### **Complaints**

Should anyone have any concerns or complaints please contact

*Church Secretary Mr Ian Moore*      0208 289 7760      07701 032014  
ian.km555@gmail.com

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**

The Elders will review this policy annually.