

## Homewood Road United Reformed Church - Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk - Practice

### Guidelines for volunteers working with Children and Adults at Risk

1. The Safeguarding Coordinator should make sure that all persons working with children and adults at risk (hereafter referred to as 'workers') in the church are aware of what they should do if they have concerns related to the safety of someone in their care. A copy of the Good Practice Handbook 4, a chart of appropriate action and a copy of our Policy and Procedures are provided to named Group Leaders of Children's and Adult Groups. A copy of the chart of appropriate action is available on the noticeboard at the back of the church.
2. Each group should have a designated leader who is aware of good practice as set out in the URC Good Practice Handbook 4. Leaders will be asked to sign to say they have read and understood this.
3. All workers should undergo an application process and if deemed necessary undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check (DBS). The Church Secretary will take up references and administer DBS checks, if appropriate.
4. All workers should be willing to undertake training as necessary.
5. Group Leaders should ensure that all workers are familiar with health and safety procedures in the church buildings. Any concerns about health and safety issues should be reported to the Business Committee.
6. Each group will have at least one person trained in first aid.
7. Each group will have support mechanisms e.g. Regular meetings of leaders
8. The church has two 'Safeguarding Coordinators' to contact in case of suspected abuse. Each group should be made aware of who these 'Safeguarding Coordinators' are. They are named on the Church noticeboard
9. The 'Safeguarding Coordinators' are responsible for updating all policies and statements regarding safeguarding and child protection. It is also their responsibility to make sure all workers are aware of Homewood Road's guidelines on working with children and vulnerable adults.

### Groups working with children

In addition to the above, the following guidelines apply to persons working with children and vulnerable adults:

1. There should always be a minimum of two volunteers. On Sunday mornings an Elder may be called upon to assist with a group. The ratios of volunteers to children are as follows:

Children aged	0-2	1 adult: 3 children
	2-3	1 adult: 4 children
	3-7	1 adult: 8 children
	Over 8	2 adults: 20 children and 1 further adult for every additional 10 children

2. The workers must ensure that children are safely collected at the end of each meeting.

3. If parents/guardians are not present at the activity, they will be asked to supply relevant medical information for each child. The Group Leader will keep this information securely confidential and ensure that the volunteers are aware of it.
4. Parental consent forms should be used for any off-site activity (copies can be found in the Good Practice Handbook 4)
5. A register of all children and adults in attendance at each session must be kept for every group.

### **The role of the Safeguarding Coordinator**

The Safeguarding Coordinators are responsible for:

1. Updating all policies and statements regarding safeguarding and child protection.
2. Being the 'link' person to the Elders' Meeting on all matters surrounding 'Safeguarding'.
3. Making sure that all leaders and volunteers have completed an application form and undertaken a DBS check.
4. Making sure that all leaders and volunteers are aware of Homewood Road's guidelines on working with children and vulnerable adults.
5. Liaising with all groups working with children and vulnerable adults about any Safeguarding issues.
6. Post safeguarding policy and procedure on the Church website
7. Reporting any allegations to the appropriate authorities swiftly and sensitively.

### **The Safeguarding Coordinator should:**

1. Be appointed by the Elders' meeting.
2. Have some experience of working in children/youth/social services context
3. Be capable of being sympathetic to young people and children, vulnerable adults, but objective in the pursuance of their task- with an ability to cope with the shock and upset abuse allegations may produce.
4. Be capable of acting confidentially, speedily, decisively, relating well to statutory authorities, parents/carers etc.
5. Be willing to undergo training in procedures and be prepared to brief staff and the church and Elders' meetings on appropriate local policies, procedure development and review their effectiveness.
6. Have clear lines of accountability to the Elders and have clear links with other staff.
7. Be alerted to opportunities for support and networking with others.

**Responding to concerns of abuse**

**WHAT TO DO:**

1. **ACT IMMEDIATELY** – Listen carefully, accept, reassure, explain next steps. Get medical help if required
2. **RECORD** on incident form (Group leaders have a copy of these)
3. **ALLEGED ABUSE** - has alleged abuse occurred during Church activities? If not, share concerns with supervisor of the activity. Report to Safeguarding Co-ordinator
4. **ALLEGED ABUSE** – Do you suspect minister or person with responsibility in Church? If no, share concern with supervisor of activity. If yes, report to Safeguarding Co-ordinator in Church or Synod.
5. **ACTION** to be taken by Safeguarding Co-ordinator. If further action is required the Safeguarding Co-ordinators will act immediately by contacting the appropriate body.

**At Homewood Road URC, the people appointed as ‘Safeguarding Coordinators’ are:**

Name: **(Safeguarding Coordinator) MRS SUSAN F GRAY**

Tel: 01438 712653

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Name: **(Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator) Mrs HELEN F GRIFFITHS**

Tel: 01727 840885

Signed: .....

Date: .....