



Safeguarding Newsletter



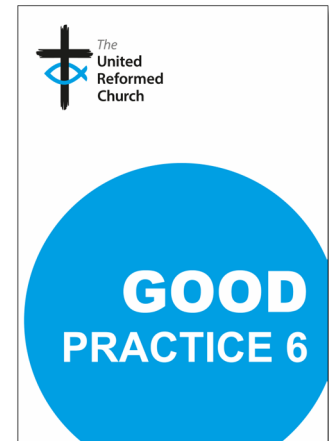
The
United
Reformed
Church
Safeguarding

July 2024

Summer has finally arrived and what have we been up to in safeguarding.....our Training and Development Coordinator has developed a new course around safeguarding children, the Church House safeguarding team welcomes a new member staff and the entire safeguarding team comprising also Synod Safeguarding Officers met together for an annual safeguarding residential.

Good Practice 6 (GP6) Resources

Recent additions include an update to the safeguarding clauses in Letting Agreements for groups or organisations who use URC facilities (Resource SA6), and guidance on handling, retention and disposal of DBS certificates (Resource P6). There has also been a small update to page 1 of the local church safeguarding policy template (Resource P1) in the section 'who the policy applies to' which reflects the updated Lettings Agreement. See <https://urc.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-good-practice/>



Disclosure and Barring Service

DBS Update Service - we are currently drafting guidance on using the DBS Update Service for churches that may want to do this. The guidance should be available in the autumn.

A Note on Basic DBS Checks - a number of DBS roles instigated by churches and synods require a basic check. These are currently:

- Church Administrator
- Church Caretaker or Cleaner
- Church Treasurer
- Synod Treasurer
- Synod Trustee

These checks do incur a charge of £18 which needs to be paid for by the applicant in order to complete the application. Be assured that this is not a charge from Due Diligence Checking (DDC) but rather the Disclosure and Barring Service. Please do ask the applicant to pay the fee and, where appropriate, claim back from the church or Synod.

Training Update

Training Review Group - the group met in June to discuss all aspects of safeguarding training, from participation and publicity, to monitoring training attendance and course content. This is ever evolving within the safeguarding training framework. At each meeting of Training Review Group we welcome a member of a local church to join us. If you are interested in joining a meeting to give any feedback on safeguarding training then please contact carrie.kaunda@urc.org.uk



Safeguarding Courses via Zoom

These courses are delivered on Zoom and open to the entire denomination. The list of dates and times for 2024 is available on the Safeguarding pages on the URC [website](#) under 'Training Dates for the Whole Denomination'. To book, please email emma.pearce@urc.org.uk with your name/church/role and your course(s) and dates.

New Course – Safeguarding Children and Young People

Due to popular demand our Training and Development Co-ordinator has developed a new course around safeguarding children and young people in churches which will be held on 10 September from 1pm – 3.30pm This will cover:

- A more in depth look at scenarios around Children's safeguarding
- Discussions around the challenges of safeguarding within the non-statutory sector
- An insight into grooming
- A look at the specific safeguarding concerns that could be raised within the church and how to respond to these

To book at place, contact emma.pearce@urc.org stating your name, church and role. If there is a high demand for this course we may run a waiting list.

For mandatory safeguarding courses please contact your [Synod Safeguarding Officer](#).

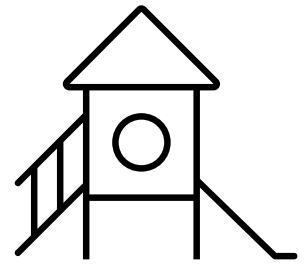
The Safeguarding Foundation E-Learning is now available on the [URC Learning Hub](#). This means you can do the course in your own time. Each month we take a list of participants from the previous and create a training record to show that you have completed the module.

Suicide Awareness Training

Should churches wish to explore the topic of suicide awareness, we would refer you to the [Zero Suicide Alliance](#) (ZSA) which is a national organisation that aims to empower, educate and equip individuals and organisations to support suicide awareness and prevention. They offer a free [20 minute Suicide Awareness Training](#) session which you and it is also available in the [Welsh language](#).

Speaking to Children about Safeguarding

Talking to children about safeguarding is just as important as talking to adults. We need to ensure that in churches we empower children to recognise harmful situations so they can reach out to an adult. Children need to know that they can, and should, speak up when they feel worried, frightened, or unsure about something, know who they can speak to, and that they will be listened to and believed. These are important lessons for children to learn, and all settings should have these as part of raise awareness around safeguarding.



The recommendations from the IICSA report conclude that “empowering children and young people to talk about [abuse] and opening up discussions between them and a broad range of adults, is essential,” but as an adult, knowing how to do this confidently with children can feel daunting. Where do you start? What do you include? How do you ensure you use language that children will understand?

The independent safeguarding charity *Thirty One Eight* have created the character of Roarry the Lion, a friendly and trusted guide, helping children to navigate the dangers and learn important skills such as how to raise their voice, their “roar” and speak up when things aren’t right. The lion is a familiar image to Christians, associated with wisdom and of God himself and personified by characters such as Aslan from C.S. Lewis’ Narnia books.

Drawing on stories from the Bible where children have spoken up or spoken out about issues and injustice, the resources support children to learn that the Bible shows us that God wants us to use the voice he has given us to speak up for ourselves and others.

Roarry’s Rangers know how to keep safe by following the Ranger Code. The code gives children four key points to remember and take away. These are:

- ❖ When I feel worried or upset, I won’t keep it to myself.
- ❖ I will raise my roar and speak to someone I trust.
- ❖ I know which grown-ups I can go to for help.
- ❖ I will use my roar to speak up for others.

We are recommending the use of Roarry the Lion resources produced by Thirty One Eight. These can be accessed on their [website](https://www.thirtyoneeight.org.uk).

Audit development working group

The URC's Safeguarding Committee are committed to ensuring that throughout the Church we work in line with our safeguarding policies, procedures, and legislation and as a result have endorsed a piece of work to look at internal and external auditing need.

Are you a church safeguarding coordinator with an interest in joining a short-term working group (1 year) to look at how as a denomination we audit safeguarding cases? The aim of the group is to take a proposal back to the Safeguarding Committee/General Assembly with a plan of the audit process the denomination should adopt.

If this is something you are interested in or would like more information, then please get in contact with Sharon Barr the Designated Safeguarding Lead at safeguarding@urc.org.uk



Staffing

Matt Knowles joins the Church House Safeguarding Team

The new Casework Supervisor role has been taken up by Matt Knowles, the current lead safeguarding officer from the Northern and Yorkshire Synods. He will be performing this role alongside his current role.

Matt says 'On the 1 July 2024 I took up a new role as the Casework Supervisor as part of the safeguarding team at Church House. In doing so I will be providing safeguarding casework supervision for the denomination's Synod Safeguarding Officers as well as developing the denomination's case management system in relation to safeguarding.'

URC Safeguarding Awayday

The URC Synod Safeguarding Officers and the Church House Safeguarding team met in Birmingham for our annual residential. Although we meet regularly on Zoom the yearly opportunity to meet in person away from the Church provides space for team bonding and training.

We were fortunate enough to secure a training session from the Revd Dr Adam Scott and also from the Revd Cham Kaur-Mann who pioneers collaborative leadership. Closer to home, Diana Taylor, Synod Safeguarding Officer for Wales, delivered a course on crisis prevention intervention.

It was a full timetable to say the least but here's a photo of us relaxing over our last lunch together. Tired, happy but also very hot (someone said the weather was 28 degrees – it certainly felt it).



Wessex Synod Safeguarding Training

- **Refresher safeguarding training on Zoom.**
6.30pm – 8pm on Thursday 12 September and 19 September 2024

Bookings: via the Wessex Synod website

<https://www.urcwessex.org.uk/event/safeguarding-refresher-online/> or email development@urcwessex.org.uk

Advanced safeguarding on Zoom 17th and 24th October 6.30-8.30pm!

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Bookings: email development@urcwessex.org.uk

Please contact the [Wessex Synod Office](#) for further information.