



Clapton Park United Reformed Church Round Chapel Old School Rooms Safeguarding Policy

This safeguarding policy for Clapton Park URC / Round Chapel Old School Rooms is closely based on the current URC model local church safeguarding policy document (Good Practice 6).

Like the URC's model local church safeguarding policy, this document is supported by the following six appendices:

- L1 – Contact details for relevant organisations
- S1 – The role of a Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- C1 – Code of conduct for working with children or young people (under 18)
- C2 – Code of conduct for working with adults (over 18)
- F1 – Safeguarding concern form
- S5 – Signs and symptoms of abuse

This document also contains useful contacts of organisations and services that can provide information, advice and support. However, the most important local contacts for our organization, both within the organization itself and in our local authority, the London Borough of Hackney, and in the wider United Reformed Church are included in the section of key contacts within this policy.

This is not a 'catch-all' policy. It covers the broad basics of good safeguarding practice in our local church, but it will be supplemented by procedural documents adapted to the individual circumstances of our church, its projects and the day to day usage of our premises.

We would note that it is also important to remember that a safeguarding policy alone is worthless without proper implementation and a church-wide commitment to keeping people safe.

Please note that although part of Clapton Park URC / Round Chapel Old School Rooms, our early years Nursery provision has its own distinct Safeguarding Policy. The Nursery Safeguarding Policy is legally compliant with both Ofsted and Hackney Borough Education requirements. It is the duty of the Trustees / Elders' Meeting to ensure that there is no conflict between the two policies.



Our Commitment to Safeguarding

We believe that all children and adults have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Although reporting concerns can be uncomfortable for staff, and be unpleasant for families, as a setting, we recognize that it is better to help children, young people and their families early, before issues escalate and become damaging. This also applies to vulnerable adults.

Because safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, all staff are committed to recognizing and reporting all concerns related to child safety, issues concerning vulnerable adults, wellbeing and in particular are vigilant to spot signs of abuse and maltreatment. The whole community – staff, parents, trustees, volunteers, congregation and visitors have a legal and moral duty to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm and abuse. In doing so, we will seek to play a role in the wider community in line with our safeguarding mission to fulfill this objective.

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 eg 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 the 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 and 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 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 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.

7. Key contacts

Church Safeguarding Coordinator

Name and contact details: Michelle Baker michelle@theroundchapel.org.uk 0208 5339676

Deputy Church Safeguarding Coordinators

Name and contact details: Alex Collings (Families Project) alex@theroundchapel.org.uk
Fiona McAllister (older people) fiona@theroudchapel.org.uk
Abi Kingston (CP Church Members) abi@theroundchapel.org.uk



Synod Safeguarding Officer

Name and contact details: Belinda Herbert
safeguarding@urcthamesnorth.org.uk
07716 640 596

URC Safeguarding Office

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

Email: safeguarding@urc.org.uk

Local statutory services: Children

- **Hackney Children & Family Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Telephone: 0208 3565500
(Emergency Duty Team 0208 3562710)

MASH@hackney.gov.uk

- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The LADO should always be contacted when there is an allegation that any person who works with children has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Telephone: 0208 356 4569

LADO@hackney.gov.uk

Local statutory services: Adults

- To report a concern about an adult complete the online report form:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>

Telephone: 0208 3565782
(out of hours 0208 356 2300)

8. Review

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

Date of most recent review: **February 2025**

Date of next review: **February 2026**

Signed by:(On behalf of the church Elders)



9. Concerns Complaints & Compliments

Should anyone have any concerns, complaints or compliments please contact:

The Chair of the Elders / Trustees Meeting, Hannah Henderson

Telephone No 07821 298502

Email Hannah@theroundchapel.org.uk

or the Trustee responsible for Safeguarding Issues as they affect governance, Abi Kingston

Email abi@theroundchapel.org.uk

It 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.