

## Safeguarding Policy Statement

This is the safeguarding policy statement adopted by URC General Assembly in 2021.

Bexley United Reformed Church (URC) is committed to safeguarding in every area of its life and ministry.

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote and protect the well-being and human rights of individuals. This means we will:

- do all we can to create and maintain a safe and caring environment for all people
- respond promptly and effectively to any form of abuse and neglect, including reporting abuse to statutory agencies as necessary
- seek to prevent abuse in any form from occurring.

We will seek to identify individuals who may pose a risk to others and take necessary actions to minimise risk whilst supporting these individuals in our communities when safe to do so.

Bexley URC confirms that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone: to prevent abuse and neglect of children, young people and adults; to act upon concerns of abuse; and to support the wellbeing of each person within all communities in which the Church is placed. Safeguarding is a requirement and a duty in all Councils of the Church. Safeguarding in Bexley URC is supported with relevant policies, practice, guidance and training.

Bexley URC acknowledges that the wellbeing of the child or adult who is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing abuse, harm and neglect is paramount, and it will always act in their best interests, in line with national legislation, relevant statutory guidelines and good practice guidance. The United Reformed Church believes that all people have the right to be and feel part of this community, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We will operate in line with the Human Rights Act 1988, the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Equality Act 2010.

### Commitments

Bexley URC will adhere to the policy statement above by committing to:

- promote safe and healthy cultures in which good practice standards in safeguarding are updated and disseminated
- ensure everyone in a position of trust is carefully recruited / selected / appointed / elected and trained in safeguarding children and adults at risk
- respond promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding allegation or concern (including reporting any allegations to statutory agencies) including those who may pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk
- care pastorally for all children and adults at risk, and all those who have experienced abuse in the past
  
- ensure that all those who pose a risk to children, young people or adults at risk, and those who are the subject of allegations, receive appropriate pastoral care and supervision
- exercise informed vigilance about risks in all forms of abuse and neglect work together with other denominations, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations.

