

# Reigate Park Church

## Safeguarding Policy

(following URC Good Practice 6 guidelines)



**Copies of the Safeguarding Policy to be kept by the members of the Safeguarding Panel, Junior Church, the Church Office & placed on the Website for reference.**

**R.P.C. Safeguarding Policy**  
**(Revised January 2026)**

## **The Safeguarding Panel**

There should be a minimum of 5 people who have overall responsibility for safeguarding the children, young people and vulnerable young adults at RPC. This group is responsible for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults attending Church and Church-related activities. This includes the appointment of volunteers through informal discussion and completion of appropriate checks.

This panel (hereafter SP) should consist of:

- ✝ The Minister(s)
- ✝ The Junior Church Leader and Deputy.
- ✝ The Safeguarding Officer (hereafter SO) and Deputy from within the Church who have counselling or similar skills and are sympathetic to young people.

The Junior Church Co-ordinator and Deputy will deal with the day-to-day matters, including recruiting volunteers.

The SO Christina Papworth and Deputy Susan Ward will deal with all safeguarding matters.

As a Panel they will ensure that the Elders and Church Meeting is kept up to date with Safeguarding procedures.

At Church Meeting the SO will notify the Church Family of those on the Panel. Parents and Junior Church volunteers will be notified annually of the names of those on the Panel and when any changes occur.

Contact details for the SO and Deputy will be displayed in the foyer and other relevant noticeboards. There will be a list of all Safeguarding Panel members on the Junior Church noticeboard in the hall.

## **Junior Church**

### **Appointment of Volunteers:**

- ✝ All volunteers are responsible for a group of children and young people and are in loco parentis whilst the children and young people are in their care. Each group will have at least two volunteers.
- ✝ On recruiting a suitable volunteer using the URC's Safer Recruitment Guidelines the SO will be given their name and oversee completion of appropriate reference and DBS forms, discussing any problems that arise. The Elders and Church Meeting will be informed in the Annual Report from Junior Church.

All group volunteers should be practising members of Reigate Park Church.

Training expected:

i. Safety procedures: building, accident, accident book and fire procedures.

ii. Safeguarding:

Leaders, Christina Papworth, Pat Denchfield, Rev. Siobhan Antoniou, Rev. Susan Knight require Advanced training

Volunteers require Foundation Safeguarding and are requested to do Intermediate training.

All require refresher training every 3 years. The Deputy SO will assist with this.

The SO or Deputy SO must be contacted over all safeguarding issues or concerns and should have outside contacts for referring to if necessary.

iii. Support:

Safeguarding Panel (hereafter called SP), Junior Church volunteers.

**Liaison:**

- ✝ The weekly recording sheet should be completed in full after each session and kept securely at Church.
- ✝ All child protection issues should be discussed with the SO or deputy.
- ✝ Where appropriate, family concerns may be shared with relevant people.

**Practicalities:**

- ✝ Computers, Smart phones and Mobile Devices cannot be used with children and young people without the prior consent from the Safeguarding Panel.

- ✝ On-line communications with Young People:

- a. RPC is aware that young people make extensive use of social networking sites, often below the set age-limits.
- b. Volunteers with appropriate training should be prepared to advise young people as appropriate on safe use of the internet.

- ✝ Photographs and other electronic images (to include cameras on all electronic devices):

- a. All parents/carers are asked to sign a photo permission form.
- b. Private photos (including during the service) can only be taken prior RPC permission and must not be shared on social media.

Use or possession of illegal substances, solvents or offensive weapons

Use or possession of illegal substances, solvents or offensive weapons is not permitted on Church premises.

Alcohol is permitted for adults over18, as appropriate, and with permission from Elders.

- ✝ During the session volunteers should:

- a. Take the register at the beginning of every session noting the **names and surnames** of visiting children.
- b. On completion of the weekly recording sheet, anything of a very delicate nature should be talked through immediately after the session with the SO, Deputy or another member of the Safeguarding Panel.

- c. All children, young people and vulnerable adult's names should be noted and once they have attended 3 times they should be given a registration form and photo consent form (attachment 3). Updated lists, together with any relevant information, will be given to each groups (as appropriate) at the beginning of each year and at any other time when it is deemed necessary.

 Volunteers should be advised by Minister(s), Families Liaison, or Junior Church Co-ordinators if there are any complications within a family where extra care is needed, either socially, emotionally or financially. This should remain confidential.

 Volunteers should avoid being on their own with a young person, especially where they cannot be seen by others (e.g. the Library). They should move to the Hall, Lower Stage Room (door open), Kitchen (door open) or Foyer & inform the Junior Church Coordinator or Deputy of this decision.

 On RPC premises during the service and on off-site trips, there should be:

adequate volunteers (depending on age of group, at least two adults, preferably 1 male and 1 female) and a ratio of 1:3 for 0-2 years, 1:4 for 2-3 years, 1:6 for 4-8years, 1:8 for 9-12years and 1:10 for 13-18 years) including, whenever possible, a suitably trained First Aider.

If volunteers want to take groups off-site, a Risk Assessment must be done, the SO or DSO should be informed and appropriate permission be given.

## Safeguarding Procedures

### What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred:

- a. You must report concerns as soon as possible to:

**SO: Mrs Christina Papworth (01737 249766; email: [safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org))**

who is nominated by RPC to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. She may also be required by conditions of the Church Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company.

In the absence of the SO the matter should be brought to the attention of:

**Deputy SO: Mrs Susan Ward**  
**email: [safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org)**

- b. If the suspicions in any way involve the SO then the report should be made to the Deputy SO:

**Deputy SO: Mrs Susan Ward (01737249766;**  
**email: [safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org](mailto:safeguarding@reigateparkchurch.org)**

- c. If the suspicions in any way implicate both the SO and the Deputy SO, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

**CCPAS Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (hereafter "CCPAS")**  
**Swanley,**  
**Kent.**  
**BR8 7UQ tel:**  
**01322 660011 or 01322 667207.**

**PO Box 133,**  
**Thirtyone:eight 03030031111**

Alternatively contact:

**Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 03004709100 (Mon-Fri, 9-5)**  
**Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team 01483 517898**  
**Local Authority Children's Social Services 0300470100**  
**Local Authority Adult Social Services 03002001005**  
**Non-Emergency Telephone Number for the Police 101**  
**Contact in the case of immediate risk of harm 999**

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/contacting-social-care/contact-childrens-social-care](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/contacting-social-care/contact-childrens-social-care)

Allegations against volunteers should be reported to:

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**  
**0300 1231650 Option3**

Suspicions will only be discussed with members of the SP on a need-to-know basis.

It is of course the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from CCPAS, although we hope that members of the church will use the agreed procedure. If, however, you feel that the SO or Deputy has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation direct. We hope that by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the Church to effective child protection.

✝ Volunteer should:

- a. be prepared to let the young person talk without interruption until he/she has finished. Don't ask any questions. Write down immediately everything that has been heard and said. Date this and keep it for later consultation.

- b. reassure the young person that it was all right to talk, but say that you will have to take it to the SO.
- c. You cannot promise confidentiality. If the young person asks for this before he/she starts, then you must explain that for some things you are unable to remain silent.
- d. tell the SO or Deputy immediately what has happened.

✝ The SO will deal with all reported concerns as follows:

- a. When physical abuse, emotional abuse or neglect is suspected, social services must be contacted in case of deliberate injury, or if there is concern about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- b. If the parents are suspected perpetrators then they must not be informed.
- c. Medical help must be sought if needed urgently, informing a doctor of any suspicions.
- d. Lesser concerns (eg poor parenting) may be talked over with parents to encourage them to seek help, if this does not place the child at risk of further injury.
- e. If sexual abuse is suspected, social services and/or police must always be contacted. Parents must not be informed. It is not the SO's role to investigate the matter personally, but to record and collate information and relay it to the appropriate authorities and to co-operate in any investigation.

✝ In the case of a young person accusing a volunteer of abuse, the person should contact Christina Papworth, Susan Ward or any other member of the SP immediately. The volunteer will automatically be relieved from duties whilst the matter is resolved in as confidential a manner as is possible.

✝ Reporting Convictions

Information about any convictions to be reported to Natalie Van Camp the Synod Safeguarding Officer: Tel. 07483 994 590, [safeguarding@urcsouthernsynod.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@urcsouthernsynod.org.uk)

✝ Working with Offenders

Where someone attending church is known to have abused children then, whilst extending friendship to that individual, the SO or Deputy will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep.

A strict formal contract may need to be drawn up to include such issues as which meetings that person may attend, where to sit in Church and not being alone with children or accepting offers of hospitality where children are present in the home.

Where someone attending church is known to be under suspicion of having abused children then the situation will be carefully monitored by the SO, Deputy and Ministers.

✝ Helping Victims of Abuse

As a Church we are committed to supporting victims of abuse and encouraging them in their faith.

✝ Abuse of Trust

As a Church we undertake to follow the principles found within the Abuse of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office <http://ccpas.co.uk/Documents/AbuseOfTrustQRG.pdf>

**This document is based on the URC's Good Practice 6**

**Copies of the Good Practice Guide to be kept by the SO of the Safeguarding Panel, Junior Church , the Church Office & placed on the Website for reference.**

**Review**

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

**Date of most recent review: 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Date of next review: January 2027**

**Signed by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Knight', written in a cursive style.

(On behalf of the church Elders)

REV SUSAN KNIGHT