

Paper R3

Attendees at URC's Basic Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding Advisory Group

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Mr Ioannis Athanasiou safeguarding@urc.org.uk
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	Mission Council expects a standardised approach to safeguarding training across the United Reformed Church and strongly encourages all those who are working with children, young people and adults at risk in the life of the Church to access the new basic safeguarding training.

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	The Past Case Review indicated the need for a standardised mandatory safeguarding training for those working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm (page 21 in the Learning Group report). This paper introduces the basic safeguarding training module in the URC and provides a list of those the training is for.
Main points	
Previous relevant documents	Paper R2 at Mission Council, November 2019 Paper R2 at Mission Council, May 2019 Paper R2 at Mission Council, November 2018.
Consultation has taken place with...	Members of SAG Safeguarding Training Review Working Group Synod Safeguarding Officers.

Summary of impact

Financial	Synods will make their own funding arrangements to enable them to offer basic safeguarding training to local churches, depending on their current resources and existing practices. They will be able to access Assembly-level support if further support is required.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	URC is already a member of a national ecumenical group that works on sharing good practice and resources on safeguarding training with other denominations. ¹

1. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard others. The United Reformed Church needs to ensure that some specific categories of people are equipped to protect vulnerable groups.
2. In 2018 Mission Council, in alignment with the recommendations of the PCR Report, agreed that safeguarding training is mandatory for those working with children and young people. The last Mission Council meeting also noted that one of the priorities of the URC's Safeguarding Strategy is providing appropriate and accessible safeguarding training for all those who are accountable for and working with children, young people and adults at risk.
3. The introduction of a standardised basic safeguarding training aims to ensure that all individuals working with children, young people and adults at risk understand the processes and policies of the URC. The basic training module is based on good practice standards, covers both areas of safeguarding (children and adults at risk) and provides advice in respect to abuse and protection of children, young people and adults from any form of abuse. Additionally, those involved in such work must be aware of the necessity of referring cases to the appropriate staff (synod safeguarding leads) or civil authorities or agencies (police, social services, etc.) as well as of not attempting to make decisions themselves.

4. Core list of attendees (identified by SAG)

- Synod Safeguarding Officers and Advisers
- Church Safeguarding Coordinators and their Deputies
- Members of the Safeguarding Advisory Group
- Active Ministers, including Synod Moderators and retired ministers who meet the requirements of active ministry
- Youth/Children/Adult/Pastoral Workers
- Synod Clerks
- Section O Investigation, Commission and Appeal Panel Members
- Worship leaders
- Lay preachers
- Pastoral visitors
- URC trustees, synod trustees, and Elders as local church trustees.

5. Optional attendance

- Synod officers
- Church Secretaries

6. Basic safeguarding training will be run by synods. Synods will lead the delivery and dissemination of regular safeguarding training for relevant staff and volunteers. It is the responsibility of the SSO to provide further details about training available in their Synod. A person's safeguarding training will have to be refreshed every three years.
7. A safeguarding training review group will continue developing the framework of safeguarding training across the denomination to develop an advanced safeguarding training module as well as specialist modules tailored to the internal culture of the URC.