Safeguarding Newsletter

The United Reformed Church Safeguarding

October 2026



As we move towards Autumn the safeguarding team is gearing up for the next Annual Safeguarding Return (ASR) which will be instigated in January 2027. The team has done a deep dive to decide what data is meaningful and how to better represent this in the questions. A revamp of sorts.

Leviticus 23:22 *"When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. Leave it for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the LORD your God."*

Training Update

The series of short, specialised safeguarding modules on Zoom is nearing an end for this year.



For the rest of the 2027 the short courses are as follows:

Discriminatory Abuse 4 November – 1-3pm (please note the change of date) bookable via Emma Pearce

Supporting Faith Development in Young People
10 November 7.30pm–9.00pm (a short module from the Children and Youth and Safeguarding Teams) bookable via Emma Pearce

We will circulate widely the short courses program for next year with details of how to book in the next few weeks. We anticipate moving bookings to Eventbrite so that you have greater control over the courses you wish to book.

Advanced Safeguarding Training for Retired Active Ministers

We have received a number of queries about the level of safeguarding training mandated for Retired Active Ministers. Provided that the Minister has completed Foundation, Intermediate or Combined safeguarding courses in the last 3 years they can proceed to the Advanced course. The course comprises of 4 topics and we would ask Retired Active ministers to take topics 1&2 (and not topics 3&4).

Minister and CRCW Advanced Safeguarding Zoom 24 November - bookable via the link here and if you have any queries please direct them to Carrie Solomon.

Mandatory courses - Foundation/Intermediate/Advanced safeguarding courses are organised and delivered by your Synod so please contact your Synod for further details. Foundation Training is available as an e-learning package on the URC's Learning Hub, the advantage of which is that you can take the module at a time and pace convenient to you.

If you are unable to attend either face to face or Zoom hosted training within your Synod, please speak to your Synod Safeguarding Officer who may be able to facilitate you attending a course in an alternative Synod.

URC Safeguarding Training and Compatible Providers

We recognise that church officers are busy and we appreciate all you do. To that extent we wish to minimise duplication of training wherever possible.

We kindly ask you to refer to the training matrix endorsed by General Assembly in 2025. It outlines where training undertaken in other settings (eg. with the Methodist Church or Church of England), this alters the training pathway to reduce duplication of training. Please refer to section 6 of the Training Matrix here and if you have any queries, contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer.

Where it is agreed that your ecumenical or work based training can be included as part of your URC safeguarding training, your Synod Safeguarding Officer will note this on your training record. URC Ministers and Church Related Community Workers are expected to undertake training within the URC safeguarding training framework.

Disclosure and Barring Service Update – change to definition of regulated activity in England and Wales We

Disclosure & Barring Service

We reported a change to the definition of regulated activity in the **July 2026 newsletter**

Previously, the 'supervision exemption' meant that some people working/volunteering with **children** did not need a Barred List check if they were working under supervision (e.g. a helper who was never alone with children and always worked under the guidance of the group leader).

The Crime and Policing Act 2026 removes that exemption.

The amended definition means that a worker/volunteer is engaged in Regulated Activity if:

•They are involved in teaching, training, instructing, caring for, or supervising children; or providing advice/guidance on wellbeing

• This takes place frequently, which is defined as on more than 3 days within a 30-day period or overnight

This now applies regardless of whether an individual is working under supervision or not.

Where a person volunteers in multiple settings or with different groups, each instance of teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child counts towards the ‘on more than 3 days in a 30-day period’ period condition.

Anyone engaged in Regulated Activity needs an Enhanced with Barred List DBS check.

We appreciate that this is an extra task for our churches but we ask that you review your roles in light of this change and instigate a new DBS check with Barred List where a role now falls under this category of Regulated Activity.

This indeed is a catch up task for our churches and it has been agreed by the Safeguarding Committee that as a denominations we would like this completed by the end of **February 2027**. If you need assistance please contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding Sunday



Safeguarding Sunday is 15 November with a theme of 'Love Protects'. Thirtyone:Eight, the organisation behind Safeguarding Sunday has again produced a wealth of materials to inspire and support churches in raising awareness of safeguarding within a Christian context. To access their materials please register here to access the downloadable materials.

We would love to hear of any stories of how you participated in the initiative and if you have a positive story we would love to hear about it (with photos if possible!) via Emma Pearce

The Safeguarding Newsletter – your feedback please!

We would like some feedback to improve the usefulness of the newsletter and gauge the reach to churches. Please support us by filling in this very quick form. It would be great to have your response. Thank you for your support in this.

Feedback on the Newsletter – Fill in form

Dame Esther Rantzen



Dame Esther Rantzen sadly passed away last month. We think of the legacy she has left in terms of safeguarding children.
Through her media career she was able to highlight the then unknown levels of abuse and neglect of children and launched Childline in the 1980s with an easy to remember freephone telephone number 0800 1111 operating 24 hours. Although this later transferred to the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children the phone line is still current and has helped millions of children.

It didn't end there and in later years Esther turned her attention to older communities and launched Silver Line in 2013 with the aim of helping older people suffering neglect, isolation and loneliness. Now run by Age UK there is a 24 hour freephone helpline 0800 4 70 80 90.

We thank Esther for her immeasurable contribution.