



Urban Saints' Safeguarding Policy

Name of Place of Worship / Organisation: Urban Saints

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Chief Mission Officer

CMO Contact

- **Email:** NLT@urbansaints.org

Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Safeguarding Team contact:

- **Email:** safeguarding@urbansaints.org

Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Rachel Retallick-Cheel

Designated Safeguarding Lead contact:

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Urban Saints helpline: 01582 589855

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Charity Number:

- England & Wales: 1144923
- Scotland: SCO39313

Company Number:

- England & Wales: 07771037

Regulators: Charity Commission for England & Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator

Insurance Company: Ecclesiastical Insurance

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The following is a brief description of Urban Saints and the type of work/ activities we undertake with children, young people and adults at risk:

Urban Saints is passionate about working with children and young people, helping them to realise their full God-given potential as they journey from childhood to adulthood, helping them to explore a personal faith in Christ and an effective Christian life of service. Urban Saints is a Christian organisation and seeks to carry out its mission in line with Christian principles. God's demonstration of love, justice and protection throughout the Bible are all relevant to practising the highest levels of safeguarding. We commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all associated with Urban Saints. In pursuit of this, we commit ourselves to this policy and to the development of sound procedures to ensure we implement our policy well.

Our work is primarily with children and young people i.e. those under 18 years of age. However, we do recognise that adults with care and support needs or those at risk may also be part of our work as volunteers. This policy therefore seeks to address safeguarding for both groups.

Urban Saints currently operates the following core activities:

- Weekly Groups and associated events
- Camps (weekend and week-long residential)
- Westbrook Residential Centre, Isle of Wight
- Editorial activities within Energize
- Digital Initiatives

Where an Urban Saints Group may wish to engage in activities or events outside of the core activities of Urban Saints, the Group's Main Leader/ Safeguarding Coordinator should consult with the Urban Saints Safeguarding Team (via email or helpline number), to ensure they have considered all relevant safeguarding aspects of the activity they are seeking to engage with (e.g. attending youth events/ festivals/ overseas trips with other organisations).

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect the children, young people and adults at risk who are engaged with Urban Saints.
- To provide all those engaged in providing Urban Saints' services with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding because we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults.

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This Safeguarding Policy applies to all paid staff, interns, the Board of Trustees, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Urban Saints. *This Policy should be read alongside other Urban Saints' policies and procedures, where relevant to staff and volunteers:*

- Basis of Faith
- Employment
- Equal opportunities and diversity
- Data Protection
- Harassment and Bullying
- Whistleblowing
- The Urban Saints Good Practice Guides (Groups, Camps)
- Digital Safeguarding Procedure Template
- Parental Consent Form
- Behavioural expectations / Young Person's Agreement Example

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POLICY SECTIONS

- 1) **Statement of Commitment**
- 2) **Prevention**
- 3) **Protection**
- 4) **Promoting a Safe Culture**
- 5) **Digital Considerations**

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1) STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Statement

The Leadership at Urban Saints recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

This policy and the Urban Saints practice guidelines (set out in the *Good Practice Guides*) are based on the ten safeguarding standards published by ThirtyOne:Eight.

The Urban Saints Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Make efforts to uphold requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation in an inclusive manner and as far as practicably possible.
- Support the Safeguarding Officers in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- This policy has been developed in conjunction with ThirtyOne:Eight and as such the Urban Saints Leadership agrees not to permit other organisations to copy the Policy.

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2) PREVENTION

Urban Saints understands safeguarding to be everyone's responsibility. Therefore, all Urban Saints workers, volunteers and leadership members should be equipped with appropriate knowledge and awareness on how to identify concerns effectively and ensure steps are taken to respond to it appropriately.

The [Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance of 2018](#), very clearly stipulates that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and therefore requires that anyone who works with children and young people is aware of 'the role they play, the role of other designated professionals and being aware of identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action'.

Defining abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution, or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult. See the Urban Saints *Good Practice Guides* for detailed definitions of abuse, signs, and indicators of abuse.

Safeguarding awareness and training

Urban Saints is committed to providing suitable initial and ongoing safeguarding training and development opportunities for all those working or volunteering on behalf of the organisation, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. Urban Saints will provide online and face to face training (dependent on the role being carried out) and provide annual refresher training. Urban Saints will also ensure that children and adults at risk are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have concern. This information will be displayed in suitable locations at each activity. Urban Saints partner with ThirtyOne:Eight, an independent Christian safeguarding charity, who offer an emergency safeguarding helpline service (0303 003 1111) which is available to anyone concerned about the welfare of a child, young person, or adult at risk. Their information will be available via our posters. An Information Sharing Agreement is currently in place between the two organisations which facilitates Urban Saints' Designated Safeguarding Lead receiving a copy of any advice offered to Urban Saints staff and/or volunteers by ThirtyOne:Eight.

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Safer recruitment

At Urban Saints we recognise the immense contributions that volunteers offer in the running of this movement. Our Safer Recruitment Policy therefore is a crucial layer of safeguarding not just for our children and young people but also for those we seek to recruit into positions of responsibility and trust. Safer recruitment is vital because it minimises the likelihood of those who may be vulnerable being harmed by those in positions of trust. *See our Employment/ Safer Recruitment Policy.*

Management of workers – Code of Conduct

Urban Saints is committed to supporting all workers (staff and volunteers) and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers will be issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults at risk. The principles also apply between adult leaders in any setting.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

Urban Saints' policy is that we will not allow anyone known to have harmed children, or who is on the Barred List as defined by the Disclosure and Barring Service, to help on any activity within the organisation. However, someone with a past conviction or caution may not necessarily be declined work as a volunteer within Urban Saints. When a DBS / Access NI / PVG certificate returns with a blemish, the Urban Saints' Safeguarding team will be informed who will then make contact with the ITL/Main Leader associated with the activity in question and carry out a risk assessment. After discussion with the ITL/Main Leader a decision to appoint the volunteer or not will be made,

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3) PROTECTION

Responding to concerns

As an organisation we are committed to ensuring that our response to abuse and concerns is robust, compliant and also sensitive. We discuss this in detail in the *Good Practice Guides* which offer guidance on responding to a disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of abuse, including those against trustees, staff and volunteers. The flowcharts in our *Good Practice Guides* offer a visual representation of actions to take in response to any concerns. All employees and volunteers should familiarise themselves with the recommended protocols in these sections.

Supporting those affected by abuse

Given the relational nature of our work at Urban Saints, it is recognised that children, young people and also adults may disclose experiences of recent or non-recent abuse with our volunteers and leaders, as they build trust. Whilst appropriate safeguarding protocol will be followed by the Safeguarding Team where such allegations or disclosures are made, we also recognise that receiving these disclosures is not easy and may affect different volunteers/leaders in different ways.

Therefore, we are committed to offering pastoral care and working with statutory agencies as appropriate to support all those connected with the organisation who may be affected by abuse (either recent or non-recent).

Referral to counselling services and/or health agencies (such as the emergency services or those dealing with mental health) may be considered where appropriate. Those affected by abuse through any of Urban Saints (or previously Crusaders) events, where appropriate may be offered a confidential independent Listening Service via our safeguarding consultants, ThirtyOne:Eight.

Having said this, it is also recognised that in group/camp/residential situations, the Safeguarding Team may be able to explore with the relevant leader of a child/young person, the most appropriate form of pastoral care especially after an event. This may be carried out through the local church or other agencies in the area where the child/young person/adult lives. A clear record of discussions regarding this must be made and the Safeguarding Team at Urban Saints notified appropriately. ThirtyOne:Eight may be consulted for further advice regarding this.

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4) PROMOTING A SAFE CULTURE

Practice guidelines

Urban Saints wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation. Urban Saints will provide clear guidance on appropriate conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs. These guidelines are found in the Urban Saints' *Good Practice Guides* within the section on '*Working Safely with Young people*'.

Working in partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

Our expectation is that when working in partnership with others, whether in the UK or overseas:

- This Safeguarding Policy will be the minimum standard to which all parties agree to work.
- This safeguarding expectation will be discussed with partners, and it will be set out within any joint agreement.
- Where other organisations use our premises or centres, we will seek to exercise due diligence in ascertaining that their safeguarding policy and practice guidelines meet the above standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, whether with those we wish to protect, with staff and volunteers involved in working with children and adults within the organisation, or with others with whom we work in partnership. To create a 'culture of safeguarding' which embraces the principles and practice contained within this Policy, we are committed to making training, support and information available to all our staff and volunteers. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

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5) Digital Considerations

Urban Saints recognises that interaction with young people increasingly takes place in the digital world as well as the physical one. We are passionate about meeting young people where they are at and so our commitment to creating safe spaces extends to the spaces we create online just as much as our in-person activities.

All the stipulations in the earlier sections of this policy apply to any activities undertaken in the digital realm as well including:

- The values and commitments underlined in the Safeguarding Statement to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk, ensuring their well-being. Believing in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our organisation where the value of all people is recognised and where we respond appropriately when this value is undermined.
- The prevention of harm through a robust safer recruitment process and codes of conduct; ensuring that codes of conduct are reviewed and developed to meet the additional safeguarding issues presented by digital interactions.
- The protection of children and young people in ensuring that concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately and that those affected by abuse are supported. It is important that children, young people, parents and volunteers engaging or working remotely are made aware of how to report safeguarding concerns just as easily as those attending events in person.
- The promotion of a safe culture where good working practice is promoted and partners uphold the same commitment to safeguarding. This is even more relevant to digital work; as we forge new relationships and innovate new projects we must ensure that all involved understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We recognize that digital engagement presents additional challenges and risk to the safety of children and young people. This includes:

1. Content Risks

These are risks that children or young people are exposed to as a result of material that can be accessed online during Urban Saints events. This might include exposure to content that is not appropriate for the person's age such as violence, explicit language, or imagery.

2. Contact Risks

These risks are related to other people's online behaviour both peers and people attempting to make contact with young people online. This might include:

- Bullying or trolling
- Harassment and stalking
- Grooming
- Distribution of private or sexual images
- Harvesting, tracking or sharing of personal information

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- Increased exposure to cybersecurity risks

3. Conduct Risks

These are related to a young person's own online behaviour putting them at risk. This might include:

- Sharing of personal information or location data
- Bullying, harassing or exploiting others/themselves
- Breaking confidentiality that leads to others inflicting harm on them

Urban Saints takes these issues seriously and are committed to putting measures in place to minimize risk to children and young people.

Urban Saints staff and volunteers will consider all of these risks when setting up any digital initiative (by completing a Digital Safeguarding Procedure Template) as well as adhering to the Urban Saints Safeguarding Statement and Safeguarding Policy in full.

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Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership on **18th May 2024** and will be reviewed annually.



Signed by: Matthew Judson

Position: Chair of the Board



Signed by: Mark Markiewicz

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Date: **18th May 2024**

Document Control		
Version	Release Date	Change History
1A	16/05/2021	New Release
1B	13/05/2023	Inclusion of Notice for non-core Urban Saints activities. Other minor textual edits.
1C	18/05/2024	Inclusion of Digital Considerations and other minor textual edits

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