

SAFE CHURCH POLICY (safeguarding policy)

(PREVENTIE EN INTEGRITEITSBELEID)

REDEEMER INTERNATIONAL CHURCH - The Hague, December 2023

Church Details

Redeemer International Church The Hague
St Jacobstraat 125
2512 AN Den Haag
KvK nr. 505 26065
RSIN nr: 822789322

Mission Statement

Vision - We are a church family together on Jesus' mission

We are a church that loves God and people. In everything we do, we want to be Spirit filled and Bible based. Whatever your thoughts about God and church, you're welcome! We are passionate about the good news of Jesus and bringing hope to our city.

Our key mission: We make disciples, we care for the poor and we plant Churches.

Redeemer International Church (Redeemer) recognises that its congregation and visitors include people of all ages including those considered to be vulnerable. They have much to give as well as to receive. The Church aims to provide a safe and secure environment within which everyone will be treated with respect and dignity as they are nurtured in developing the right relationship with God.

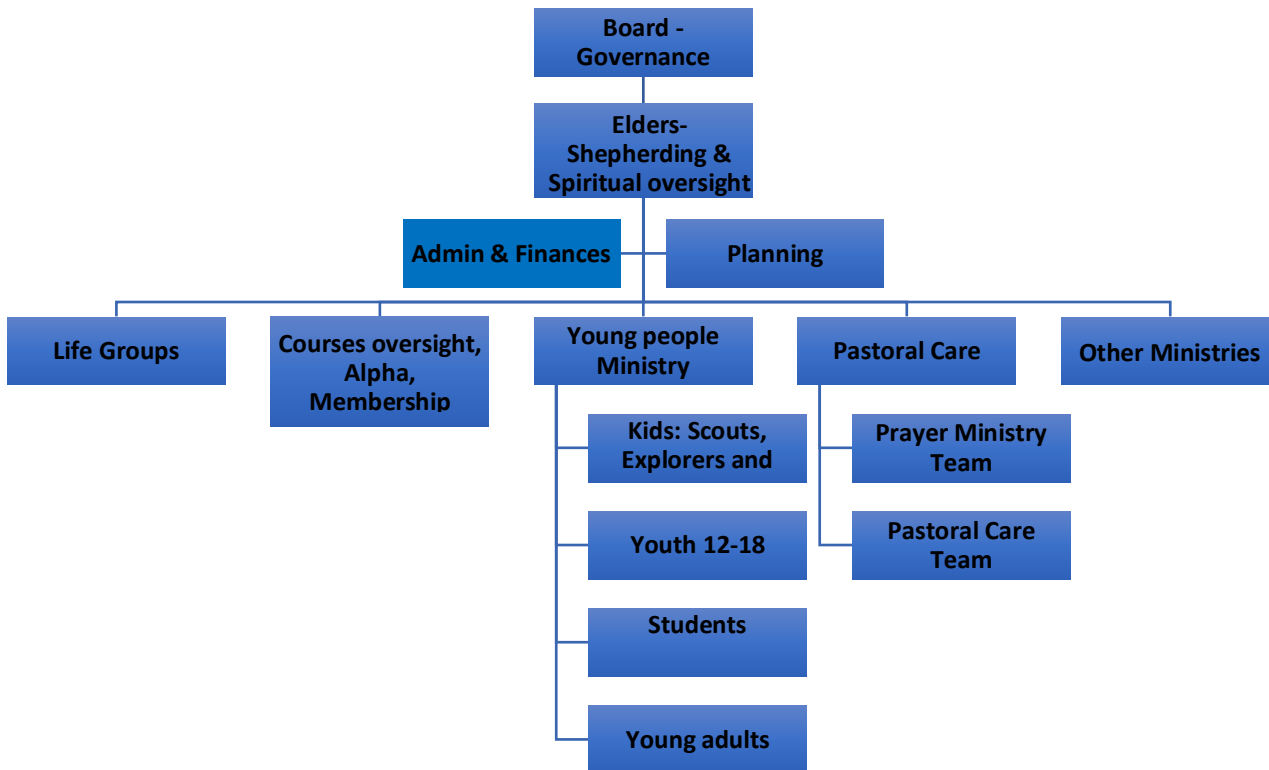
Policy Statement

The Church:

- takes seriously the responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all people entrusted in its care.
- recognises that responsibility for Vulnerable Adults, Children and Young People lies initially with parents, guardians and carers.
- is committed to encouraging and supporting carers and parents.
- considers the impact of its plans and decisions on everyone.
- ensures that workers are responsibly appointed and given support and training.
- adheres to good practice guidelines.
- has detailed guidelines and procedures relating to suspicions or allegations of abuse, and ensures that these procedures are known to and followed by all workers, including volunteers.

Safe Church Organisation: Redeemer

This gives a high-level overview of our organisation. Responsibility for Safeguarding lies with the board, key execution is done by the staff team. The IVP (Interne Vertrouwens Persoon) is named for our Church and sits within the board.



Making this policy known

At the first interview, all prospective volunteers (and employees) who will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be given access to this policy and asked to read it through carefully. It must be understood and signed before work begins (see Form below).

This policy must also be read alongside other policies in our induction process.

Lastly, the policy is published on the website of Redeemer International Church of The Hague.

Policy update and development: *Stappenplan (Planning steps for a safe Church)*

This policy will be continually updated. In setting up this policy we have looked at best practice from the website veiligekerk.nl, in particular the “stappenplan” from this organisation.

Code of Conduct and Behaviour (*Gedragscode en Omgangsregels*): All employees and volunteers

The following code is to be observed by all employees and volunteers. Although only children are mentioned here (for the sake of brevity) it applies equally to all people, whether young or old.

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect in your attitude, language, and actions.
- The person with the more senior role is always responsible for the safeguarding of the relationship and environment
- Avoid any physical contact which in any way or form could be considered sexually suggestive.
- If you have to give personal care to someone (eg. physical needs), do so in a way in which maintains their privacy while ensuring that there is no undue intimacy. If possible more than one adult should be involved or you should ensure that another adult is within earshot.
- Respect the privacy of children in a way befitting their age when they are showering, toileting etc. Where appropriate, ask the child if help is required. Children should not be accompanied to the toilet by men that are not their father.
- Never engage in intrusive touching of anyone. Any physical contact with a child, for example, should be in public, should be related to the child's needs, should be appropriate to the age of the child and should normally be initiated by the child.
- Be aware of any excessive attention-seeking behaviour from anyone, especially any behaviour which is physical or overtly sexual. When such concerns arise, immediately consult your team leader.
- It is not appropriate to engage in any sexually suggestive comments or remarks whether in gest or not. If you witness any situation like this, immediately consult your team leader.
- We uphold key principles of equality and diversity within this church and as such all characteristics are protected. Within this, zero tolerance to ridiculing, scapegoating or discriminating against persons based on their protective characteristics. Protective characteristics can be defined as age, gender and gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, religion or belief. You should at all times try to present a positive, affirming role model.
- Be aware of any potential bullying situations within a group and remember that bullying can be verbal as well as physical. We have a zero tolerance policy for bullying. You must confront any bullying and not appear to condone it by ignoring it or laughing at it. Report immediately to team leader.
- All workers and volunteers should conduct themselves professionally and with the values and ethos of the church in mind. There may be occasions where such behaviour falls short and personnel may witness a colleague behaving outside the realms of the code of conduct. On such occasions, we advise to have a conversation with the party or parties to express your concern. If such behaviour persists or is so severe that a conversation is l'll advised please immediately discuss with your team leader.

Interne Vertrouwenspersoon (IVP)

The Interne Vertrouwenspersoon (IVP) develop and generate initiatives, in consultation with the Board of Redeemer, aimed at preventing the perpetration or experience of sexual and any other form of abuse within the church. In this they take guidance from the “Stappenplan Veilig Jeugdwerk” from www.veiligekeerk.nl

The IVP is the first point of contact in the event of allegations of abuse:

- (1) by those in the church who have, or have had, an official role
- (2) and during the exercise of this role have been guilty, or are becoming guilty of such.

The IVP is also the person to report all safeguarding related incidents to. (Incidents should be reported using the incident report form and should be logged in the Safeguarding Incident log – kept by the IVP. For the form: see attachment – incident form to this policy. The form is also available at our website. The form can be used by the person affected by the incident, potentially with help of a worked – but only if the person affected agrees to that.

In accordance with best practice Redeemer has an IVP, appointed by the Board of Redeemer. Currently that person is board member Ann Twene (ann@redeemerchurch.nl)

Detailed Procedures

Supervision (adult-to-child ratio)

At any given event or Sunday meeting, we aim to have (at each minors' activity) a minimum of two adult workers (preferably both male and female) so that minors can relate to workers of the same gender. Should there be more than 10 minors present we will strive to increase the number of adult supervisors accordingly. Counselling or matters of a confidential nature should be conducted by an adult of the same gender as the minor present, with two leaders to one minor in personal meetings.

Leaders of church activities, when parents are not present, should keep a register of names and should record arrival and departure of minors.

Incidents

An incident log should be maintained for all group activities. The activity or team leader should ensure that any incident which causes concern is recorded. This recording should include details of the incident, names of those involved, action taken and any future action required. The log form needs to be handed in to the leader of the team leader and a senior member of staff. The IVP will audit these logs every 6 months.

An incident log form available from: admin@redeemerchurch.nl. It is also attached to this policy.

Important – if you have any doubts about the seriousness of the incident and questions on how to report, contact the IVP immediately.

Workers on duty should be aware of who is on duty from the Emergency Response Team (BHV) and where the First Aid Kits are. A qualified First Aider (BHV) should be available at key activities and any First Aid must be administered by that person. Minor First Aid should be given either in public or in a room with the door ajar. If First Aid requires privacy, two adults should be present. All instances of First Aid should be recorded.

Outings & Overnight trips

When minors are taken on outings, written parental consent should be obtained in advance, with contact details, medical details, doctor's phone number and medical insurance details. As far as possible, a minor should not be alone in a car with an adult. Where this is unavoidable for short journeys (e.g. the last of a group to be dropped off at home) the person should be asked to sit in the back of the car.

When groups are taken for overnight trips, care should be taken to ensure that sleeping arrangements are appropriate. All bedrooms/dormitories should be single gender and workers should not share sleeping accommodation with minors.

Discipline

All workers have the right to verbally correct and discipline the people entrusted to their care. This should be done in a loving way and upbuilding way.

Physical punishment should NEVER be used on anyone in your care. You should learn how to use positive discipline. Seek help if you have problems with discipline and control.

There may be occasions when it is necessary to restrain someone to ensure the physical safety of themselves and others. Such restraint should only be used in an emergency, should last for as short a time as possible, should use only the minimum force necessary to ensure safety and should always be immediately reported to your ministry leader. If safety permits, do not engage in restraint without another worker present. If the situation allows, ask for help from the person's parent/carer.

If someone refuses to cooperate with safety and disciplinary instructions, the worker should return them to their parents/carers. If the parent/carer is not present they should be contacted immediately.

All problems encountered with discipline need to be reported to parents/carers immediately if present in the building or afterwards (preferably by a visit) but if not by phone or letter.

All parents and carers should be informed both verbally and in writing of these procedures when someone joins an activity.

Counselling, coaching, discipleship

In principle you should never be alone with a minor or vulnerable adult in an isolated area. Coaching, prayer and discipleship should take place in a group environment.

- In a counselling situation with a child, youth or vulnerable person, where privacy and confidentiality are essential, you should make sure another adult knows the conversation is taking place as well as when and where. Another adult should be in the building, and always within sight (and the person must know this). All such counselling must be by an adult of the same gender. The parent or carer must always be notified, except in cases where they are possibly causing harm to the person concerned.
- If you are seeing someone individually off-site for any reason (befriending, discipling etc) this should be with the knowledge of the group leader and with the parent/carer's consent. Such meetings must be in public places and another adult of the same gender as the child should be present. No minor or vulnerable adult should be invited to your home alone.

Digital Communications

Before communicating digitally with minors, permission must first be sought from parents and carers. If such permission is granted, emails sent to minors must nevertheless also be copied to the parents/guardians/carers.

Communication with minors *individually*, via digital means and social media is not permitted. It is permissible for the youth leaders to have an Instagram group or something similar with the youth: this is the most transparent way of communicating. This group must contain, however, more than 1 adult worker and more than 1 youth.

Photo / Video Consent

Parents and guardians must indicate in ChurchSuite their consent (or non-consent) for photos and videos of their children to be used in Redeemer Church media. They must also respect their children's wishes when setting these consents. Use of any such media will be strictly in accordance with Redeemer's privacy and data policy.

All Childrens and Youth ministry leaders are to strictly observe these consent settings. First-time and occasional visitors are not expected to create and complete ChurchSuite accounts: until they have done so, no photos or videos of their children may be taken.

Safeguarding Incident Reporting Procedure (*Meldprotocol*)

The reporting of incidents happens in three stages: recognition of the incident/issue, responding to it, and recording of information. Below is specific to child abuse, but much of this can apply to anyone/any situation.

Recognising Abuse

Definition of child abuse

Abuse is categorised into four categories and is defined as:

- Physical abuse: the child is hit, kicked, pinched, burnt etc.
- Psychological abuse (emotional): the child is rejected, terrorized, incited to behave in a strange or anti-social manner: extreme demands are placed on a person. The child may be psychologically neglected, isolated, ignored.
- Sexual abuse: the child is forced to endure sexual actions and/or to carry out sexual actions.
- Physical neglect: care (medical/physical) and/or safety is withheld from the child, or they do not get sufficient food or clothing.

Signs of abuse

The following signs may indicate abuse but they should not be taken in isolation. Do not jump to conclusions. There could be other explanations.

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Any signs of self-harm. These might include cutting, substance abuse etc
- Injuries on parts of the body which are not normally exposed to falls, rough play etc
- Significant bruising over a period of time that the child is reluctant about or tries to cover up
- Illnesses or injuries which have not received appropriate medical treatment
- Inappropriate clothing and/or poor health and hygiene
- Eating disorders or significant weight loss
- Changes in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging
- Unusual depression or aggression
- Sudden instances of running away, stealing or lying
- Frozen watchfulness or flinching
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning abuse against them

It is important to record things as one off observations may be nothing but over time a pattern may emerge that needs dealing with. At the same time, there is such a thing (in the case of children) as bad parenting and this is not necessarily abusive.

Responding to abuse

If abuse is suspected, disclosed or discovered:

Do NOT Delay

Do NOT Start To Investigate

Do NOT Contact Alleged Abusers

Do NOT Discuss With Friends

1. How to REACT to someone who wants to talk about abuse

If a child tells you about abuse they have suffered they have chosen you because they trust you and think you will know what to do to help. It is important that you react in a way which will be helpful and supportive to the child. It is not easy to give precise guidance but the following may be of help and should be followed wherever possible. Please also notify a team or ministry leader that you will be meeting with the child and make sure he/she is aware of when and where the conversation is taking place and is in the building should you need support.

DO NOT - agree to keep the information secret

DO NOT - say or suggest that you are shocked

DO NOT - say or suggest that you don't believe the child

DO NOT - make false promises

DO - explain to the child at the outset that you may have to tell someone else if you think it is necessary

DO - remain calm and supportive

DO - show acceptance of what the child says

DO - reassure the child that they were right to tell you

DO - tell the child what you are going to do next

Immediately after the person has spoken to you, you should write down exactly what you have been told by the person. Use the person's words as much as possible. Do not add anything - even your own opinions or feelings or what you think might have happened. Date and sign these notes and keep them in a safe place (see 'Recording of Information' below).

If the person does not want you to record the incident for whatever reasons, you should make the Safeguarding incident report from available to them and ask them to submit to the IVP themselves.

2. Inform an IVP immediately.

The best person to inform is the IVP, Ann Twene (ann@redeemerchurch.nl). They will know best how to respond further. If this is what you choose to do, record it in the incident log and leave it with them: your

responsibility ends there, do not involve yourself further. If, for whatever reason, you are unable to inform an IVP then do the following:

3. If IVP unavailable - there are 2 scenarios:

Broadly speaking, there are three potential scenarios of concern, each needing a separate response:

1. Allegations of domestic violence, incest, abuse within a family

If domestic violence, incest or other abuse within a family (i.e., not on church premises or during church events) is suspected, or if there is anything that gives serious concern about someone's welfare in a family situation, contact Veilig Thuis ('Safe at Home'):

Veilig Thuis Haaglanden

Westeinde 128

2512 HE Den Haag

Telefoon: 070-3469717. Is er direct gevaar? Bel dan met 112

info@veiligthuis Haaglanden.nl

It is possible to ask for advice from Veilig Thuis without having to name the person or the parents. If required, Veilig Thuis can record the details under the name of the person asking for the advice. If the church later on requires further advice about the same person, the details can thereby be retrieved without having to give the name of the person. If the church does eventually decide to report the matter officially then earlier recorded information will be available. Once a report is officially made to Veilig Thuis the responsibility for initiating help lies with Veilig Thuis. This is help for the family by agreement and may be through Veilig Thuis or other agencies.

If the matter is so serious that you think it is unsafe for the person to return home, you should inform your team leader, and if at all possible while the person is still with you. Remember, that you have the right, as a member of the public, to contact Veilig Thuis or the police if you have serious concerns over the welfare and safety of a person. You can (anonymously) report a person's situation or ask for advice. In either situation you can choose whether or not to reveal the name of the person and his or her family.

2. Allegations of abuse (i.e., punishable offences (*strafbare feiten*))

If the information disclosed concerns abuse, inform: your team leader, one of the elders, and the Police. In an emergency situation when you are unable to reach an appropriate person in the church you may have to take the step of informing the Police alone. If you believe the alleged abuse to be **acute or life-threatening** you should report it directly to the Raad voor de Kinderbescherming (Council for the protection of persons) or to the jeugd en zedenpolitie (Youth and Vice police) within 24 hours.

3. Allegations of inappropriate behaviour by leaders (meaning people in a leadership position of any sort).

If the allegation concerns a leader (person or youth worker, life group leader or even a deacon or elder) and their relationship with an adult in the congregation, do not contact another leader, but rather contact the one of the other Board members that are not elders - again, only in case the IVP is not available.

Contact details of Board members that are not elders:

Chairperson of the board: Tjitze Weststrate tjitze@redeemerchurch.nl

Secretary of the board: Erin Jegels. erin@redeemerchurch.nl

After you have informed the appropriate person, you no longer have direct responsibility for dealing with the situation. The Social Services and/or police may want to interview you in the course of an investigation.

It can be distressing to hear of abuse for perhaps the first time and you may need support and reassurance yourself. The Elders will ensure that this support is offered. You should not share your information with anyone else. Confidentiality should be respected for the sake of the person and the family.

Your care and prayers will be invaluable to the person and the family in what may well prove to be a difficult and disruptive time for everyone. The church leaders will be responsible for any other issues of pastoral care, which arise from an abuse situation.

Recording of information

Every team leader must keep, under the **strictest** security, an incident log. Anything causing concern during an event in their team activity (including injuries and first aid) must be recorded. These logs will also be made available to any lawful civil authority entitled to view them in the proper course of their investigation.

The incident log form is attached to this policy and available from admin@redeemerchurch.nl.

Specifically for injuries and first aid – there is a specific form available as well from admin@redeemerchurch.nl. This is also attached to this policy.

Safe Church Policy Agreement: Staff and Volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

1. I understand the nature of the work I am to do with: *(name of group.....)*
2. I understand that I will be directly accountable to:

Name of team leader/coordinator: (.....)
and that he/she will be responsible for directing me and supporting me in my work.

3. I have read and understand the Church's Safe Church Policy. I understand that it is my duty to contribute to the protection of everyone with whom I come into contact. I declare that I have never engaged in any form of child abuse including child pornography. I don't feel sexually attracted to children. I undertake to take the appropriate action if abuse is suspected, discovered or disclosed.

4. I understand that this document will be continually updated, and I commit to always comply wholeheartedly with it. I commit to periodically undertake training as offered or recommended by the church.

Signature.....Date.....Place.....

If you are under 18 years old at the time of volunteering, your parent/guardian needs to go through this document with you, make sure you understand it, and countersign it here:

Father/mother/guardian [delete as appropriate]

Name:

Signature.....Date.....Place.....

TEAM LEADER/COORDINATOR:

Name.....

.....

Signature.....

.....

Date.....

.....

Place.....

.....

Redeemer Incident Report Form - Safeguarding

The following information should be completed by the affected person, and only if agreed to, with help from a worker. This should be done each time an issue is seen in relation to the Safeguarding policy. If the incident is witnessed by a worker – he/she should report to team leader. The team leader should keep a log of incidents and report the log to his/her team leader and a senior member of staff.

Please fill in the questions below as completely as possible.

Location the incident occurred: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Date of Incident: xx/xx/xxxx

Person(s) Involved in Incident:

Others Observing Incident:

Give a brief description of the incident/accident (including who did what to whom):

Was the incident reported to:

- The IVP – Ann Twene. Yes/NO
- Other leaders: _____
- Police

Please indicate the condition of the affected person in the incident:

Please ensure that you:

Mail the completed form to Ann Twene, our IVP.

Signature: _____

Please print name: _____

Phone #: _____

Redeemer Incident LOG - Safeguarding

The following information should be completed by the team leader in case of safeguarding related issues.

Please fill in the questions below as completely as possible.

Location the incident occurred: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Date of Incident: xx/xx/xxxx

Person(s) Involved in Incident:

Others Observing Incident:

Give a brief description of the incident/accident (including who did what to whom):

Was the incident reported to:

- The IVP – Ann Twene. Yes/NO
- Other leaders: _____
- Police

By whom was the incident reported: _____

Please indicate the condition of the affected person in the incident:

Please indicate what actions have been taken and what further actions need to be taken.

Please ensure that you report this log form to your team leader and to a senior member of staff.

Signature: _____

Please print name: _____

Phone #: _____

Redeemer Kids Ministry Injury Form in case of accident/incident.

The following information must be completed each time an individual is injured or is involved in an incident of concern. Catherine Nieuwveld (Ministry leader) must be informed of all the details of the said incident.

Please fill in the questions below as completely as possible.

Location the incident occurred: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Date of

Incident: / /

Person(s) Involved in Incident:

Others Observing Incident:

Give a brief description of the incident/accident (including who did what to whom):

Was it necessary to administer first aid? Yes No

Please explain the type of care that was given:

Was the incident reported to:

- Senior Leadership
- Police

Please indicate the condition of the affected person in the incident:

Please ensure that you:

1. Notify Catherine Nieuwveld of the above incident;
2. Please put the completed form in a sealed envelope and give it to Catherine Nieuwveld or Ann Twene.
3. Follow up if necessary.

Signature: _____

Please print name: _____

Phone #: _____