

# Model Safeguarding Policies

## Statement of safeguarding principles

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of humans in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

### Principles

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with<sup>1</sup> the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an child, young person or adult may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our Church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Or membership of (PVG scheme Scotland).

# A model church policy

## Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for ..... Methodist Church

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on .....

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

..... Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

..... Methodist Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether by disabilities or by reduction in capacities or by their situation. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

..... Methodist Church fully agrees with the statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space 2007*:

*As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.*

..... Methodist Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical,

emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse or neglect, abuse using social media or human trafficking (slavery). It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The ..... Methodist Church commits itself to:

- **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.
- Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
- The **PROVISION** of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.
- **AFFIRM** and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and also acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

..... Methodist Church

## Church Council

It is the responsibility of each Church Council to appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. It is not appropriate for the minister to fill any gap, because of the potential conflict of roles. The role will usually be undertaken on a voluntary basis although expenses should be met.

appoints ..... (name)  
as church Safeguarding Officer (Adults)

and ..... (name)  
as church Safeguarding Officer (Children) and supports him/her/them in his/her/their role, which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with circuit and district safeguarding officers
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers
- v) ensure proper records are kept of all incidents/concerns according to Methodist policy and practice (see *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church* - Updated Jan 2015)
- vi) ensure that all safeguarding training which is required is undertaken by those in post and appropriate records kept and made available
- vii) attend training and meetings organised to support the role
- viii) oversee safeguarding throughout the whole life of the church (eg lettings, groups, property etc)
- ix) report to the Church Council annually
- x) ensure the church completes a yearly audit/monitoring on safeguarding confirming that policies are in place for the church and all groups and lettings in the church and that these have been annually reviewed
- xi) ensure the church completes a risk assessment on each area of activity in the church; that this is stored and reviewed at least annually, and that it is readily available on request
- xii) ensure that the church recruits safely for all posts
- xiii) ensure that the church has a safeguarding noticeboard with a copy of the current, signed safeguarding policy, contact numbers for local and national helplines and other suitable information.

## **1. Purpose**

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church* (2018).

## **2. Good practice**

We believe that good practice means:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- The church premises will be assessed by the church safeguarding officer with the property steward and/or their representatives at least annually for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Church Council in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The Church Council will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
- Any church-organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate. An agreed record to be kept in the church file for each driver/car.
- Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Church Council will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

These things are to safeguard those working with children, young people and those adults who may be vulnerable.

## **3. Appointment and training of workers**

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure and following safer recruitment procedures of the Methodist Church. Each worker will have an identified supervisor who will meet at regular intervals with the worker. A record of these meetings will be agreed and signed and the record kept. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first 6 months (agreed by Methodist Conference in 2011 -*Creating Safer Space Report*) of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (eg food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc).

**4. Pastoral visitors**

In terms of safeguarding, pastoral visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

**5. Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults**

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems will be produced and given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This leaflet will be reviewed annually. Church Councils may produce their own material or use appropriate connexional leaflets (eg the *Quick Reference Guide* or *Code of Safer Working Practice*).

**6. Ecumenical events**

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council.

**7. Events with church groups off the premises**

Adequate staffing, a risk assessment and notification of the event to be given to the church safeguarding officer PRIOR to the agreement for any event or off site activity. Notification of the event will be given to the church council secretary.

..... (name).

If the activity is unusual or considered to be high risk the church safeguarding officer will contact the circuit safeguarding officer in order that it can be ratified or any queries raised.

## 8. Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement ([www.t MCP.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use](http://www.t MCP.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use)) will be given a copy of the church safeguarding policy and the appropriate leaflet<sup>2</sup>. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings. All lettings will be notified to the church safeguarding officer who will keep the records and take advice as appropriate from both the District Safeguarding Officer and Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

## 9. Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisation. However, if the complaint is of a safeguarding nature, relating to possible abuse of children or vulnerable adults, then it is very important that your DSO is consulted as statutory services may need to be informed. A complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the Church Council and who is currently ..... (*name*). If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to ..... (*name*) who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is regarding this person or a member of their family it will be referred to the minister.

If the complaint relates to the minister it will be referred to the superintendent minister. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of the Methodist Church which will involve initially speaking with the local complaints officer, who is ..... (*name*) who is the superintendent minister.

## 10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review is:

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<sup>2</sup> Such as the code of safer working practice leaflet in the appendices of the [Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church](#) or the quick reference guide <https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/pe750-sg-16/safeguarding> .

**11. Key concepts and definitions**

- 11.1. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- 11.2. Vulnerable Adults: Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- 11.3. Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- 11.4. Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- 11.5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated .....

Signed ..... Chair of Church Council

## A model circuit policy

### **Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for ..... Circuit**

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on ..... / ..... / .....

It will be reviewed on ..... / ..... / .....

#### **1. The Policy**

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of humans in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

The ..... Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

The ..... Circuit recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether by disabilities or by reduction in capacities or by their situation. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people. This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe, supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

The ..... Circuit fully agrees with the statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space 2007*:

*As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.*

The ..... Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse or neglect, abuse using social media or human trafficking (slavery). It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its

responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The ..... Circuit commits itself to:

- **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the Church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust. It commits itself to providing informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.
- Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
- The **PROVISION** of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.
- **AFFIRMS** and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of us all for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

## 2. Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2018)*.

The full implementation of these policies should achieve the following:

- Church (and all associated activities) is a safer place for everyone
- Communities we serve have confidence that children and vulnerable adults are as safe as possible and that their wellbeing is enhanced in the life of the church.
- People in the church are alert to unsafe practices and are able to challenge them.
- Office holders are safely recruited, trained for their roles and are accountable for their activities.
- People who have experienced abuse are accepted, empowered and supported in maintaining control over their lives and making informed choices without coercion.
- People who abuse are held accountable to the law and their risk is managed while they are supported and challenged to address their motivations and behaviour.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1. Circuit Meeting**

It is the responsibility of each Circuit Meeting to appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. It is not appropriate for any minister to fill any gap, because of the potential conflict of roles. The role will usually be undertaken on a voluntary basis although expenses should be met.

The .....Circuit

appoints.....(name)

as Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Adults) and

.....(name)

as Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Children), and supports him/her/them in their role.

#### **3.2. Superintendent Minister**

- 3.2.1. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
- 3.2.2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
- 3.2.3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
- 3.2.4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for staff of the circuit and for members of the local churches in the circuit.
- 3.2.5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a circuit safeguarding officer/s and that the details of each person are passed to the district office.
- 3.2.6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
- 3.2.7. Support the circuit safeguarding officer (Adults) and the circuit safeguarding officer (Children) in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

#### **3.3. Circuit stewards**

Ensure agreed procedures are in place for circuit and ecumenical events that involve children or vulnerable adults.

### **3.4. Circuit safeguarding officer (CSO)**

- 3.4.1. Support and advise the circuit superintendent and the circuit stewards in fulfilling their roles.
- 3.4.2. Make sure the safety and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults within the circuit is maintained.
- 3.4.3. Be the point of reference for individual Church Safeguarding Officers throughout the circuit to guide and advise them upon Methodist Church safeguarding policy requirements.
- 3.4.4. Liaise with the district safeguarding group(s).
- 3.4.5. Keep themselves informed of safeguarding issues.
- 3.4.6. With the support of the superintendent, make sure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.
- 3.4.7. Know how to respond to any concerns raised if somebody believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have suffered, may be suffering or is at risk of harm. They should take the concerns seriously and always, without delay, make an immediate referral to a statutory agency. In all cases, the District Safeguarding Officer should be informed.
- 3.4.8. Make sure a record of all safeguarding issues is kept and report (in conjunction with the superintendent and relevant minister) any concerns to the district safeguarding officer within 24 hours on the referral form (please see the *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church - 2015*).
- 3.4.9. Act on behalf of and consultant to the Superintendent with regard to reports required by the district or Connexion
- 3.4.10. Make sure that safeguarding is placed on the Circuit Meeting agenda as a 'standing' item and present a report to each meeting about safeguarding events (noting the need for relevant confidentiality regarding specific cases).
- 3.4.11. Receive risk assessments, policy and training schedules from churches across the circuit and report on these to the circuit meeting annually.
- 3.4.12. Attend the circuit staff meeting as necessary to discuss concerns brought to their attention.
- 3.4.13. Liaise with the individual church safeguarding officers to make sure that they are being compliant with connexional policy, procedures and guidance.
- 3.4.14. Work with the superintendent minister, ministers and the district safeguarding officer regarding safeguarding concerns.
- 3.4.15. Agree with the superintendent minister about how and where records are stored and who should have access.
- 3.4.16. Meet with the church safeguarding officers at least annually.
- 3.4.17. Attend applicable training as necessary.
- 3.4.18. Attend district safeguarding events.

- 3.4.19. Be a member of and actively participate in district safeguarding liaison meetings as called by the District Safeguarding Officer
- 3.4.20. Work with local ecumenical partners and their safeguarding representatives.
- 3.4.21. Review the circuit safeguarding policy at least annually and send an updated copy to the district safeguarding officer.
- 3.4.22. Advise churches where necessary on their policies.
- 3.4.23. Request and review copies of the safeguarding policy for each church in the circuit each year after any amendments by the churches.
- 3.4.24. Keep up to date with current policies and practice in statutory services and within the church.
- 3.4.25. Organise and contribute to safeguarding training for all those working in voluntary and paid roles within the circuit.
- 3.4.26. Maintain a record of all people within the circuit who have received Foundation Module training, Foundation Module Refresher training together with dates of attendance
- 3.4.27. Make sure that all persons receive appropriate training when working with children and vulnerable adults, hold an office of responsibility, or are in other applicable roles as defined in the Methodist Church policy.
- 3.4.28. Oversee timely delivery of appropriate training, in liaison with the Church Safeguarding Officers and accredited Circuit Trainers
- 3.4.29. Make sure that all circuit churches adopt a safer recruitment policy when appointing staff, or volunteers
- 3.4.30. Act as DBS verifier on behalf of the circuit.
- 3.4.31. Keep a detailed record of names of those at circuit level who have DBS checks.
- 3.4.32. Remind Church Safeguarding Officers about the need to apply or reapply for checks in accordance with the Methodist Church policy (for updates, the period is currently every five years).
- 3.4.33. Be prepared to assist in forming a small group to make provision for people who may pose a risk to others, participating in Safeguarding Agreements and ensuring periodic reviews of them.
- 3.4.34. Keep a directory of useful names and contact details.
- 3.4.35. Ensure supervisory oversight from the superintendent minister or nominated substitute, with signed and agreed records of meetings.

#### **4. Procedures for circuit events involving children, young people or vulnerable adults**

It is essential that circuit events that involve children or vulnerable adults do not slip through the net because they are not owned by one church. Circuit events to be notified to the District Safeguarding Officer prior to these being agreed to ensure that all permissions, risk assessments and good practice

guidelines are in place.

#### **4.1. Responsibility for those planning and leading the event**

All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of the procedure.

The event should have been planned effectively and attention given to the following issues:

- 4.1.1. Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises
- 4.1.2. The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, including safeguarding and first aid personnel (particular health or ability needs should be taken into account)
- 4.1.3. Numbers of children, young people or vulnerable adults involved
- 4.1.4. Transportation following good practice guidelines.

This information is to be sent to the District Safeguarding Officer for approval PRIOR to the event being agreed.

#### **5. Key concepts and definitions**

- 5.1. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- 5.2. Vulnerable adults: Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- 5.3. Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- 5.4. Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- 5.5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community or in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers, by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated .....

Signed ..... Chair of Circuit Meeting

## A model district policy

### Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for

#### ..... Methodist District

Methodist District is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and firmly believes that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable is paramount.

The ..... Methodist District fully agrees with the Connexional Team statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space 2007*: As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

The ..... Methodist District recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

The ..... Methodist District recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse or neglect, abuse using social media or human trafficking (slavery). It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The ..... Methodist District commits itself to:

- **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the Church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.
- Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in circuits and churches.
- The **PROVISION** of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable. It affirms the role of the district safeguarding group.

## 1. Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2018)*.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

### 2.1. District Chair

The District Chair attends the district safeguarding group and should:

- 2.1.1. Manage and support the work of the district safeguarding officer.
- 2.1.2. Through the district safeguarding officer, ensure that superintendent ministers are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and enable skills training opportunities to be made available.
- 2.1.3. Use the expertise and advice of the district safeguarding officer, district safeguarding group and, as appropriate, Connexional Team personnel.
- 2.1.4. Through the district safeguarding officer, ensure that all circuits and churches create and implement their own policies.
- 2.1.5. Support the district safeguarding officer and the district safeguarding group in their work by ensuring an independent chair is appointed and that the group are capable of taking forward reports of incidents and allegations promptly and in accordance with good practice.
- 2.1.6. Ensure that, where there are district meetings and events, the district policy is implemented.

- 2.1.7. Ensure each superintendent completes an audit/monitoring form after the first Circuit Meeting of each connexional year confirming that policies are in place in each circuit and church and that these have been annually reviewed. Each superintendent shall send a copy of their circuit's policy to the district safeguarding officer for scrutiny by the district safeguarding group. The monitoring of this will be a subject of the district safeguarding group's report to the District Council.

## **2.2. Independent Chair of the district safeguarding group**

As part of the implementation of the recommendations from the President's Inquiry (Safeguarding) 2011, the Methodist Conference affirmed in 2012 that every district must have a group to focus on safeguarding work with children and vulnerable adults and should have an independent Chair, as set out in the Safeguarding Framework (2010), who:

- 2.2.1. should be strongly committed to supporting the district safeguarding officer
- 2.2.2. should be well-respected
- 2.2.3. should be able robustly to challenge the district where necessary
- 2.2.4. should not be the district safeguarding officer, the District Chair, or a close relative of those fulfilling those roles.

## **2.3. District safeguarding group**

The district safeguarding group will promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults across the district. This responsibility includes ensuring that:

- 2.3.1. The group is independently chaired; its business managed in an effective manner and it has a representative membership of ordained and lay people across the district, including people with experience and/or professional background in safeguarding.
- 2.3.2. The group provides support and guidance to the district safeguarding officer, including confidential advice and discussion on complex cases.
- 2.3.3. Any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred on as necessary with the support of the District Chair (NB the responsibility lies with the Chair or the relevant person in pastoral charge).
- 2.3.4. A response is provided to requests for help, advice, information and training.
- 2.3.5. Programmes of awareness, training and good practice are initiated.
- 2.3.6. Publicity is given to its contact numbers.
- 2.3.7. District and connexional policies are effectively implemented.
- 2.3.8. The Chair, superintendents and District Council are updated on any changes to safeguarding

policy, practice and guidance.

- 2.3.9. Two meetings are organised annually to provide support and information on safeguarding issues to superintendents, circuit and church safeguarding officers.
- 2.3.10. A report is delivered to the first District Council meeting of each connexional year by a member of the district safeguarding group, which will include a note on the monitoring of district events.
- 2.3.11. Collaborative work is undertaken with other relevant groups (eg connexional, regional and ecumenical partners and professional colleagues) on safeguarding issues.

## **2.4. District safeguarding officer**

The district safeguarding officer has a key role within the Methodist District and is required to:

- 2.4.1. oversee church, circuit and district compliance with the Methodist Church's safeguarding procedures
- 2.4.2. be contacted by churches about all safeguarding issues, be fully involved and oversee all situations of concern including the establishment and review of all safeguarding contracts
- 2.4.3. liaise regularly with designated officers of the local authority and the police as necessary
- 2.4.4. undertake safeguarding risk assessments for the Connexional Safeguarding Advisory Panel
- 2.4.5. take a lead on working with individual cases in the district, including representing the Church in meetings with external organisations
- 2.4.6. have a clear understanding of the issues facing faith communities as they seek to make their places of worship a safe place for children and vulnerable adults
- 2.4.7. be committed to personal continuing development and to the provision of safeguarding training opportunities within the district.

## **3. Key concepts and definitions**

- 3.1. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- 3.2. Vulnerable adults: Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- 3.3. Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- 3.4. Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.

3.5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult, or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated .....

Signed ..... District Chair

Date for review .....