Connexional Model Safeguarding Policy for churches & Nottingham and Derby District Safeguarding Good Practice Guidance September 2024

Briefing note: Putting the policy into action

Every church will:

- Appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer (who is not the minister). This may be a shared role with another church where necessary.
- Ensure all office holders and users of the building have access to a copy of the policy (including online/electronic access).
- Promote and publicise this policy.
- display copies of the Connexional Safeguarding posters available here Safeguarding posters
- display local contacts for police, social care etc
- Communicate the Church's safeguarding message as reflected in the Connexional Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance.
- Assess how well the policy is being implemented.
- Undertake an annual review of the policy and report to the Circuit Safeguarding Officer.
- Refer all safeguarding concerns promptly to the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) on 07434 284633 or districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk

For further or more detailed information please check the **Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance** for the Methodist Church which can be found at:
Connexional Safeguarding Policy July 2023

Updates & Changes to the policy and guidance	
Changes in wording sections highlighted	In green
Hyperlinks checked and shortened	
Updates based on Connexional policy July 2023	
Connexional model policy for local churches replaces previous policy	
New: Visiting Adults at home added	

MODEL CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Statement of Safeguarding Principles
It is the Methodist Church's intention to value every human being as part of God's creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all.
Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift, which is offered to all people.

Principles
Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:
•**promote** the welfare of children, young people and adults
•work to **prevent** abuse from occurring
•seek to **protect** and respond well to those that have been abused.

We are committed to:
•the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
•safeguarding and protecting all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
•establishing 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 checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

- respond without delay to every safeguarding concern, which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, working in partnership with the police and social services in any investigation.

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

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

- support risk assessment of those who present a safeguarding risk within a church environment. We will ensure appropriate pastoral care is offered and measures are taken to address identified risks including referral to statutory agencies, suspension and the use of safeguarding contracts.

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

Model Church Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Wellspring Church Wirksworth (LEP).

Purpose

The purpose of the church safeguarding policy is to check that procedures are in place and provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities of those trusted with promoting the church as a safe space for all its users.

This policy was agreed at a Trustees' Meeting held on **12 November 2025**

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.

Wellspring Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of vulnerable individuals at risk are paramount

Wellspring Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether as a result of disabilities or 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 our wish 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 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.

Wellspring Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children, young people 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, child sexual exploitation 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 promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

Wellspring Church commits itself to:

1.**RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed or may suffer harm, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

2.**IMPLEMENT** the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

3. **PROVIDE** support, advice and training for lay and ordained people to ensure that people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

4. **AFFIRM** and give thanks for those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and also acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding children, young people *and* vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

Trustees

Legal responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Church Trustees. The safeguarding officer should be a member of the Trustees' Meeting or have the right to attend at least annually to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy. Where an individual covers the role in more than one location, they must be able to cover the activities identified in the relevant role outline and be facilitated to attend meetings to report on safeguarding in each location. (*It is not appropriate for the minister in pastoral charge to hold the Church Safeguarding Officer role because of the potential conflict with their own responsibilities).*

Wellspring Church appoints Church Safeguarding Officer:

SUSAN WATTS

and supports them in their role, which is to:

• provide support and advice to the minister and the Trustees in fulfilling their safeguarding roles

• ensure that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is always available in the church, along with names of current safeguarding officers, national helplines and other suitable information. This must be renewed annually.

• record all safeguarding issues that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist safeguarding policy and share with the District Safeguarding Officer

• promote appropriate routes for reporting of concerns, including reporting to the District Safeguarding Officer

• identify and inform those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance and work with the Circuit Safeguarding Officer to arrange training

• attend training and meetings relating to the role

•work in partnership with others including Trustees and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. This may include gaining written confirmation that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy and are using an appropriate policy of their own.

•check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Trustees' meetings and report to the Trustees' Meeting at least annually.

•inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures.

•advise the Circuit Safeguarding Officer of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.

(NB: Churches may choose to appoint separate safeguarding officers for adults and children- if so, both should be named here and roles clearly defined)

a) Good practice

We believe that good practice means:

i)All people are treated with respect and dignity.

ii)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 record will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.

iii)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, young people and vulnerable adults and a written risk assessment report will be given annually to the Trustees. This will include fire safety procedures. The Trustees will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.

iv)Any church-organised transport of children, young people or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure that the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort (where required) are appropriate. A record should be kept in the church file for each driver/car.

v)Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. Approval will be obtained from the event leader/minister. A written record of the assessment will be retained securely.

vi)Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Trustees 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.

b) Appointment and training of workers in the church
Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory criminal record check and following the 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 safeguarding training, within the first 6 months of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (such as food hygiene, first aid and lifting and handling).

c) Pastoral visitors
Pastoral visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of safeguarding training upon appointment. If they are undertaking tasks for which a criminal record check would be required, this will be undertaken prior to appointment.

d) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults
A leaflet outlining good practice and systems will be given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This leaflet should be reviewed annually.

e) Ecumenical events
Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of the Trustees.

f) Events with church groups off the premises
Adequate staffing, a risk assessment and notification of the event will 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 Secretary to the Trustees: Alison Proctor
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.

g) Other groups on church premises
Where the building is hired for outside use, the Church Safeguarding Officer should be informed. On behalf of the Trustees this may include gaining written confirmation that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy and are using an appropriate policy of their own.

h) Complaints procedure
There is a formal complaints procedure within the Methodist Church, which allows concerns to be raised about actions or behaviour by a member or officer of the Church. In addition, employed staff will be subject to relevant contractual procedures. All complaints will be responded to with care, diligence and impartiality.
A complaint should be addressed to the Superintendent Minister, the Revd. Ann Andreson at revannanderson@gmail.com
If a complaint is made to another person, it should be referred to the Superintendent. Meetings will be arranged with the person making the complaint and, usually, the person against whom the complaint has been made, in an attempt to resolve it. If the complaint is against the superintendent, it should be sent to the District Chair, the Revd. Andy Fyall at andy.fyall@methodist-nd.org.uk
Safeguarding officers must be informed of any complaint or issue relating to the potential abuse of children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable. They will support prompt action to respond to the circumstances of any safeguarding concern, whether or not any party involved wishes to make a formal complaint through the Methodist Church.
Review
This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees. Next review date: November 2026

i)Definition of Key Terms

i)A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

ii)Vulnerable adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, owing to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.

iii)Safeguarding: protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

iv)Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity, which is undertaken to protect children, young people and/or adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.

v)Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, a community or an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child, young person 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.

vi)Worker: anyone working with children or vulnerable adults in the name of Wellspring Church whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Signed ..... Chair of Trustees' Meeting

Dated .....

Nottingham and Derby District Safeguarding Good Practice Guidance

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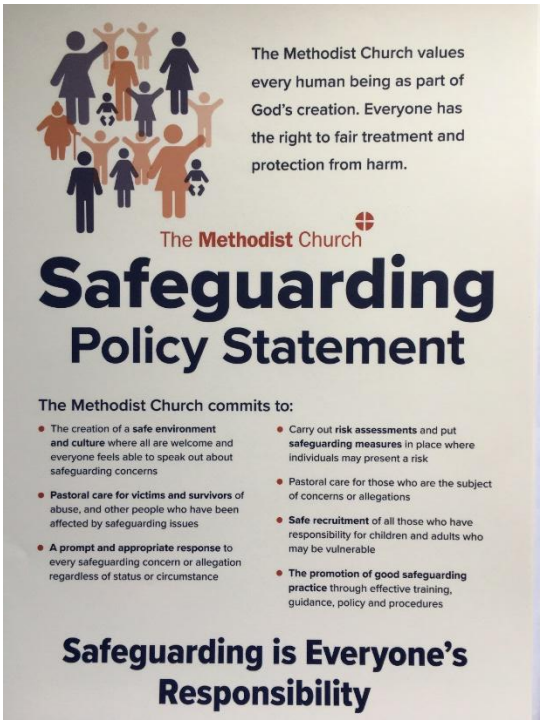

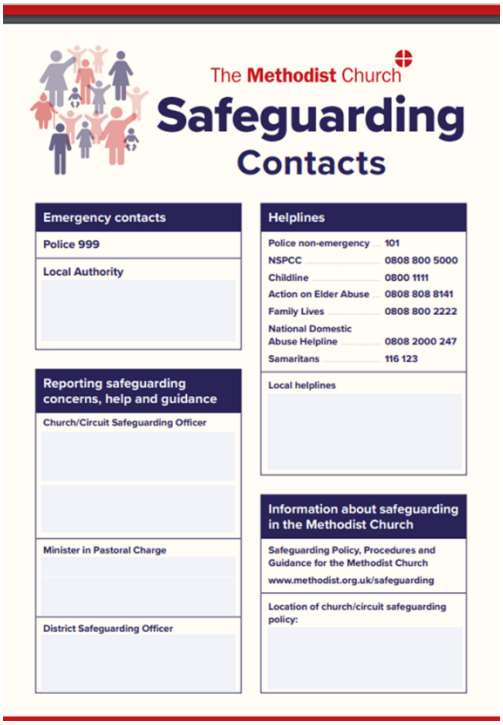

This poster contains your policy statement.
This poster MUST be displayed in every Methodist Church.
Copies available to download here

Safeguarding posters

The District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) can be contacted at
districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk
Tel 07434 284633.

3 Responding well to safeguarding concerns

If we think a person has been harmed, may have been harmed or might be harmed by another person we will

- ring the emergency services is someone is at risk of immediate significant harm
- speak to the DSO on mobile number 07434 284633
- create a written record on the safeguarding concern form available from here (You do not need to speak with your minister or church or circuit safeguarding officer first. You will discuss with the DSO who else will be informed.)
- Report to the police, children's services or adult social care before notifying the DSO, if we think it is appropriate.

Abuse may be disclosed to us, or we may see something happen. We may also be concerned that someone is not following safer working practices. All these are safeguarding concerns which we will report.

We recognise if someone discloses abuse or suspects abuse, we cannot ignore it or do nothing with the information. We will:

- respond warmly to the person and listen well to what we are being told;
- Record what was said after the disclosure and sign and date it;
- Refer the concern to the DSO, as soon as possible and within 24 hours (and the statutory agencies if necessary);
- discuss the concern and receive advice without identifying the victim if the concern is about an adult victim of abuse and they have not consented to the sharing of information. On rare occasions and to prevent significant harm we may need to share information with statutory agencies without a person's consent.

If someone wishes to disclose abuse to us

- We will let them know from the start we may need to tell someone else – DON'T PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.
- Accept what the person says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Listen with undivided attention
- Be aware that the person may have been threatened.
- Never push for information or ask leading questions
- Never ask anyone to lift up or remove clothing to show you any possible signs of abuse.
- Never photograph injuries
- If an adult discloses abuse of themselves, we will ask what they would like to happen next

Concluding
Clarify what the person says happened: Check out What? When? Who? Where?
Reassure the person that they were right to tell you.
Let the person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
Contact the DSO on 07434 284633
districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk or your local Children's Services or Adult Social Care
Do not contact the person about whom the allegations have been made

Further guidance can be found in Section 4 of the Connexional 'Policies, Procedures and Guidance July 2024' found at *Connexional Safeguarding Policy*

In an emergency
The person receiving the information will assess whether the person is at risk of immediate harm and if so, take any action straight away to safeguard them including contacting statutory authorities such as police, child or adult services.

Caring for people who people have experienced abuse
The Methodist Church recognises that abuse of an individual by someone within a church context can have a negative impact not only on the survivor, but on their family, the perpetrator's family and the church community. The impact will be different for different people and assumptions cannot be made about the severity of the impact and its perceived seriousness. The Methodist Church aims to respond to those affected by abuse in accordance with legislation and guidance but also with respect and compassion, providing pastoral support where appropriate.
People receiving or dealing with reports of abuse will also consider whether other forms of support may be appropriate, in addition to or instead of pastoral support within the church. Confidential advice will be sought from the DSO.

Further guidance can be found at *Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance*, July 2023, Section 4.3

Responding well to those who pose a risk
Where a concern is passed to the DSO which indicates a person may have harmed another person the DSO will undertake an assessment of risk.

The following risks will be reviewed regularly regarding any concern raised:
Risk to the victim/survivor
Risks to members of vulnerable groups within the church and involved with church activities
Risks to the person believed to be responsible for the issue and their family
Risks to the wider congregation or attendees at church activities
Risks to the loss of information/records
Risks to the reputation of the Methodist Church.

Care for those who are subject to concerns or allegations

The Methodist Church aims to provide pastoral care for all its members, including those who are suspected of causing harm or have caused harm to others. However, in this context, such care will be provided in a way that prioritises the safety of other church members, while enabling the person who may pose a risk, to worship and be a part of the church community. Advice will always be sought from the DSO.

For those with a criminal conviction or caution for a sexual offence, or offences against children and young people, Standing Order 010 bars a person from holding any office, post or responsibility. On occasions this Standing Order may be suspended. Contact the DSO for further advice

Specific procedures are laid down for safeguarding risk assessment (e.g. a safeguarding contract). Further information can be found at, *Safeguarding Policies Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist* July 2023, 4.7.

When the DSO receives a safeguarding concern

s/he will:

i. Consider the child's or adult's safety throughout.
ii. Advise whether a referral to Children's Services or Adult Social Care and/or police and/or Local Authority Designated Officer is necessary and decide with the referrer who will make the referrals.
iii. Assess the possible risks posed by the person who has allegedly harmed a child or adult;
iv. Consider whether an interim safeguarding contract is necessary.
v. Consider whether colleagues from other churches or community organisations need to be informed following advice from Children's Services/Adult Social Care/police (as appropriate).
vi. Notify the Connexional Safeguarding Team if necessary
vii. Contact the media office to discuss communications within the local church and circuit.
viii. Consider support needs of the victim/survivor, family/close friends
ix. Consider support needs of the accused and their family.
x. Ensure pastoral support and management of the case is not provided by someone supervising or overseeing the person whose behaviour is of concern.
xi. Check whether privacy notices have been provided to relevant parties and/or advise when they will be given
xii. Ensure the church notifies its insurance company (if necessary)
xiii. When necessary, advise the Chair of the trustees in the local church about whether a Serious Incident Referral to the Charity Commission is required, or if a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service is necessary. (The DSO may be requested to provide support or undertake the preparation of an initial reporting form)
xiv. Notify the Conference Office of a Charity Commission referral (if necessary)
xv. Notify District Chair and Superintendent (as necessary)

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE - A TO Z

Critical to good safeguarding is safer recruitment and safer working practices.

The Church has developed procedures for both these areas, informed by legislation and government guidance. As such, we aim to:

- carefully select and train all those with responsibility within the Church in line with safer recruitment principles
- ensure that any church activities are organised in such a way to avoid the risk of harm to everyone participating
- promote safe spaces that are inclusive and welcoming.

Below is an A to Z list of practices that promote safer working and safer space.
Church Council members and leaders of groups with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be familiar with and implement safer recruitment and safer working practices for all activities.

Accident book/ Incident Book
An accident/incident book/log will be available on all church premises and at all church activities
Any injury, however slight, suffered by an employee, office holder or volunteer in the course of their involvement in any church activity will be recorded in the accident book/log, together with the particulars that are a requirement of statutory regulations.

Additional needs
If a child or adult has additional needs the church will try to make reasonable adjustment to accommodate these needs. This may for example include changes to building or provision of large print resources.
Ask the person (or their parent/carer as applicable) how best to meet their needs.
If premises are being redesigned or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible additional needs of future children and adults. Disability legislation requires organisations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people, and this includes children.

Advocacy /access to an independent person
Children need to know who they can talk to if they need help. Churches will display Childline posters and the contact number where they will be seen by children and young people. See NSPCC

Vulnerable adults will be allowed and encouraged to share any concerns they have with parents, carers or church staff/volunteers. The Methodist Church aims to create a culture of transparency and accountability, where secrecy will not be tolerated. For adults who lack capacity, appropriate support and advice can be obtained from IMCAs. Find out more: independent mental capacity advocate

Anti-bullying

POLICY FOR CHILDREN/ YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

The Methodist Church works with children and families as part of its activities. The purpose of this policy statement is:

• to prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities
• to make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
• to provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

This policy statement applies to anyone working or volunteering on behalf of the church, Separate documents set out:

• our code of Safer Working practice for those who work with children, young people and adults
• our policies and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment that takes place between adults involved with our organisation are below.

Bullying includes a range of abusive behaviour that is

• repeated
• intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.

We recognise bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development

• in some instances, bullying can cause significant harm
• all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
• everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

• developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in our organisation is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
• holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it
• providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
• putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place.

Our regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families will focus on:

• group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
• practising skills such as listening to each other
• respecting the fact that we are all different
• making sure that no one is without friends
• dealing with problems in a positive way

• checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.

Responding to bullying
We will make sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:
the needs of the person being bullied
• the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
• needs of any bystanders
• our activity, group or church.

We will review the plan we have developed to address any incidents of bullying at regular intervals, in order to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

Diversity and inclusion
We recognise that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity. We will be proactive about:
• seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference
• increasing diversity within our staff, volunteers, children and young people
• welcoming new members to our organisation.

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures including:
• safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
• managing allegations made against a child or young person
• managing allegations of abuse made against staff and volunteers
• code of conduct for staff and volunteers
• equality, diversity and inclusion policies.

This church/ group/ activity appoints

…….. (Name) as anti- bullying lead.

…….. (Contact details)

Further advice may be sought from the NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 or by contacting the District Safeguarding Officer on 07434 284633.

We are committed to reviewing our anti-bullying policy and practice at least once a year.
This policy was last reviewed on: ……(date)

Signed by (Name ……

Group/ Activity Leader/ Title …….

POLICY FOR ADULTS

All allegations of bullying of adults will be reported to the District Safeguarding Officer

The Methodist Church offers a warm welcome to everyone and strives to be a safer place for all where all forms of bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

Policy Statement
Bullying and harassment are unacceptable and never excusable. The Methodist Church holds that all forms of bullying and harassment are unacceptable, inconsistent and incompatible with the Christian faith and a Christian way of living. The Methodist Church is committed to being a safer space for all. This means ensuring that members of the Methodist Church have an understanding and awareness of harassment and bullying and know how to respond appropriately, and that there are processes in place to enable the issues to be addressed. Victims of bullying or harassment can expect to be listened to, taken seriously and supported when they disclose that they are subject to bullying or harassment. Local Churches can receive advice and support from their Church/Circuit Safeguarding Officer and the District Safeguarding Officer.

Definition of Bullying and Harassment
There is no single definition of bullying. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) states that bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying or harassment may be carried out by an individual against an individual (perhaps by someone in a position of authority) or involve groups of people. It may be obvious, or it may be insidious. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. The Methodist Church offers this definition as follows:
Any behaviour, always involving a misuse of power, which an individual or group knows, or ought reasonably to know, could have the potential effect of offending, humiliating, intimidating or isolating an individual or group should be regarded as unacceptable. 'Unacceptable behaviour' changes its label to 'bullying' or 'harassing behaviour' when it causes actual harm or distress to the target(s), normally, but not exclusively, after a series of incidents over a prolonged period of time. Lack of intent does not diminish, excuse or negate the impact on the target or the distress caused. The degree of intent is only relevant in terms of how the behaviour should be challenged and the issues subsequently resolved. (Positive Working Together - A Short Guide 2015)

Harassment refers to poor treatment related to a protected characteristic (ACAS 2020). These are as follows:
- age
- sex
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race

- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

While bullying itself is not against the law, harassment is. It is against the law to discriminate against someone on any of the above grounds under the Equality Act (2010).
You are also protected from discrimination if:
- you are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend
- you have complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim.

Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended (Workplace bullying and harassment - GOV.UK 2020). These terms are often used interchangeably and some definitions include bullying as a form of harassment.

Types of Bullying
There are different types of bullying and some can be covert and therefore more difficult to spot, but others more obvious and therefore easier to identify. It is helpful to split these into different categories:
Physical Bullying This can include hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing or damaging property.

Verbal Bullying: This can include name-calling, insults, snide remarks, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Social Bullying: This form of bullying can take many forms such as the following:
- Lying and spreading rumours
- Negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Mimicking unkindly
- Encouraging others to social exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyber Bullying: This can happen at any time and be in public or in private and consist of the following:
- abusive or hurtful texts, emails or posts, images or videos
- deliberately excluding others online
- nasty gossip or rumours
- imitating others online or using their log-in.

Bullying and harassment can happen:
- face-to-face
- via a third party instigated by the 'primary' bully
- by letter
- by email
- via any digital platform
- by phone (mobile of landline).

What is not bullying:
- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

These actions can cause great distress, but do not fit the definition of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them (National Centre for Bullying 2020). The Methodist Church has systems in place to deal with those within the church who are perpetrators of bullying or harassment. The Complaints and Discipline process is one route, but this does not apply to those who are not members of the Methodist Church. To help ensure any allegations of bullying or harassment are dealt with in a timely, sensitive and comprehensive manner and that pastoral care for the victim is prioritized the procedures for any allegation or complaint are detailed in the flowchart.

SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS
Bullying UK (A leading charity providing advice and support to anyone affected by bullying).
National Bullying Helpline 0845 22 55 787 (Support and advice for anyone who needs help).

Appointment of workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
See Safer Recruitment.

Building Risk Assessment template
https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedure-and-information/forms/

Character References
If you are asked to write a character reference for court or a legal process consult the DSO. Further information about providing character references can be found in section 4.5.6 in https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/24067/safeguarding_policy_procedures_and-_guidance_for_the_methodist_church_oct_2021docx.pdf

Church Safeguarding Officer Role description
Main tasks
- provision of support and advice to the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding.
- ensuring that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is displayed at all times in the church on a safeguarding noticeboard, along with contact details for current safeguarding officers, national helplines and other suitable information. This will be renewed annually.
- recording of all safeguarding concerns that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist policy and practice and promotion of the requirement for others to do the same. All concerns will be reported to the DSO.
- Identify those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance. Work with the circuit safeguarding officer to arrange Foundation Training, or signpost people to the District website to arrange Advanced Training.
- attend training and meetings relating to the role

- work in partnership with the lettings officer, stewards and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. Check hirers or premises have appropriate safeguarding policies in place
- Check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Church Council meetings and report to the Church Council annually.
- inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures
- advise the circuit safeguarding officer and/or DSO of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.
- Ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place for all ecumenical activities; (this policy applies when the activity takes place on this church's premises). Download the role descriptions for this and other church roles here: Safer recruitment role descriptions

Churches Websites
Methodist churches and organisations creating their own websites adhere to these safeguarding policies and procedures and regularly review the pages of their sites so that they remain up to date, effective and safe. The Internet is constantly evolving and changing, and the Methodist Church guidelines change accordingly. You are strongly advised to review the guidelines regularly to ensure your compliance. See Methodist Church Social Media Guidelines: here

Anyone designing a website for a Methodist church, will ensure the safety of children and young people and vulnerable adults.
Website builders will follow these guidelines:
• Photographs are personal data as far as data protection legislation is concerned and will be used responsibly. Where a person requests their photograph is not included this decision will be respected.
• Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs of anyone under 18 on a website. This will include providing a privacy notice. Where the person in the picture is 12 or over, their consent will also be sought, in addition to that of parents, carers or guardians.
• Children and young people under the age of 18 will not be identified by name or other personal details, including email or postal addresses and telephone numbers.
• When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures. When a photograph of an individual child or young person is used, names or other personal details will not be used in any captions.
• Care will be taken when advertising special events for children and young people.
• Ensure that the image files are appropriately named – do not use names in image filenames or alt tags.
• Only use images of children in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
• Consider advertising events simply by giving contact details of the adults responsible.
• When posting activity ideas for children or young people, ensure they comply with good safeguarding practice.

Code of safer working practice with Adults –
To be issued to all workers and volunteers with adults.

You will:
- treat all adults with respect and dignity
- ensure that your own language, tone of voice, and body language are respectful
- record any incidents of concern and give the information to your group leader, sign and date the record
- share concerns about an adult or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the DSO. Complete the safeguarding concern form and send to the DSO.

You will not:
- invade the privacy of an adult who is washing and toileting
- use any form of physical punishment or restraint (except car seat belts)
- be sexually suggestive about or to an adult, or scapegoat, ridicule or reject an adult or group
- permit abusive peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying)
- show favouritism to any one adult or group
- allow an adult to involve you in behaviour that is overtly physical or sexual
- allow unknown adults access to adults deemed at risk of harm (visitors will always be accompanied by a known person)
- allow strangers to give lifts to adults in your group.

Visiting adults at home

- Most visits to adults in their own home will be straightforward as they will be well known to the church.
- However, when visiting someone new for the first time, visitors will let someone else know whom they are visiting (and when).
- Visiting in twos may be advisable, especially if the adult lacks mental capacity.
- Do not call unannounced. Call by appointment, telephoning the person just before visiting if appropriate.
- Be clear about what support can be offered to the adult if they ask for help with particular problems and refer back to the church if uncertain.
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact.
- Never offer 'over the counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If you have received any gift, make your group leader aware you have received the gift and decide with the group leader what should be done with it. If someone wants to make a donation to the church, put it in a sealed envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the treasurer.
- Pastoral visitors will note the date when they visit people, report their visit to the pastoral secretary and say what is concerning or going well. The pastoral secretary will report safeguarding concerns to the minister and DSO as appropriate and agree what action will take place and who will record the incident.
- It is advisable to take a mobile phone on all visits.

Code of Safer Working Practice with Children and Young People
To be issued to all who work or volunteer with children and young people.

Appropriate conduct (children)
It is expected that all leaders will:

- be aware of and understand the local safeguarding policy
- Treat all children and young people fairly and without prejudice, discrimination or favouritism
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and faith and challenge behaviour that demonstrates discrimination and/or prejudice
- ensure that your own language tone of voice and body language is respectful
- always aim to work with or within sight and hearing of another adult (who is not a family member)
- ensure that another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet (toilet breaks will be organised for young children)
- ensure children and young people know who they can talk to or contact if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern and encourage them to speak out if they feel uncomfortable or concerned (signpost children and young people to Childline) Childline
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but this will not involve physical comfort e.g. cuddles.
- advise children, young people and their parent/carers/guardians in advance if any activity requires physical contact and provide an opportunity to opt out or agree alternative activities.
- administer any necessary first aid with others around
- obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed via any medium. This will be from the parent, carer or guardian and the young person if 12 years or over. Images will not be taken or stored on personal devices.
- record any incidents that concern you or make you feel uncomfortable and give the information to your group leader and/or the DSO (DSO). You will complete the Safeguarding Concern form and send to the DSO.
- You will contact the DSO immediately if you believe you have acted in a way which others may have interpreted as inappropriate or if a child has acted inappropriately towards you. Records will be signed and dated.
- always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the DSO on 07434 284633 and complete the safeguarding concern form
- dress appropriately when working with children and not wear anything revealing or that is not practical for carrying out the tasks as part of your role.
- Notify the group leader if you are given a gift. Do not accept gifts of over £15.
- You will report all concerns about bullying between children to your group leader who will ensure the group's anti-bullying procedure is followed.

You will not:
• initiate physical contact. If contact is initiated by the child pull away gently so physical contact is for the minimum amount of time.
• invade a child's privacy whilst they are washing or toileting
• play rough physical or sexually provocative games
• use any form of physical punishment
• make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through social networking or online
• be sexually suggestive in the presence of or to a child, even as a joke
• touch a child sexually, intimately, or forcefully
• scapegoat, ridicule, reject or ignore a child, group or adult
• allow abusive peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying)
• show favouritism to any one child or group
• allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is physical or sexual in nature
• give lifts to children or young people.
• smoke any substance, vape or consume alcohol in the presence of children or when responsible for them
• provide your personal contact details to a child or young person such as mobile number, email or social media contact.
• share sleeping accommodation with children
• arrange social occasions with children or invite them to your home outside organised group occasions (other than with the consent of parent, carers or guardians and where at least one other unrelated adult is present)
• allow unknown adults access to children (visitors will always be accompanied by a known person)
• allow strangers, and those who are not authorised, to give children lifts
accept gifts, without notifying the group leader

Consent Forms
Where the church is running a dedicated service for children or vulnerable adults best practice requires that all activities will have: a registration form including the following:

- name and address
- date of birth
- emergency contact details
- medical information
- any additional needs including activities person cannot take part in
- consent for emergency medical treatment
- consent for photographs/videos if relevant.

Consent forms will be available at every session of the relevant group for reference and use in case of emergency. Separate consent will be obtained for one-off events and activities (e.g. swimming) and also for outings, weekends away etc. Personal details will be stored securely.

Consent to share information

The general principle around consent is that you will explain to children and adults at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement to share personal or sensitive information.
The exception would be where seeking consent would put that person at increased risk of significant harm, or would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime, including where it might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
You will, where possible, respect the wishes of children, families and adults who do not consent to share confidential information. However, this will not stop you reporting concerns or seeking advice from the DSO, who will discuss the concerns in an anonymized way, wherever possible.
You may still share information if, in your judgement, there is sufficient public interest to override that lack of consent.
When in any doubt, you will seek advice from the DSO.
This is particularly recommended in relation to adults as the issues around capacity and consent are more complex.

Day trips
See Residential and Day Trips

DBS Checks & Due Diligence Checking (DDC)
The requirement for and the type of DBS check is determined by the role description. Contact with vulnerable groups and frequency will be clearly stated in the role description. Guidance on type of check, and whether barring information is required can be found on pp 18-19 of the Safer Recruitment policy, Connexional Safer Recruitment policy
There are additional resources on the District website, including role descriptors and a DBS check decision making flowchart. See https://www.methodist-nd.org.uk/resources/safer-recruitment/

DDC Due Diligence Checking
This is the organisation which processes DBS checks on behalf of the Methodist Church.
Website https://www.ddc.uk.net/
For advice about DBS checks consult the safer recruitment policy. Contact DDC on 0845 644 3298 or 0116 260 3055

Definitions
Child: Anyone under the age of 18.
Vulnerable Adult: 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 against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

For definitions of abuse and further guidance see *Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance*, July 2023, Sections 6.1 & 6.2

Disability and Accessibility
The Equality Act 2010) www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

provides disabled people with protection from discrimination and gives legal rights in the areas of:

- employment
- education
- access to goods and services

What does accessibility mean in practice? Some examples:

- accessible toilets
- installing ramps
- providing information in various mediums e.g. braille, clearer signage
- providing sign language interpreters
- installing T-loops
- ensuring that wheelchair access is possible
- providing disability awareness training.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as the abusive behaviour of one person towards another if the persons involved are 16 years of age or over and personally connected.
Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse

All reports of Domestic Abuse will be taken seriously by the church and advice sought from the DSO. We have adopted a separate Domestic Abuse policy and charter.

<u>Domestic Abuse Policy</u>

We pledge to:

- raise awareness about domestic abuse and its impact on individuals, children, the wider family and community
- ensure that the safety of individuals suffering abuse or seeking help is the first priority, and be aware of the need for confidentiality (unless there are safeguarding concerns) consider how best to provide support and information for anyone seeking help, including working with specialist agencies
- encourage discussion of how our church can be a safer space for victims and survivors of domestic abuse
- regularly discuss the Domestic Abuse policy, procedures, theology and principles that underpin it
- adopt the Domestic Abuse Charter and display this in our churches and on social media
- discuss domestic abuse with church leaders, including at the Church Council

Drivers

see Transport for Church Activities

Drug and Alcohol Use

Drugs and alcohol are strictly forbidden while participating in Methodist activities for young people. This applies to staff, volunteers, visitors, children and young people. If drug or alcohol use by children or young people is suspected, the group leader will be informed and a discussion will take place about informing parents/carers. The DSO will be informed. Consideration will be given to the need to inform the police and for a referral to appropriate support services. Alcohol is not generally allowed on Methodist Church premises.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) and Unconscious bias.

Our safeguarding policy is underpinned by the commitments outlined in the 'Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity' (The Methodist Conference 2021), aiming to ensure that we improve the experiences of all people and working towards a fully inclusive church. As part of achieving this we will also consider how unconscious bias can affect us and train ourselves to recognise it and modify our responses accordingly.

'Working towards a fully inclusive Methodist Church: A User guide to the strategy for Justice Dignity and Solidarity is available here: User Guide The EDI toolkit is available here: EDI toolkit

Emergency Contact and Support Organisations - Contacts for Display

See Appendix & Safeguarding Poster

E- Safety and Internet use with children and young people

- Where WIFI is available on church premises, an acceptable use notice will be displayed with the access instructions. A template is available from here: WIFI acceptable use policy
- Create a social media policy and agreement. See Social media guidelines in work with children and young people You can also find a really helpful guide at : https://bit.ly/DigitalSafeguarding
- Ensure that all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site or online.
- Maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.
- Ensure that parents or carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their written permission in advance.
- When demonstrations are being given, plan beforehand to ensure that all websites visited have material that is appropriate for the age group taking part.
- Where children and young people are given access to undertake their own searches on the Internet, get advice on search engines from https://www.internetmatters.org/
- Children and young people will be regularly informed and reminded of safe Internet use and accessing social media. If they have any concerns or fears, they will be encouraged to access websites such as NSPCC or Childline or talk to an adult.

Financial integrity
Financial dealings can have an impact on the Church and the community and will always be handled with integrity. Those with authority for such matters will maintain proper systems and not delegate that responsibility to anyone else.

- Church workers will not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their stipend, salary or recognised allowances.
- Church workers will not be influenced by offers of money.
- Church workers will ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart and will avoid any conflict of interest.
- Money received by a church will be handled by two unrelated lay people.
- Any gifts received will be disclosed to a supervisor or colleague where it will be decided whether they can be accepted.
- Do not canvass for church donations from those who may be vulnerable (e.g. the recently bereaved).
- Church workers and volunteers will notify their line manager, Minister in Pastoral oversight or the Superintendent Minister before taking on Power of Attorney, wills, bequests or acting as an executor for someone known to them through their church role, and the DSO will be notified.

First aid provision
A first aid kit will be available on the premises where an activity is taking place. The contents will be stored in a watertight container and be clearly marked.
Each group will designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals.
All staff and volunteers will be encouraged to have some first aid knowledge and the church or circuit will encourage access to first aid training.
A list of first aiders will be compiled and kept available.
A compliant first aid kit will be carried on all activities off-church premises and in all vehicles used by the church (both church-owned and private).
Notices will be displayed identifying the location of the nearest defibrillator

Forms
Safeguarding Concern referral forms can be found here Church safeguarding referral form

The following forms are available from safeguarding forms

- Confidential declarations: All office holders will complete a confidential declaration.
- Safeguarding DBS verifier privacy notice
- Keyholder declaration – Form D: Before the keys can be issued the keyholder is asked to sign the declaration and acknowledge the conditions of issue. This includes a privacy notice and consent form.
- Exemption forms for ministers
- Volunteer with vulnerable groups – Form A

Health and medication
When organising any activity involving vulnerable groups, health issues will be identified before the activity takes place. These may include noting any mobility difficulties and

ensuring that the meeting place is accessible. They may also include matters relating to medication.
In such circumstances, the event leader will ensure that:
- the person required to administer any medication is identified
- parents/carers are consulted so that medication requirements are fully understood
- all medication is stored securely
- consent forms are signed
- a record is made of any medication given, and signed and dated

Health and safety
It is the responsibility of the Church Council to ensure that proper health and safety processes are in place. Health and safety will be managed as part of all activities and reference will be made to the following policies and guidance:
- Health and safety regulation HSE
- Methodist Insurance offer a self-assessment for churches for Health and Safety. Click here Health and Safety

Hire or use of church premises
See Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes (TMCP) Lettings policy, flowchart and guidance: Click: Third party use

- For Martial Arts groups with under 18's (including Karate, TaeKwonDo, KungFu, Judo, see *Martial Arts*)
- Many churches own buildings, which they hire out to community groups and others. Some of these undertake work with children. The observance of 'reasonable care' by both parties is a standard insurance condition.
- The hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage, and will carry full liability insurance for this.
- Lettings officers/ property stewards will ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults when booking multiple groups for the premises at the same time. Group leaders will be made aware of any associated risks.
- For both one-off and regular hiring, it is recommended that a written hiring agreement be used. Please refer to the TMCP website for further information and hiring agreements, including the declaration: www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use.
- If the hiring body is required to register with Ofsted, the church will ask to see the registration certificate and record that it has been seen.
- Church Councils are required to ensure that those who use their premises under licence or who hire the premises for regular or occasional use are given a copy of the local church safeguarding policy and declare their willingness to comply with the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church or equivalent procedures (such as Scouting and Guiding national safeguarding policy). This information will be prominently displayed.
- All non-church groups are required to have their own safeguarding policy which will be checked against this checklist. Find the guidance here: Letting Property and External use of Premises - Methodist Church

Insurance
The church will check adequate insurance is in place to cover all activities as well as the church building. The policy details will be displayed in a public place.
A duty exists upon the insured to research and adopt best practice based upon current and ongoing guidelines. It is also a condition of a policy of insurance that any incident or allegation is notified to the insurer immediately. Failure to comply with this requirement may prejudice any cover provided by the policy. Public liability insurance indemnity limits will be kept under regular review.
Guidance is available from Methodist Insurance or your insurer.
NB It is advised that copies of insurance policies are retained for 50 years, given the potential for historic abuse claims.

Internet
s*ee E- Safety and Internet use with children*

Keyholders for church premises
The Methodist Church is not obliged to give anyone access to church premises unless it is required as part of their role for regular hire.
Before any keys are issued, a declaration (form D) will be signed acknowledging conditions of issue. The form can be found at users and hirers

Managing Safeguarding Information, privacy notices, data storage & information sharing
Careful attention will be paid to the storage, use and sharing of data held by the church relating to other people. This is critical to ensure that those who engage with safeguarding processes have confidence in the legitimacy and appropriateness of actions taken. The management of information is governed by law, statutory and government guidance.

Privacy Notices
Privacy notices are central to effective data protection practice within safeguarding and they are supplied using standard documents for specific activities such as reporting a safeguarding concern, ongoing safeguarding case management and before undertaking a risk assessment.

The relevant forms can be found here: https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedure-and-information/risk-assessment/

For safeguarding purposes

i. Care and sensitivity will be shown in issuing Privacy Notices especially where it may be necessary to inform the police/social care of concerns. In these circumstances seek the advice of the DSO before issuing the Privacy Notice.
ii. If a person shares information about themselves or a third party the person will be issued with a privacy notice as soon as possible.
iii. If information has been supplied to the church by a third party which relates to another individual, the person to whom the information relates will receive a privacy notice within a reasonable period of the data being received within one month.
iv. It is the responsibility of the minister in pastoral charge/ Superintendent Minister to issue the privacy notice. The DSO will advise when the privacy notice may be issued.

Guidance for Data Storage can be found at section Appendix 4 Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (July 2023)
(Safeguarding records are usually kept for 75 years)
Advice about what to do in the case of a Data Breach can be found at Appendix 4
Subject Access Requests for safeguarding are made via Methodist Church House Appendix 4

Information sharing requests
Any request for safeguarding information by another organization or person will be directed to the DSO in the first instance. Safeguarding information will not be shared with another person or organization without consultation with the DSO.

The DSO will follow the procedure as outlines in Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (July 2023) *, Appendix 4*

Martial Arts
Martial Arts groups which use the church premises will be signed up to the Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts and display the Safeguarding Code Mark. More information available here safeguarding code in martial arts

Mental Health
see Self Harm and Mental Health

Mixed-age activities (eg. Choirs and music and drama groups)
Care will be taken to ensure that children in mixed-age activities such as choirs, music and drama groups are supervised by DBS checked adults at all times.
DBS checks are not required for adults in those groups who do not have specific responsibility for children. Separate changing facilities will be provided when needed for adults and children and different sexes.
Children will be supervised only by those authorised to do so.

New Places for New People NPNP
See Pioneer ministers, New Places New People NPNP and new projects

OFSTED registration
Churches which provide groups for children under the age of 6 who attend regularly for more than 2 hours at a time or more than 14 days in any period of 12 months will need registration with Ofsted unless an exemption applies. See out of school clubs
Many children's groups provided by churches will be exempt but will still be required to inform Ofsted of the activity. For further details see OFSTED

Pastoral Conversations
Relevant safeguarding information may be disclosed in the context of a pastoral conversation. A minister or pastoral visitor is not prevented from disclosing details of any crime or offence which is revealed in the course of a pastoral conversation or a confession within that context. The requirements about information sharing apply. Wherever possible, ministers and others engaged in pastoral conversations on behalf of the Church will explain

the limits of confidentiality in pastoral relationships. This will occur at the beginning of a pastoral relationship or meeting. Convicted offenders can sometimes come forward with new information. There is no bar in law to prevent ministers passing on such information to the authorities.

Peer on peer abuse
All concerns about peer on peer abuse (abuse perpetrated by children/ young people on other children/young people) will be reported to the group leader and the DSO and Children's Services.

Photography and Video Recordings
The rights of everyone to choose whether or not to be photographed will be respected. The following measures are taken to safeguard children and young people at Methodist Church activities:

- Display prominently a notice/notices advising people that that the event will be photographed/recorded; example available Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk)
- Any captions for photographs will not contain the names of individual young people.
- Group photos will be used rather than images of individuals where possible.
- Consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed via any medium. This will be from the parent, carer or guardian and the young person if 12 years or over. Images will not be taken or stored on personal devices. Consent forms for parents, carers and young people 12 and over are available on the District Church website, Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk)
- Images will only be taken or used of young people in appropriate clothing for the activity, undertaking activities that will portray them and the Church in a positive light.
- Where external media or photographers are present, they will be notified of safeguarding policies and procedures. They will not be left in unsupervised, sole contact with a child or young person and will wear an I.D. badge.
- Do not photograph any child who has asked not to be photographed or any child who is known to be under a court order.
- No external party will be allowed unsupervised access to young people while taking images or speaking to children and young people.
- Photographs and video recordings will be stored securely in a password-protected folder on an encrypted system which is only accessible to appropriate and necessary parties. Images will not be retained on any personal, mobile storage devices do not use children's names in photograph captions. If a child is named, avoid using the photograph.
- At large events arrange video or photographic stills of the participants in action or set up photo opportunities at the end. This allows the performance to go ahead with limited interruption, allowing any child who is not to be photographed to take part. If there are children or young people at the event for whom you do not have a completed consent form, put the notice about photographs in prominent places or in the event programme. Make sure that official photographers are aware of the guidelines for photography.

- Guidelines for photographers are available at Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk)
- Where a person becomes aware images of a child or young person in a Methodist context are being used inappropriately this will be reported immediately to the DSO on 07434 284633.

Pioneer ministers, New Places New People NPNP and new projects

Across the district our vision and ministry is constantly evolving. It is essential that whenever a pioneer ministry or new project is being discussed and planned or when an existing project becomes 'Church' that safeguarding is carefully considered before plans are fully developed and the work commences. Safeguarding should be like a golden thread running through all aspects of the work/project. Please contact the DSO, who will support you.

Private Dwellings

Activities in a private dwelling.

Where the activity takes place in someone's home, the owner should consider the health and safety and fire safety risks and the duties to those attending. For example, the owner should have appropriate fire precautions in place and a first aid kit. As the user, you will be responsible for managing risks and should seek support from the group leader (if that is not the home owner) for identifying and making clear the health and safety and safeguarding arrangements according to the activity and individuals attending. Participants should be clear about who the identified lead is and how to report concerns should any arise.

Record-keeping (church activities/events)

As a guide, records of the following will be kept by the local church:

- safeguarding incidents (on the form available here) Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk) Safeguarding records to be kept for 75 years.
- church workers employed or working as volunteers with vulnerable groups (this will include start and finish dates, DBS check details, references, application forms, all posts held, training completed)
- risk assessments of church events and activities
- hiring arrangements.

IMPORTANT NOTE See also Managing Safeguarding Information, privacy notices, data storage & information sharing

Registers

A register will be taken of those attending church activities and will include:

- the date of the activity
- the type of activity
- a list of adults present
- a list of children/young people present.

Registers will be retained until all children and young people contained in the document reach the age of 21. If this is unknown there is a standard retention period of 20 years from the creation of the document.

Residential and Day Trips

The Circuit and DSOs will be informed of the dates, times and location, and leader contact details for all overnight/residential trips involving children and young people/vulnerable adults.

For guidance see: Organising Events - Methodist Church

A sample consent form for off-site activities is available here Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk)

Risk Assessments for Activities

Activity risk assessments will be undertaken, and a written record made before any activity takes place. These will be approved by the event leader/minister and retained securely in case they need to be seen later (e.g. because of an accident taking place).

Activity risk assessments will include:

- the nature of the activity
- the location
- transport needed and associated issues (e.g. insurance)
- staffing levels/gender
- experience of staff
- ages of the group attending, abilities, additional needs
- medical and health needs of the group
- emergency planning
- identification of risks
- action needed to address the risk
- a named person for resolving risk issues

Risk of Children Running Away

If there is a risk of a child running away, contact the child's parents if appropriate; or police/ children's social care.

Do not share with the child who you have contacted.

Make a note of the child's physical appearance including what they are wearing.

Consider moving to a place in the building that is less open so they cannot easily abscond.

Find something to occupy them.

If a child leaves the premises

- Do not try to stop them physically
- Do not follow the child as this can make their behaviour more unpredictable and may put them at risk of greater harm.
- Contact parent/carer and police as appropriate.

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment will be undertaken for all roles and responsibilities in the church.

Safer recruitment begins with a role description. For sample role outlines (which you can edit to suit local circumstances) check out District N&D Safer Recruitment
You can find the Connexional Safer Recruitment and DBS guidance here:
Safer Recruitment - Methodist Church
The Church Safeguarding Officer and the Minister in pastoral charge are responsible on behalf of the Church Council for ensuring all parts of the safer recruitment policy are followed for all appointments.
The Methodist Church uses Due Diligence Checking (DDC) for all DBS checks.
https://www.ddc.uk.net/
See the flowchart for who needs a DBS check here DBS flowchart
DBS checks will be renewed every 5 years in the Methodist Church. Ministers in pastoral charge are normally verifiers, though this task may be delegated to a lay person.

Self-harm and Mental Health needs - Adults
If anyone expresses thoughts of suicide and another person believes there is immediate risk to life help will be sought immediately from the police/ambulance service by calling 999.
Many adults live with mental health needs at some point in their lives. Where the behaviour of an adult with mental health needs is posing a risk of harm to themselves or other people advice will be sought from the DSO. Signposting to the Samaritans may be helpful.
The Stay Alive App offers support for people at risk of taking their own lives and those supporting them. StayAlive - Essential suicide prevention for everyday life

Self-harm and Mental Health needs – Children and Young People
If any child or young person expresses thoughts of suicide and a person believes there is an immediate risk to life immediate help will be sought from the police/ambulance service on 999.
Parents/carers will normally be informed whenever a young person expresses suicidal thoughts or self-harms or talks about self-harming or is concerned about their mental health. If you think this may put the child/young person at risk you will consult the DSO and your local children's services for advice first.
All concerns about self-harm and children/young people's mental health will be referred to the DSO here Safeguarding Hub – Nottingham & Derby Methodist District (methodist-nd.org.uk)

Specialised activities
Where the group is participating in a specialised activity such as adventure activities, advice will be sought from the relevant licensing authority/organisation. Advice is also available from the Well for Workers: The Well Learning Hub - Methodist Church

Staffing levels required for children's/ young people's activities (staff/child ratios)
It is the responsibility of the group leader to arrange sufficient supervision to ensure the safe and effective management of all activities. The following issues will be considered when determining appropriate numbers of helpers:

- the gender of the group – if mixed, then staff members will also be mixed, where possible
- Only those aged 18 or over can be counted as part of the staff to child ratio

- Any leader/helper will be more than 3 years older than the upper age limit of the group
- the duration of the activity
- the competence and experience of the staff providing oversight and support
- the age of the group – staff will have the appropriate skills for the age they are working with
- children with additional support needs, such as physical disabilities, behavioural or mental health problems – extra staff may be necessary
- the size and layout of the room or outdoor area and any particular issues that may be relevant to that location.
- the nature of the activity, what this involves and what tasks there will be for children
- There will be a minimum of two unrelated adults present at any activity (it is recommended that there be at least one male and one female) in line with the ratios below. Staff ratios are based on a risk assessment e.g. increased ratios for outdoor or activities.

Required Adult to Child Ratios (as recommended by the NSPCC)
0 – 2 years 1 adult to 3 children 1:3
2 – 3 years 1 adult to 4 children 1:4
4 – 8 years 1 adult to 6 children 1:6
9 – 12 years 1 adult to 8 children 1:8
13 – 18 years 1 adult to 10 children 1:10

Training

- The Methodist Church offers two levels of Safeguarding Training; Foundation and Advanced.
- Training is refreshed every 4 years.
- A person refreshes their training at the highest level of training.

The responsibility for the provision and record-keeping for Foundation Training is with the Circuit. A list of all who need to undertake Foundation training, and those who are warmly invited can be found here Foundation training required attendance

The responsibility for the provision of Advanced Module training is with the District. A list of those who need to undertake the Advanced Module and those who are warmly invited is available here. Advanced module required attendance
All places will be booked via the District website Booking training go to training sub-section.

For all queries relating to Advanced Module training please contact the safeguarding training administrator on padistrictsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk

The Methodist Church now recognises the Church of England Safeguarding training. This means if a person has undertaken training with the Anglican church recently, they do not have to undertake the same level of training with the Methodist Church. Training will be renewed at least every 4 years.
The Foundation Module, C1, is equivalent to Foundation Module. The Leadership Module, C2, is equivalent to the Methodist Church Advanced training Module.

Transport for church activities

The safety of people being transported to and from church activities is the responsibility of whoever makes the transport arrangements. If parents make those arrangements themselves, then they are responsible for ensuring the safety of those being transported. If the church makes the arrangements, safety becomes the responsibility of the church. Transport or travel between church activities will usually be the responsibility of the church.

Drivers

- All those who drive children/adults on church-organised activities/rotas will have held a full and clean driving licence for more than two years.
- Drivers who are not children's/adults' workers will be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process. (For children and young people this role requires an enhanced DBS with Barred list Check. For driving adults who may be vulnerable this will normally require and enhanced DBS check)
- Any driver for church organized activities who has an endorsement of six points or more on their licence will inform the group leader and the DSO.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence will not transport children/adults for the church.
- Drivers will always be in a fit state (i.e. not overtired, not under the influence of alcohol, not taking illegal substances and not under the influence of medicines that may induce drowsiness).
- An annual licence check will be undertaken for all drivers using the website check driving licence.
- Insurance and MOT details will be provided to the church
- Cars that carry children/adults on behalf of the church will be comprehensively insured for both private and business use.
- The insured person will make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.
- Cars will be in a roadworthy condition. They will have up-to-date road tax and MOT (where applicable)

Transporting Children

- All children/passengers, including the driver, will wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional passengers will not be carried.
- Children will not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers.
- At no time will the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.
- There will be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver.
- If, in an emergency, a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child will sit in the back of the car another leader notified and a signed record will be kept of the reason for this.

Transporting adults

- Care will be taken in assisting adults to board or leave vehicles and put on seat belts.

- Drivers will be aware of moving and handling issues when assisting adults and transferring their mobility aids.
- Lifts to GP or hospital appointments or adult social care facilities are regulated activity and require additional safer recruitment procedures including an enhanced DBS check with barred list check.

Minibuses/coaches

- Workers/helpers will sit amongst the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.
- Before using a minibus, the most up-to-date regulations for its use will be checked and a trial drive undertaken.
- The driver will check their licence covers the class of vehicle they intend to drive.

Unaccompanied children

The Methodist Church advises that children under 11 years of age will be taken to and collected from church or a church activity. If a child is over 11 years of age it remains the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure the child is cared for and arrives and leaves the church safely.

If an unknown child arrives at a church or church activity you will take the following actions:

- Welcome the child
- Confirm their name and request parent/carer contact details
- Contact the parent/carer to confirm where the child is, what the activity is, who is looking after the child and get permission for the child to remain and inform the parent/carer of the end time of the activity.
- Ask the parent/carer for any essential medical information e.g. details of allergies or health conditions
- Request that a consent form (sent with the child) is completed for future attendance.
- If the child refuses to give information about parent/carer or something they say, or how they present, causes you to believe they may be at risk of harm contact Children's Social Care, using the Out of Hours service if necessary. You may also contact the DSO for advice and support.

Uncollected Children

When a child is not collected from an activity the following steps will be followed:

- The parent or carer will be contacted to confirm whether it is safe for the child to go home unescorted.
- If both the parent/carer and activity leader deem it is safe for them to go alone, the child will be given instructions to go home safely. The parents/carers will be invited to discuss future arrangements.
- In the event the parent/carer cannot be contacted, the police will be called and the child reported as missing from home. If there are safeguarding concerns explain these to the police. Keep trying to contact the parent/carer unless the police advise you otherwise.

- Two leaders will always remain with a child in these circumstances.

Venues for church groups with children and adults

- A health and safety check of the premises will be undertaken regularly by the church. The group leader is responsible for notifying the church property secretary of any health and safety concerns relating to the premises. Similar principles apply if the group meets away from church premises.
- The meeting place will be warm, well-lit and well ventilated. It will be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Fire exits will be checked regularly and clearly marked. The fire exits will not be blocked or obstructed.
- Electric socket covers will never be used as they present a safety hazard.
- Toilets and hand basins with hygienic drying facilities will be easily available.
- Appropriate space and equipment will be available for any intended activity.
- Where food is regularly prepared for the group the facilities are checked by the Environmental Health Office. Leaders have Food Handling and Hygiene training and will provide up to date certificates on request.
- A first aid kit is available, up to date, and leaders know where to find it
- The Childline telephone number (0800 1111) will is on display for children's groups
- The safeguarding poster is displayed including local contact numbers for social care
- The certificate of insurance is displayed
- There is access to a telephone/ mobile phone

Victims and Survivors

Support and information for victims and survivors of abuse and those who support them can be found here: https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/support-for-survivors/

Visiting adults at home

Most visits to adults in their own home will be straightforward as they will be well known to the church. However, there are circumstances where there is a greater risk to the person visiting or the person being visited. Below is a list of things to consider when visiting adults.

- When visiting someone new for the first time, visitors should let someone else know whom they are visiting (and when).
- Visiting in twos may be advisable, especially if the adult lacks capacity. It is also advisable to take a mobile phone.
- Do not call unannounced. Call by appointment, telephoning the person just before visiting if appropriate.
- Be clear about what support can be offered to the adult if they ask for help with problems and refer to the church if uncertain.
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact.
- Never offer 'over the counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so.
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If

someone wants to donate to the church, put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the treasurer.

- Pastoral visitors should note the date when they visit people, report their visit to the pastoral secretary and say what is concerning or going well. The pastoral secretary will report safeguarding concerns to the minister and safeguarding officer as appropriate and agree what action should take place and who should record the incident.

Vulnerable Children, Young People and Adults

Some children, young people and adults are more vulnerable than others to being victims of sexual exploitation, human trafficking and modern day slavery.

If it is suspected that a child, young person or adult is affected by any of these issues, the group leader or minister will be informed and further advice sought from the DSO who will support you in contacting the statutory authorities.

Whistleblowing

Concerns about safer practice and behaviour will always be raised as soon as possible. If any member, volunteer or employee feels that any adult is or has behaved inappropriately towards a child or vulnerable adult, they will speak to the DSO or statutory services. See link to the Methodist Whistleblowing Policy: whistle blowing policy

WIFI Acceptable Internet usage policy

Where WIFI is available on church premises, an acceptable use notice will be displayed with the access instructions. A template is available on the Methodist Church website safeguarding section which can be modified for local use. Acceptable Use Policy for Guest Wi-Fi - Methodist Church

Young people as leaders/helpers

- If young people (under 18) are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping with younger children they will always be supervised by an appointed worker
- Young people aged 16 & 17 will be safely recruited to their roles and their suitability assessed
- The worker will be responsible for ensuring good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding.
- The worker will also be responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding needs of the young leaders/helper are met.
- Young people will be at least 3 years older than the upper age limit of the children's group.

Appendix 1: Emergency Contact Numbers for Display

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)	101
Local police Child/Family Protection Unit	101/999 Emergency
Local Authority Children's Services/Social Care	Call Derbyshire – 01629 533190
Local Authority Adult Social Care	Call Derbyshire – 01629 533190
Local General Hospital	Derby Royal – 01332 340131 Chesterfield Royal – 01246 277271

Support and Advice Organisations

Childline	0800 1111
Family Lives (helpline for parents)	0808 800 2222
YoungMinds (parents helpline, mental health)	0808 802 5544
Hopeline (suicide support for young people)	0800 068 4141
FRANK (drug and alcohol support)	0300 123 6600

Local Contacts

District Safeguarding Officer Rosie Clements	07434 284633 districtsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk
Circuit Safeguarding Officer Helen Shirtcliffe Anne Kettlewell	 0115 9197302 01773 852938
Church Safeguarding Officer Susan Watts	s.rwatts96@btinternet.com 01629 824596
Advanced Module training contact Rosie Farrow	padistrictsafeguarding@methodist-nd.org.uk 0115 9375665