**Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for**

**……….. Methodist Church**

This policy was agreed by the Church Council on ………

……. Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults (henceforth referred to as vulnerable individuals).

* We acknowledge the impacts that vulnerability and abuse may have on people, including on their spiritual and religious growth.
* We accept our responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in our care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained.
* We accept our responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them.
* We take seriously our role in supporting everyone to reach their full potential in God’s grace.

This policy supports the Church in being a safe, supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults; for communities; for survivors of abuse; and for all those affected by abuse.

***For our Statement of Safeguarding Principles, please see Appendix 1***

***For Key Concepts and Definitions, please see Appendix 2***

**At ……. Methodist Church we commit to:**

* Recognise and apply the restrictions to appointment laid down in Standing Order 010 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church.
* Respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a vulnerable individual may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another environment.
* Challenge the abuse of power of anyone viewed as being in a position of trust within the church.
* Ensure the implementation of the Connexional Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance and safe practice.
* Provide support, advice and training for lay and ordained people so that they are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable individuals.
* Affirm and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledge that we all share responsibility for safeguarding everyone on our premises.

**The Church Council of ………. Methodist Church**

Appoints **…………..** as church Safeguarding Officer (Children, Young People and Adults) and commits to support her/him in the role, which is to:

* promote safeguarding best practice and oversee safeguarding throughout the whole life of the church.
* ensure safeguarding policy and procedures are in place.
* ensure everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities for vulnerable individuals in our care and using our premises.
* ensure records are kept of all incidents/concerns as per Methodist policy and practice[[1]](#footnote-1) and of all training and DBS checks.
* support and advise regarding any safeguarding issue within the church or in relation to roles held.
* liaise closely with other Safeguarding Officers, including those at Circuit and District level, by attending appropriate meetings and training.
* report to the Church Council at least once a year.
* complete and act upon any issues identified within the annual safeguarding audit.
* ensure the church completes a risk assessment on each area of activity in the church and reviews these at least annually.
* ensure that the church has a safeguarding noticeboard which displays posters with the policy commitments and contact lists and has a clear indication as to where the church policy is located.

*This policy is to be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church, which is updated every six months. (Most recent version July 2020)[[2]](#footnote-2).*

Dated ........................................................................................

Signed ....................................................................................... Chair of Church Council

 **Appendix 1 - 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**

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

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.

**Policy**

**Training**

**Culture**

**Challenge any abuse of power**

**Safer recruitment**

**How will we do this?**

**Support victims/ survivors**

**Recognise vulnerabilities**

**Informed pastoral care**

**Risk Assessment**

**Support/ monitor abusers to enable sharing in worship**

**Respond to concerns/ complaints/ vulnerabilities**

**Cooperate with statutory agencies**

**Support of Pastoral Visitors**

**Follow the Code of Safer Working Practice**

**Not work alone or out of sight of others**

**Principles of good practice**

**Follow Complaints procedures**

**Letting and Hiring Agreements**

**Risk Assessments:**

**building, activities, transport**

**Annual report to Church Council, Circuit Meeting**

**Safeguarding Policy and related guidance reviewed annually**

**Appendix 2 – Key Concepts and Definitions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Child** | 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 their status or entitlements to services or protection. |
| **Vulnerable Adult** | 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. Vulnerability by permanent or temporary; occur only once or many times. |
| **Safeguarding** | Protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.  |
| **Abuse and Neglect** | Abuse or neglect may be caused by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. It may occur within a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known or by strangers. Abuse may be perpetrated by anyone; male or female, adult or child, it may be recognised as such or not.**Online, social media** |

**Sexual**

**Financial**

**Forms of Abuse**

**Domestic**

**Human trafficking**

**Institutional**

**Exploitation**

**Discriminatory**

**Modern slavery**

**Spiritual**

**Physical**

**Neglect**

**Emotional**

1. See section 4.2 – Recording, of the policy below [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedure-and-information/policies-and-guidance/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)