
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Circuit Policy Guidelines For External User Groups

Policy Aims:

- To Promote a safer environment and culture of external User Groups using Methodist Church Premises.
- To ensure that correct procedures are in place across the Circuit and that local Church Councils are clear about their responsibilities.

Scope: This policy applies to all External User Groups of Circuit Premises

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.

Safeguarding Principles:

- 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.

Promote a safer environment and culture

- have a safeguarding children and adults policy in place with evidence of/process for annual review and update
- named safeguarding person/point of contact
- acknowledgment that safeguarding is a shared responsibility
- evidence the policy is based on statutory guidance and good practice
- statement that all people are treated with respect and dignity
- the property should be kept safe and checked at the beginning and end of any session for issues, and these reported to the appropriate person
- any transport of children or vulnerable adults will need to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are safely recruited. An agreed record to be kept for each driver/car.

Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and adults at risk of harm

- evidence that staff and volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities
- safeguarding training at the appropriate level to be in place for all staff and volunteers
- staff and volunteers are not to work alone or meet alone with a child or vulnerable adult
- all staff and volunteers to be safely recruited with DBS checks completed for all eligible roles and a process in place to assess the appropriateness of anyone who has a blemished DBS.

Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

- a process in place to deal with safeguarding concerns without delay
- a process to deal with allegations about staff and volunteers
- a process in place to deal with complaints.

Organisations may have separate policies for social media/electronic communication; photography and video, off-site events. They may also have safer working guidance about adult child ratios, touch and a code of conduct for individual workers.

Users and hirers of Methodist premises

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, Procedures and Guidance of the Methodist Church or comparable equivalent guidelines and procedures (such as Scouting and Guiding national safeguarding policy).

Key concepts and definitions

- i) A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- ii) Vulnerable adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- iii) Safeguarding: protecting children 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/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- v) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Signed: (*Superintendent Minister*)

Dated:

Date for review: February Circuit Meeting