

Safeguarding Principles



Statement of Safeguarding Principles

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

Principles

We are committed to:

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

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with¹ the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

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

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

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

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

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

¹ Or membership of (PVG scheme Scotland).

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for North Herts Methodist Circuit

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 10th March 2016. It will be reviewed in March 2017.

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

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

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

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

The North Herts Circuit fully agrees with the Connexional statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space* 2007:

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

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

The Circuit commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or
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vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the Church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust. It commits itself to providing informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.

The Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The Circuit commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

The North Herts Circuit appoints *Mrs Sue Chastney* as Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and (*name*) as Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports him/her/them in their role.

a) Roles and responsibilities

Superintendent

1. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for staff of the circuit and for members of the local churches in the circuit.
5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and a Safeguarding Children Coordinator and that the details of that person are passed to the District office.
6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
7. Support the Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and the Safeguarding Children Coordinator in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

Circuit Stewards

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

Circuit Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Circuit Safeguarding Children Coordinator

1. Support and advise the Circuit Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards in fulfilling their roles.
2. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues.
3. Liaise with the District Safeguarding Group(s).

4. With the support of the Superintendent ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.

b) Procedures for circuit events involving children or vulnerable adults

It is essential that circuit events that involve children or vulnerable adults do not slip through the net because they are not owned by one church.

c) Responsibility for those planning and leading the event

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

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

Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises.

The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, including safeguarding and first aid personnel. Particular health or ability needs should have been taken into account.

Numbers of children or vulnerable adults involved.

Transportation following good practice guidelines.

d) Key concepts and definitions

i) Vulnerable Adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

ii) Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

iii) 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.

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

Dated

Signed Chair of Circuit Meeting

Health and Safety Policy

Health and Safety Policy for the North Herts Methodist Circuit

The Policy of the Circuit is to provide and maintain, as reasonably practicable; safe and healthy conditions, equipment and where appropriate, documented systems for all those who are engaged in church and associated activities; and to provide such information, training and supervision as they may need for this purpose. The Circuit also accepts responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities and to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 and any other relevant legislation as appropriate.

The allocation of duties and responsibilities for safety matters and the particular arrangements which the Circuit will make to implement this policy, will be the responsibility of the Managing Trustees of each of the churches, including those who are within a Local Ecumenical Partnership.

The Circuit recognises that the promotion and continual improvement of health and safety is an essential function of good management, and considers that every responsible person should endeavour to ensure compliance with this policy, whilst ensuring that all those engaged in church activities are made aware of their own responsibilities.

This policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Circuit changes in nature in size. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed at least once a year.

Date:

Signed:

Date of next review