



Christchurch, Ilkley Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy

This policy was agreed at a Trustees' meeting held on 23 March 2017.

Christchurch, 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.

Christchurch is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people (up to age 18) and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

Christchurch 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. Christchurch seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

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

Christchurch 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.

Christchurch 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.

Christchurch commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

Christchurch commits itself to ensuring the implementation of the Methodist Church's Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the Wharfedale and Aireborough Circuit and in the churches. Current Safeguarding Policies include Safeguarding Children and Young People (2010), Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

(2010) and Safer Recruitment Policy (2013). *(These can be viewed on the Methodist Church Safeguarding website).*

Christchurch 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.

Christchurch affirms and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

Christchurch appoints Merle Collins as Church Safeguarding Adults Representative and Merle Collins as Church Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports her in her role which is to:

- i) support and advise the Minister and the Trustees and Leadership Team in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with Circuit and District Safeguarding Coordinators
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers.

a) Purposes

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 Church's Safeguarding Handbook (2010) and Safer Recruitment Policy of June 2013 (Methodist and Church of England Joint Policy)

b) Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- 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 note of this will be made and kept noting reason, date, time and place of visit. This should be sanctioned and endorsed by a third person.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Trustees in written form. 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 or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate.
- v) 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

c) Appointment and training of workers with children and vulnerable adults

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure and be subject to a confidential self-declaration. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training such as 'Creating Safer Space'. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling etc).

d) Existing Workers (lay or ordained, voluntary or employed) with children and vulnerable adults

The commitment of the Church to welcoming everyone into our community means that recruitment and existing working practices need to be exceptionally rigorous. All existing workers, whether lay or ordained, voluntary or employed, will be subject to a confidential self-declaration and a criminal record check in line with the current Methodist legislation regarding eligibility. Criminal record checks (DBS) will be updated every five years. The Trustees commit to supporting Merle Collins in the necessary work required in fulfilling this requirement.

e) Pastoral visitors

Pastoral visitors will be supported by basic safeguarding training (Creating Safer Space).

f) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

A pocket guide on Safeguarding should be given to each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults outlining good practice and systems and how to respond to any concerns. It will contain important contact numbers.

g) Ecumenical events

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

h) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to Merle Collins.

i) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement (which should include Safeguarding Form E), will be given a copy of this policy. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings and will ensure that any lettings involving children or vulnerable adults have their own DBS checks in place.

j) Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisations. However, a complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the Trustees and who is currently Merle Collins. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to Merle Collins who will arrange to meet with the complainant together with Rev Dr Roberta Topham to attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of the Methodist Church which will involve initially speaking with the Local Complaints Officer who is the Circuit Superintendent.

k) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees. The date of the next review will be before April 2018.

l) 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 Trustees