



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for
Nottingham North East Circuit 22/01

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 30/11/2022

It will be reviewed on 01/11/2023

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.

1. The Policy

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be an active and evolving 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 Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of humans 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 Nottingham North East Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults. It affirms that the needs and care of children or adults when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount. It is recognised that such 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 Nottingham North East 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, discriminatory, domestic or institutional abuse or neglect, abuse using social media 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 issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The Nottingham North East Circuit commits itself to:

1. **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. It commits itself to providing informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.
2. Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (updated 2018), the Nottingham and Derby District Safeguarding Policy for churches, government legislation for guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
3. 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.
4. **AFFIRMS** and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of us all for safeguarding children, and vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

2. 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 *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (updated 2018)*.

The full implementation of these policies should ensure that:

- Church (and all associated activities) is a safer place for everyone.
- Communities we serve have confidence that children and vulnerable adults are as safe as possible and that their wellbeing is enhanced in the life of the church.
- People in the church are alert to unsafe practices and are able to challenge them.
- Office holders are safely recruited, trained for their roles and are accountable for their activities.
- People who have experienced abuse are accepted, empowered and supported in maintaining control over their lives and making informed choices without coercion.
- People who abuse are held accountable to the law and their risk within their church community is managed with the support of their Monitoring and Support Group and District Safeguarding Officer. This may involve encouraging them to consider their behaviour.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Circuit Meeting

It is the responsibility of the Circuit Meeting to appoint a Circuit Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. It is not appropriate for any minister to fill any gap, because of the potential conflict of roles. The role will usually be undertaken on a voluntary basis although expenses should be met.

The Nottingham North East Circuit appoints and supports

- Miss Gillian Surgay as Circuit Safeguarding Officer
- Mrs Lynda Johnson as Circuit Safeguarding Officer
- Mrs Marguerite Carter as Circuit Safeguarding Officer

The circuit meeting holds the following responsibilities which may be delegated to the Circuit Safeguarding Officer, or Circuit Administrator where appropriate:

- i. Support and advice to the circuit superintendent and the circuit stewards in fulfilling their roles.
- ii. Ensuring that the safety and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults within the circuit is maintained.
- iii. Receipt of risk assessments, policy and training schedules from churches across the circuit for sharing with the circuit meeting annually.
- iv. Review of the circuit safeguarding policy at least annually and provision of an updated copy to the district safeguarding officer.
- v. Ensuring that all circuit churches adopt a safer recruitment policy when appointing staff, or volunteers.
- vi. Ensure agreed procedures are in place for circuit and ecumenical events that involve children or adults who may be vulnerable. (see appendix 1)

3.2. Circuit Safeguarding Officers

- i. Be the point of reference for individual Church Safeguarding Officers throughout the circuit to guide and advise them upon Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy requirements.
- ii. Liaison with the district safeguarding group(s).
- iii. Provision of support to the superintendent, making sure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.
- iv. Prompt and appropriate response to safeguarding concerns raised about children, and vulnerable adults at risk or believed to be suffering harm, including immediate referral to statutory agencies where appropriate, and liaison with the district safeguarding officer.
- v. Supporting the Superintendent in recording all safeguarding issues and retention of records.
- vi. Present a report to each Circuit meeting about safeguarding events (noting the need for relevant confidentiality regarding specific cases).
- vii. Reporting (in conjunction with the superintendent and relevant minister) any concerns to the district safeguarding officer immediately.
- viii. Acting with the Superintendent with regard to reports required by the district or Connexion.
- ix. Attendance at the circuit staff meeting as necessary to discuss concerns brought to their attention.
- x. Liaison with the individual church safeguarding officers to make sure that they are being compliant with The Church Safeguarding Policy - for use of Churches in the Nottingham and

Derby District of the Methodist Church.

- xi. Partnership work with the Superintendent minister, ministers and the district safeguarding officer regarding safeguarding concerns.
- xii. Meeting with the church safeguarding officers at least annually.
- xiii. Attendance at training as necessary.
- xiv. Attendance at district safeguarding events.
- xv. Membership of and active participation in district safeguarding liaison meetings as called by the district safeguarding officer
- xvi. Work with local ecumenical partners and their safeguarding representatives where necessary.
- xvii. Source of up-to-date knowledge of current policies and practice in statutory services and within the Church.
- xviii. Organisation of and contribution to safeguarding training for all those working in voluntary and paid roles within the circuit.
- xix. DBS verification on behalf of the circuit.
- xx. Assisting in setting up Monitoring and Support Groups for those engaging in Safeguarding Agreements and ensuring periodic reviews take place.

3.3. Circuit Administrator

- i. Maintenance of the circuit safeguarding database keeping a record of all people within the circuit who have received Creating Safer Space Foundation Module and Refresher training, together with dates of attendance.
- ii. Ensuring that all persons receive appropriate training when working with children and vulnerable adults, hold an office of responsibility, or are in other applicable roles as defined in the Methodist Church policy.
- iii. Overseeing timely delivery of appropriate training, in liaison with the Church Safeguarding Officers and accredited Circuit Trainers.
- iv. Sending out letters of invitation to safeguarding training. (every four years)
- v. Retaining records, via the circuit safeguarding database, of the names of those within the circuit and the churches of those who require DBS checks.
- vi. Sending out reminders for obtaining or updating DBS (updates every 5 years)
- vii. Maintenance of a directory of useful names and contact details.
- viii. Liaise with the Church Safeguarding Officers to ensure the collation of all necessary

documentation for the safer recruitment of all volunteers in line with the Nottingham and Derby District Safeguarding Policy for churches. This will include role descriptions, self-declarations and references.

- ix. Liaise with the Church Safeguarding Officers to ensure the secure retention of records and documents from the safer recruiting process.

3.4. Superintendent Minister

- i. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
- ii. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
- iii. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
- iv. 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.
- v. Ensuring that safeguarding is on the Circuit Meeting agenda as a 'standing' item.
- vi. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints (a) circuit safeguarding officer/s and that the details of each person are passed to the district office.
- vii. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
- viii. Ensure that all appropriate safeguarding records are kept securely.
- ix. Ensure that any Circuit lay employees are recruited safely.
- x. Liaise with and support the District Safeguarding Officer on any local church or Circuit Safeguarding issues as required.
- xi. Be familiar with all safeguarding concerns in the Circuit and local churches, including any safeguarding agreements that are in operation and ensure such information is passed onto the next Superintendent minister when stationed.
- xii. Support the circuit safeguarding officers in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions and providing supervisory oversight (or from a nominated substitute), with signed and agreed records of meetings.

3.3 Circuit stewards

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

4. Safer Recruitment

The Superintendent Minister and the Circuit Safeguarding Officers will ensure that the following 12 step safer recruitment process is followed for all Circuit lay employees:

Step 1 Have an up-to-date recruitment and selection policy that describes the process and roles.

Step 2 Ensure the church's commitment to safeguarding is included in all recruitment and selection materials.

Step 3 Write or update a job description/role outline and person specification for the role(s). If a DBS check is required this should be made clear in the person specification, including the level of check required.

Step 4 Advertise the role including a timetable for recruitment and the church's commitment to safeguarding.

Step 5 Send out a suitable candidate information pack containing all the required information about the Circuit role, recruitment timetable, safeguarding policy/statement, application form and confidential declaration.

Step 6 Scrutinise applications in a systematic way by a shortlisting panel in order to agree your shortlist before inviting to interview.

Step 7 Undertake appropriate checks on shortlisted candidates, including references (not family members). Confirm identity and relevant certificates of qualifications/course attendance. Check 'right to work in the UK'. Remember that, under SO 010, the Methodist Church prohibits the appointment of any person with a criminal conviction or caution for offences against children.

Step 8 Invite shortlisted candidates to interview.

Step 9 Conduct a face-to-face interview for ALL shortlisted candidates based on an objective assessment of the candidate's ability to meet the person specification and job description.

Step 10 Ensure that all specific questions designed to gain required information about each candidate's suitability have been asked, including those needed to address any gaps in information supplied on the application form.

Step 11 Confidently select a preferred candidate based upon their demonstration of suitability for the role.

Step 12 Ensure that your preferred candidate is informed in writing that the offer of employment (including volunteer positions) is conditional on receiving satisfactory information from all necessary checks, including a DBS check if necessary. *Announce successful appointee once all background checks have been completed satisfactorily.*

Key concepts and definitions

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Safeguarding is protecting children, or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
4. Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community or 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

Appendix 1

Procedures for circuit events involving children, young people 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. Circuit events to be notified to the district safeguarding officer prior to these being agreed to ensure that all permissions, risk assessments and good practice guidelines are in place.

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:

- i. Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises
- ii. Safer recruitment of all volunteers
- iii. The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, including safeguarding and first aid personnel (particular health or ability needs should be taken into account)
- iv. Numbers of children, young people or vulnerable adults involved
- v. Transportation following good practice guidelines.

This information is to be sent to the district safeguarding officer for approval PRIOR to the event being agreed.