

## **Christ Church Methodist and United Reformed Church Safeguarding Policy**

### **Introduction**

Christ Church Methodist and United Reformed Church (URC) Trustees agreed on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018, that the Methodist Church UK Safeguarding Policy would be implemented irrespective of the denomination of the minister in pastoral charge. Therefore, this policy is cross-referenced to the safeguarding policy of Methodist Church UK. Christ Church's policy was agreed by the Church Trustees on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

### **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**

We, the Church, 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, the Church, 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 with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

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

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

Working with the District Safeguarding Officer, we will support risk assessment of those who present a safeguarding risk within the Church environment. We will ensure appropriate pastoral care is offered and measures are taken to address identified risks including referral to the statutory agencies, suspension and the use of safeguarding contracts. We will recognise and apply the restrictions to appointment laid down in Standing Order 010 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church.

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

### **Christ Church Policy**

Christ Church Methodist and URC 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, child sexual exploitation or human trafficking (slavery). It acknowledges the affect this 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 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.

1. Christ Church Methodist and URC will **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.
2. Christ Church Methodist and URC commits itself to ensuring the **implementation** of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
3. Christ Church Methodist and URC 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.
4. Christ Church Methodist and URC **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 vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

### **Trustees**

It is the responsibility of Christ Church Methodist and URC Trustees to appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. It is not appropriate for the 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 Trustees appoint Gill Constable as Church Safeguarding Officer Adults and Children and supports her in her role, which is to:

- provide support and advice to the minister and the elders in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding.
- ensure that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is displayed at all times in the church on a safeguarding noticeboard, along with the name of the current safeguarding officer, national helplines and other suitable information. This must be renewed annually.
- record all safeguarding issues that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist policy and procedure.
- promote appropriate routes for reporting of concerns.
- identify and inform those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance. Work with the circuit safeguarding officer and District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) to arrange training.
- attend training and meetings relating to the role.
- work in partnership with the lettings officer, elders and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. This will include gaining written confirmation that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy or are using an appropriate policy of their own.
- check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Church Meetings and report to the AGM annually.
- inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures.
- advise the circuit safeguarding officer and/or DSO of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.

#### **a) Purpose**

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people 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 (2020)', which is available on line at:

<https://www.methodistchurch.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding/>

#### **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 date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed by a member of the Property Committee and the

Church Safeguarding Officer. The latter will initiate this annually and provide a written report for the Church Trustees. This will include fire safety procedures. The Church Trustees will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable for all users.

- 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 (where required) are appropriate. (See 6.10.7.1 of the Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church). This will be undertaken by the person organising the activity. An agreed record to be kept in the church file for each driver/car.
- v) Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any Christ Church organised activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. Approval will be obtained from the Trustees. A written record of the assessment will be retained securely.
- vi) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Church 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 church workers**

This paragraph refers to paid church workers recruited, selected, employed and supervised by Christ Church, that is not third-party contractors. Church workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Safer recruitment procedures of the Methodist Church will be implemented. Each church worker will have an identified supervisor who will meet at regular intervals with the church worker. A record of these meetings will be agreed and signed and the record kept. Each church worker will be expected to undergo Foundation Module (2020 edition) safeguarding training, within the first 6 months (agreed by Methodist Conference in 2011 – *Creating Safer Space Report*) of appointment. The other training needs of each church worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, moving and handling, etc).

#### **d) Pastoral visitors, volunteers working with children and young people**

Pastoral Visitors and volunteers working with children and young people will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. They will be supported in their role with the provision of Foundation Module 2020 safeguarding training, which will be a priority to arrange once the person has been appointed to the role.

#### **e) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults**

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems will be given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. (*The Code of Safer Working Practice* can be found at Appendix V of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance).

#### **f) Ecumenical events**

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

Christ Church Trustees.

**g) Events with church groups off the premises**

Adequate staffing, a risk assessment and notification of the event to be given to the church safeguarding officer prior to the agreement for any event or off-site activity. Notification of the event will be given to the minister. If the activity is unusual or considered to be high risk the safeguarding officer will contact the circuit safeguarding officer in order that it can be ratified or queries raised.

**h) Other groups on church premises**

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement will be given a copy of this policy. The Bookings Manager will consider the various users of the building in making lettings.

**i) Complaints procedure**

If possible, complaints will be dealt with internally by the organisation. However, if the complaint is of a safeguarding nature, relating to possible abuse of children or vulnerable adults, then the District Safeguarding Officer will be consulted as statutory services may need to be informed. A complaint may be made to the Minister in Pastoral Charge. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to the Minister in Pastoral Charge who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint.

If the complaint relates to the minister it will be referred to the superintendent minister. 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 superintendent minister.

**j) Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Trustees. The date of the next review is November 2021.

**k) 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 and 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.

Dated: 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Signed: Rev'd Helen Higgin-Botham  
Chair of Christ Church Trustees

## **METHODIST CHURCH UK SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS**

Connexional Safeguarding Team  
Methodist Church House  
25 Marylebone Road  
London NW1 5JR  
Tel: 020 7467 5189  
Email: [safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk)

District Safeguarding Officer  
South East District  
Philippa Read  
Tel: 07958 915747  
Tel: 01293 813970 District Office  
Email: [safeguarding@methodistsoutheast.org](mailto:safeguarding@methodistsoutheast.org)

## **WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Raising a concern about a child.** If you think that a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

If the concern is less urgent and you are worried about a child under 18 years of age living in West Sussex contact: 01403 229900

Out of Hours: Emergency Duty Team (5.00pm-8.00am weekdays) and for emergencies at weekends and bank holidays (24 hours) on: 0330 2226664.

If the Emergency Duty Team is not available ring: 07711769657

**Raising a concern about an adult.** If you think the danger is immediate phone the police on 999.

If less urgent phone Sussex Police on 101.

Contact Adults' Care Point on 01243 642121.

For a same day response ring Adult Social Care Out of Hours Manager: 0330 2227007

## **OTHER CONTACTS**

**NSPCC** Help for adults concerned about a child. Call 0808 800 5000

**ChildLine** Help for children and young people. Call 0800 1111

**WORTH Domestic Abuse Advisors** [www.worthservices.org](http://www.worthservices.org) support to people affected by domestic abuse in West Sussex. Always phone 999 in an emergency. Contact can be made by calling: 07834 968539 or 0330 2228181

**National Domestic Violence** Freephone Helpline 24 hours: 0808 2000247