

# North Kent Methodist Circuit

## Policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

**This Policy** was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015. It will be reviewed in March 2016.

**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 Kent Circuit** recognises that no one is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by a 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 a person's humanity.

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

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

The **North Kent Circuit** fully agrees with the Connexional statement of **The Methodist Church** 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 **North Kent Circuit** recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effect such abuse and/or neglect may have on people and their development, including their 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 person can reach their full potential in God's grace.

The **North Kent Circuit** commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether within one of the Circuit Churches 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 been convicted of or who are alleged to have committed criminal offences against children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The **North Kent Circuit** commits itself to ensuring the implementation of the Connexional Safeguarding Policy of The Methodist Church, relevant legislation and guidance and safe practice in the Circuit and in the Circuit Churches.

The **North Kent 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.

### **Policy Purpose**

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to ensure: (a) appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and (b) people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in the care of the Circuit Churches and who use Circuit Church premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

The **North Kent Circuit** appoints Mrs Sue Byard as Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Mrs Sue Byard as Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports her in her 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. Procedure for Circuit events involving children or vulnerable adults**

In planning the event attention must be given to the following issues from a safeguarding perspective: A risk assessment should be carried out in which the suitability of the activity and the premises is assessed. When appointing a team to take charge of the event, this should include safeguarding and first aid personnel. Where known in advance particular health or ability needs of the attendees should be taken into account. The number of children or vulnerable adults involved should be identified to ensure appropriate supervision/support. Any transportation should follow good practice guidelines.

**C. Responsibility of those planning and leading a Circuit event involving children or vulnerable adults**

All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of and ensure the above procedure is adopted for all Circuit events that involve children or vulnerable adults.

**D. Key concepts and definitions**

- 1) 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.
- 2) Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults** from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 Signed  Chair of Circuit Meeting

# North Kent Methodist Circuit Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

## Positive Working Together

### A Policy adopted by the North Kent Circuit on 19th March 2015

#### **Introduction: why we need a policy**

We do not yet have a truly safe and inclusive Church. Respondents to a recent survey of ministers and lay people in the Methodist Church in Britain indicated that 64% had suffered bullying and comments entered in the survey indicated that there are many instances of being treated badly in the life of the Methodist Church.

#### **The early Church**

It is clear from many letters in the New Testament that the early Christians faced such behaviour and were determined to deal with it. For example:

"But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labour among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you ..." (*1Thessalonians 5:12*)

"Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." (*Ephesians 4:31*)

The same determination is appropriate and necessary in the 21st century Church.

#### **Positive Working Together — The Policy**

This policy applies to all Church activity, formal and informal, wherever it takes place.

#### **Our Shared Commitment**

The Methodist Church strives to be diverse and inclusive and therefore welcomes difference, whilst recognising that to do so can be challenging. The Church draws people of many different ways of working and relating. Of relevance to this document is that people have different ways of dealing with disagreements and conflicts.

This document seeks to promote positive working together in order to create local church communities where all can be safe, be treated with respect, love, and dignity, and where no individual or group seeks to be dominant. ('Whoever wants to be first must be the servant of all': Mark 10:44). It does not suggest that having differences of opinion or approach is unacceptable but rather that the sharing of difference in appropriate ways facilitates growth.

#### **Foundation Values**

1. *Everyone is equally important to God and must be treated with respect.*
2. *The Methodist Church recognises the equal value of everyone before God in every ethnic group, and whatever their sexual orientation, level of ability, gender, age, or faith.*
3. *As an inclusive church, it recognises and welcomes difference, and acknowledges that sometimes difference brings with it challenge.*
4. *The Methodist Church deliberately works in collaborative ways which generally involve sharing leadership and decision making.*

## **Our Commitment to work together positively**

We commit ourselves to:

- listen carefully to each other, seeking to understand what we are saying to each other.
- speak and act respectfully towards each other, however different we may be in opinions or approach to life.
- value the uniqueness of each person.
- be courteous and respectful in all communications whether face to face, by email, or via social media.
- encourage each other to be open and confident in our relationships.

and

- not to behave in ways which involve, for example; shouting, insults, expletives, gossip, verbal or physical intimidation, exclusion, ridicule, or aggression.
- in the committees and councils of the Church to listen and speak with care and respect without interrupting others.
- if we disagree with others to continue to work together positively respecting our differences.

## **Our commitment to avoid inappropriate behaviours**

All who serve the Church, whether as ministers, lay employees, or Church members, should be free to do so creatively and without being bullied or harassed. All have the right to be treated with respect and dignity and should have the right of access to a process through which such inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

We commit ourselves to behave in ways that

- show respect for each other
- treat other people with dignity
- honour our cultural background
- affirm each other in our differences

and not to

- insult threaten undermine or intimidate anyone or
- to abuse in any way the power that we may have through our office or position in the church

and which the person who experiences such behaviour may consider amounts to harassment or bullying.

## **Harassment and bullying**

We understand harassment and bullying to have the following characteristics. 1

Harassment

- 1.1. Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.
- 1.2. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.
- 1.3. Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.
- 1.4. Harassment may include, for example:
  - unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing;
  - unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may

- perceive as harmless);
  - offensive e-mails, text messages or social media content;
  - mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability.
- 1.5. A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if the jokes create an offensive environment

## 2 Bullying

2.1 Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Bullying may include, by way of example:

- physical or psychological threats;
- overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision;
- inappropriate derogatory remarks about someone's performance;

2.2 Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of a person's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to workers in the course of their employment, will not amount to bullying on their own.

## 3 If you consider that you are being harassed or bullied

3.1 If you believe that you are being harassed or bullied, consider whether you feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. You should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing, you should speak to the safeguarding officer for your church, or if this is not possible the Circuit Safeguarding officer who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

3.2 If informal steps are not appropriate, or have not been successful, you should raise the matter formally as a complaint.

3.3 We will investigate complaints in a timely and confidential manner. The investigation will be conducted by someone with appropriate experience and no prior involvement in the complaint, where possible. Details of the investigation and the names of the person making the complaint and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need to know" basis. We will consider whether any steps are necessary to manage any ongoing relationship between you and the person complained about during the investigation.

3.4 Once the investigation is complete, we will inform you of our decision. If we consider you have been harassed or bullied. If the harasser or bully is a third party, we will consider what action would be appropriate to deal with the problem. Whether or not your complaint is upheld, we will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationship between you and the person concerned.

3.5 This does not prevent any person from raising a formal Complaint at any stage through the formal process provided by the Methodist Church. These procedures are to be found on the Methodist Church website under "Complaints and Discipline".

## 4 Protection and support for those involved

4.1 People who make complaints about harassment or bullying or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result.

## 5 Record keeping

5.1 Information about a complaint will be retained by the Circuit Safeguarding officer, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process. These will be processed in accordance with the Circuit's Data Protection Policy.

## **Our commitment to work positively where there is a dispute**

Recognising that there is likely to be conflict between all people, including Christians, we commit ourselves:

- when in dispute with one another to endeavour to continue to work together positively as we committed ourselves to do when we disagree with each other.
- to participate in and value open discussion of different points of view as a way of working together to resolve our disputes.
- to acknowledge our mistakes and seek reconciliation, being ready to give and receive both apology and forgiveness.
- where appropriate to use the pattern for resolving disagreements proposed in Mt 18:15-17.

When seeking to resolve a dispute using this pattern:

- If the person involved feels able to, he/she shall speak with the person or persons concerned without bringing in others, recognising that this will require prayer and self-reflection, courage, and a willingness to be vulnerable.
- If the person involved does not feel able to undertake this first step or this does not bring reconciliation, he/she shall invite a trusted member of the church to assist.
- If the problem persists, use the process for reconciliation provided by the Methodist Church (see below).
- If any person involved is effectively excluding themselves from the church, ensure the church leadership is aware so that they can continue to care for them.
- Remember that Jesus promises to be present in this process (Mt 18:20) and that we are called to ask for forgiveness when we have been mistaken or hurtful, and to continue to strive to become more Christ-like.

## **Positive Working Together: with help from the Circuit and District**

1. If the steps above are not effective in bringing about resolution of the dispute, the Methodist Church provides procedures in both the Circuit and District for resolving differences. These procedures are to be found on the Methodist Church website under "Complaints and Discipline".
2. If an inter-personal problem has been raised first in the local church and no resolution has been found, it can next be raised with any person in the local church or Circuit in whom the person with a concern (a 'complaint') has confidence. This may be the local complaints officer, who is the Superintendent Minister or a person appointed by the Superintendent. (Where the Superintendent is the person about whom the complaint is to be made the Complaints Officer is the District Chair.)
3. The person receiving the complaint will first seek to resolve the situation informally by whatever means seem appropriate. This may include consulting the District Reconciliation Group and /or suggesting mediation.
4. If this process does not lead to a resolution, there is a formal complaints procedure provided in the Standing Orders of the Methodist Church.
5. All people who are being caused distress by inappropriate behaviour are encouraged to seek pastoral care and/or counselling using the resources provided by Circuit, District, or Connexion.

19 March 2015

# CREATING SAFER SPACE

## Foundation Module

### WHO NEEDS SAFEGUARDING TRAINING?

This list was approved by the Methodist Conference 2011 where it formed an appendix to the *Creating Safer Space* report.

#### **Core List - Required Attendance**

- ◇ Presbyters with an active preaching or pastoral ministry
- ◇ Deacons with an active preaching or pastoral ministry
- ◇ Pre-ordination students and probationers
- ◇ Lay employees & Volunteer Workers with pastoral responsibility
- ◇ Pastoral Visitors
- ◇ Anyone working with 0 – 18 year olds in the name of the church
- ◇ Anyone working in activities targeted at adults who are vulnerable (e.g. luncheon club for the housebound)
- ◇ Church stewards
- ◇ Circuit stewards
- ◇ Local preachers
- ◇ Worship leaders
- ◇ Those training for local preaching or worship leading
- ◇ Church and circuit safeguarding representatives
- ◇ Choir/music group/drama leaders – where there are 0-18 year olds or vulnerable adults in the group.
- ◇ District staff especially policy committee members, complaints and discipline, mediators
- ◇ Core teaching staff at Methodist Church Training Institutions
- ◇ Connexional staff with direct safeguarding links e.g. children and youth workers

#### **Warmly invited but not mandatory**

- ◇ Evangelism/mission enablers
- ◇ Leaders of other organisations, working with 0-18yr olds or vulnerable adults, who use church premises
- ◇ Remaining Choir/music group/drama leaders
- ◇ Any other group leaders within the church, who may have adults within their particular group who are vulnerable.
- ◇ Property stewards and other keyholders
- ◇ Caretakers
- ◇ Church/circuit meeting secretaries
- ◇ Church/circuit/district administrators
- ◇ Remaining District and Connexional staff
- ◇ Remaining teaching staff at Methodist Church Training Institutions

NOTES:

1. People in the above roles who have received safeguarding training in other roles (eg as a teacher or police officer) still need to attend. The training is specific to the church context. In the same way, such a person would NOT be exempt from education/police training, because they have done the church training. Their attendance is also valuable because of the expertise they can share with other trainees.
2. Property stewards/keyholders/caretakers. This covers a multitude of activities. Where these people have direct contact with vulnerable groups, it may be decided locally by the Church Council that they should attend. They are listed here in the second group to avoid unduly including people who have no apparent link at all with safeguarding.
3. Church and circuit stewards are included on the core list because of their important role in church life, and particularly their responsibilities in responding to adults who may be vulnerable, who might attend any church service on an ad hoc basis to access support. Where age or infirmity suggests



## Who needs a DBS check?

The following roles require an enhanced criminal record check **and** a barred list check (Group 1)

- All Methodist ministers including ordained presbyters and deacons, those candidating for the ministry, probationer presbyters and deacons, and all supernumerary presbyters and deacons still capable of a preaching or pastoral ministry.
- All having **substantial contact** with children (under 18) including driving (organised by the church). (four or more times in 30 days or overnight)
- All having **substantial contact** with Vulnerable Adults (VA) This includes pastoral visitors where the role includes direct feeding, physical care, or assistance with financial matters; also driving (organised by the church) to medical or social care appointments. (four or more times in 30 days or overnight)
- Managers: Those managing workers who undertake Regulated Activity with children or vulnerable adults, for example Sunday School Superintendent, the manager of a luncheon provision for adults with serious physical disabilities where help with feeding is required, or anyone who manages those who train children.
- Those managing workers who work with children, where the role would have been Regulated Activity were it not for the level of supervision provided (see App. 3 for more details) with children or vulnerable adults – for example the manager of a crèche worker who is never alone with children and whose work is always directly observed.

The following roles require an enhanced criminal record check **without a barred list check** (Group 2)

- Those working alongside parents: Those working with children in the presence of their parents, carers, or supervisors, but where on occasion the worker cares for the child without the parents present – including family worker and leader of parent & toddler groups or Messy Church.
- Those whose role was (pre 2012) deemed to be Regulated Activity (with either children or vulnerable adults) and therefore now fall into Group 2 – eligible for criminal record but not for barring information. (See App..4) This includes members of PCC, church council, and circuit meetings especially the Church Wardens, **senior stewards**, and leaders for safeguarding. It also includes some specific roles for example visitors into schools e.g. Open The Book volunteers.
- Substantial work with children: All those working with children or young people where either the period condition (frequent, intense, overnight) is not met or where there is sufficient supervision to move the role out of Group 1 Regulated Activity . See App. 3 below. For example – a volunteer youth worker whose turn on the rota is only every other week (not frequent) or for example the crèche worker who is never alone with children and whose work is always directly supervised .
- Substantial work with vulnerable adults Those working with vulnerable adults where the role is substantial (Group 2) but does not fit the criteria for Regulated Activity . This includes some lay readers, worship leaders and local preachers; drivers for church activities; pastoral visitors/ assistants / home visitors

The following roles are unlikely to be eligible for an enhanced criminal record check

- Safeguarding representatives
- Those in “peer” or self-help arrangements
- Shop staff, tour guides, welcome teams, refreshment servers, flower arrangers, others who have limited or no contact with children or vulnerable adults. (Equivalent to the contact of a shop keeper)

**Notes:**

It is required that:

- New Lay Readers should obtain a criminal record check before their training commences
- New Local Preachers should obtain a criminal record check **prior to going ‘on trial’**
- New Worship Leaders should obtain a criminal record check **before their training commences**
- For all current Lay Readers, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, decisions should be based on the nature of their current duties.

Group 2 includes:

- Lay workers whose work is with children or vulnerable adults for example, lay pastoral workers, youth, children and family workers.
- Youth workers
- Children’s workers
- Holiday club workers
- Sunday school teachers
- Crèche workers
- Family support workers where work is done separately with children
- Toddler group workers (if parent not attending)
- Sports, music, drama etc. workers if working with children/VAs
- Drivers of children/VAs when organised by the church
- Managers of youth, children or family workers

Group 3

Exceptions – those who would not usually be eligible for enhanced DBS check unless they fall into these categories:

- Local Preachers/ Worship Leaders if taking services in care homes
- Lay workers and pastoral assistants if more focussed on children or VAs
- Those taking extended home communion
- Pastoral visitors only if they are involved in personal care for VAs in their homes.
- Regular drivers if organised by the church
- Managers of volunteers and staff who deliver regulated activities.
- Food bank workers if they are working directly with clients

## How to apply for a Church DBS check

You will need 3 documents to prove your identity. Ideally a driving licence, a passport and one utility bill issued in the last 3 months.

Further guidance can be found in the resources section of the CAS website:

<http://www.churchsafe.org.uk/>

### Application:

Go to <https://disclosure.capitarvs.co.uk/cas/> and click on the yellow box "Start Application"

The Organisation reference is METH3621

and the password is METHOD402

There are two pages to read and tick that you accept them and then a form for you to complete all your details.

When you have completed the form you will be asked to save it.

Please contact one of the Circuit approved verifiers to arrange to meet them with your documents to be verified.

Sue Byard (Maidstone)	01622 735527	suebyard@gmail.com
Tony Crowcroft (Gillingham)	01634 570694	tonycrowcroft@gmail.com
Tracey Burch (Dartford)	01322 865545	traceylburch@yahoo.co.uk
Laurel Townend (Maidstone)	01732 843313	laurel.townend@btinternet.com
Simon Curry (Gillingham)	01634 400994	simoncurry@fastmail.fm

Your verifier will need to see you with three separate documents, one from each of the following lists:

**Group 1 Documents (Primary Trusted Identity Credentials)**

Current valid Passport (Any Nationality)
Biometric Residence Permit (UK)
Current Photocard Driving Licence with counterpart where one is issued (UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or EU) (Full or provisional) Please note some European countries do not issue counterparts)
Birth Certificate (UK or Channel Islands) issued at the time of birth; Full or short form acceptable including those issued by UK authorities overseas, such as Embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces. (No photocopies)
Adoption Certificate (UK)

**Group 2a Documents (Trusted Government/State Issued Documents)**

Current driving licence – photo card (where a counterpart has been issued but no counterpart is presented) All countries
Current driving licence – paper version (UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or EU)
Birth Certificate (UK and Channel Islands) - (issued after the time of birth by the General Register Office/relevant authority i.e. Registrars – Photocopies are not acceptable)
Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate (UK and Channel Islands)
HM Forces ID card (UK)
Fire Arms Licence (UK and Channel Islands)

**Group 2b Documents (Financial / Social History Documents)**

Mortgage statement (UK or EEA) **
Bank / Building Society Statement (UK or EEA) *
Bank / Building Society Account Opening Confirmation Letter (UK)*
Credit Card Statement (UK or EAA) *
Financial Statement (e.g. Pension, Endowment, ISA) (UK) **
P45 / P60 (UK or Channel Islands) **
Council Tax Statement (UK or Channel Islands) **
Work Permit / Visa (UK) (UK Residence Permit)
Letter of Sponsorship from future employment provider (Non-UK/Non-EEA only – valid only for applicants residing outside of the UK at time of application)
Utility Bill (not mobile telephone) (UK) *
Benefit statement (e.g. Child Allowance, Pension) *
A Document from Central/Local Government Agency (UK) *
EU National ID card
Cards carrying the PASS Accreditation logo (UK + Ch Islands)
Letter from Head Teacher/College Principal (16/19 yr olds only)

**Key: \* issued within last 3 months , \*\* issued within last 12 months, EEA – European Economic Area**