

Burley Methodist Church
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

June 2017

This policy was agreed at a Church Council meeting held on **19th June 2017**.

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

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.

Principles

Burley Methodist Church is committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry for all: children, young people and adults.
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people (up to the age of 18) and adults.
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

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.

Policy

1. Burley Methodist Church 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.

2. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Methodist Connexional Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance and recognised good practice in the Methodist Circuit and in the churches. Current Safeguarding Policies include: *"Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2017)*, *'Safeguarding Children and Young People' (2015)*, *'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (2010)*, *'Safer Recruitment Policy' (2013)* and *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church – Consultation Document March – July 2014*.

3. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children, young people or adults when they are vulnerable are paramount.
4. Burley Methodist Church 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, 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.
5. Burley Methodist Church 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 its moral obligations and the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.
6. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to respond without delay to every allegation or cause for concern that any child, young person or adult may have been harmed, whether on the church premises or in another context, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
7. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
8. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to seek to offer informed pastoral care to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation.
9. Burley Methodist Church commits itself to seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against any child, young person or adult.
10. Burley Methodist Church, in as far as it can, will protect survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse.
11. Burley Methodist Church 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.
12. Burley Methodist Church 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. Burley Methodist Church recognises that the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and adults is everyone's responsibility and commits itself to honesty, openness, vigilance and

responsibility in all areas of its life and work.

13. Burley Methodist Church appoints **Karen Shinn** as Church Safeguarding Officer and **Wendy Walker** as Church Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports him/her/them in his/her/their role which is to:

- i) support and advise the Presbyter with Pastoral Oversight and the Church Council 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 staff.

The appointed Safeguarding Representative/s need not be a member of the Church but should have suitable skills and be in sympathy with the church. Where this is the case, one member of the Church Council will be appointed to take responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the Safeguarding policy and ensuring that records are kept up to date.

a) Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and the use of our premises. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2017)* and the *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 date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be presented annually to the Church Council in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The Church Council 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 Church Council will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.
- vi) 'Promoting Safer Practice' guidelines, as outlined in the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010), section 5 and Appendix D, will be made available to all those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, together with a copy of this policy. Group leaders are expected to issue copies of this policy and the Promoting Safer Practice guidelines to all workers in their group.

c) Existing Workers (lay or ordained, voluntary or employed)

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 (Form X) and a DBS disclosure in line with the current Methodist legislation regarding eligibility. Criminal record checks will be updated every five years. The minister and the Church Stewards have a responsibility to ensure that the relevant module of 'Creating Safer Space' Safeguarding training is offered to, and attended by, those identified by the Connexion and approved by Methodist Conference 2011 (See Appendix 1). Burley Methodist Church Council commits itself to supporting **Wendy Walker** in the necessary work required in fulfilling this requirement.

d) Appointment and training of new workers

We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment Policy and Principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes. Each worker is required to complete Safeguarding Form A, part 1 and Safeguarding Form X. Each worker will be expected to complete a satisfactory probationary period. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first year of appointment (See Appendix 1 for details of those required to attend the Creating Safer Space Foundation Module). The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.). Each worker will have an annual review, or more frequent oversight, by a Church Council-nominated person responsible for the work/group.

It is the responsibility of group leaders to inform the Safeguarding Representative of any prospective new worker in order to ensure that they comply with current policy and procedures before any work with children, young people or vulnerable adults is undertaken.

Young people under the age of 18 must not work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults at any time. It is the responsibility of group leaders to inform the Safeguarding Representative when any young person is helping regularly in a group, and to give a reassurance that they will be properly supervised and supported.

If a potential volunteer expresses the wish to visit a group (on no more than 2 occasions) before deciding to proceed as a leader/helper with children, young people or vulnerable adults; the leader of that group must contact the Safeguarding Coordinator who will arrange for the potential volunteer to complete Safeguarding Form A, Part 1 – Registration Form for Voluntary Workers. This must be lodged with the Safeguarding Coordinator **before** any such visits take place.

e) Office Holders in the Church

All people nominated or holding positions in the Methodist Church must sign an Officeholder Declaration Safeguarding Form C (except local preachers and worship leaders, ministers, and those working with children or vulnerable adults for whom other forms apply). Worship leaders to complete Safeguarding Form B.

f) Key Holders

All key holders for the Church premises are required to complete Safeguarding Form D. A list of key-holders is held by the secretary of the Services Team and appropriate forms must be completed by each key-holder.

The Church Council will keep the list under review.

g) Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, Pastoral Visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment. For those pastoral visitors whose work is more focused on adults or families with increased vulnerability, a DBS Disclosure will be required.

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

A leaflet will be produced and reviewed annually to be given to each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults outlining good practice and systems. A copy of this policy will be given to all those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

i) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on Burley Methodist Church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council. Adequate time is to be allowed in the planning of events to enable criminal records checks to be obtained if necessary.

j) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to **Rev Tim Perkins**. Adequate time is to be allowed in the planning of events to enable criminal records checks to be obtained if necessary.

k) 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 and the summary leaflet. The lettings/hall hire secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings subject to the constraints of Methodist Standing Orders and the appropriate use of Methodist Church premises. Leaders of these groups, including uniformed organisations, will be warmly invited to attend 'Creating Safer Space' training. It is important to note that the observance of 'reasonable care' by both parties is a standard insurance condition. Full details of the policy and guidance for the hire or use of church premises by others may be found in the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2017)* or online at www.methodist.org.uk

A review of all current user-groups to be undertaken to ensure that Safeguarding policy, practice and guidance is up to date. This review to include Little School, the Rubber Bridge Club and all other groups whose work involves contact with children young people or vulnerable adults.

l) The Church and Sex Offenders

The Church must be aware of, and work within, the policy and guidance as stated in Methodist Standing Orders, with particular reference to Standing Order 010 and to the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2017)*

Subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force and any regulations or orders made or having effect thereunder)

no person who has been convicted of or has received a simple or conditional police caution concerning an offence mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (as amended), or who otherwise poses a risk to children or young people shall undertake work with children and young people in the life of the Church.

no person who has been convicted of or has received a simple or conditional police caution concerning sexual offences against children shall be appointed to any office, post or responsibility in the life of the Church.

(see Standing Order 010 for further details).

Should any **known** sex offender wish to be part of the Church community, the Minister, acting wherever possible with the Church Council or the Church Stewards, must refer to the relevant policy and guidance in the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church and the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook 2010. The Circuit Superintendent and the District Safeguarding Officer must be informed should such a situation arise.

It must be remembered that not all sex offenders have been convicted or cautioned. In fact, only a minority of those people committing offences are known to the relevant authorities. The church has a responsibility to be vigilant in its recruitment of workers, and accepts the premise that Safeguarding is everyone's business.

m) Computer, internet, email, texting and social media guidelines

Care must be taken to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are not exposed to any unsuitable or harmful material while using computers, including mobile phones, smartphones, tablets or other forms of electronic communication on church premises. Access to computers kept on church premises and used by children and vulnerable adults should be controlled in order to prevent the possibility of such exposure.

Children and vulnerable adults should be supervised at all times when using the internet and given guidance about using it safely. Suitable software to prevent access to harmful material should be installed and/or Parental Controls applied at the appropriate level. (Detailed advice is available online from www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding and the Internet Service Provider, e.g. AOL.)

The church website must not include any information which could identify individual children. The church's Safeguarding Policy should be clearly and prominently displayed with links from each youth organisation.

Pre-owned equipment should only be obtained from a reputable dealer who has re-formatted the hard drive.

Group leaders should not use electronic communication (email, social networking, texts etc.) to contact group members/children, unless the following conditions have been met:

1. There are clear written guidelines about the use of electronic communication.
2. These guidelines have been circulated to parents/guardians and children.
3. Written consent has been obtained from the children and parents/guardians.

4. A copy of the written guidelines has been submitted to the Church Council.
5. Leaders have read and agreed to follow the Methodist Children and Youth guidelines.
6. (<http://childrenandyouth.org.uk/worker/best-practice/new-social-media-guidelines/>)

The Methodist Church website (www.methodist.org.uk) also contains guidance for children aged 5-10yrs, young people 11-18yrs and parents.

n) Photographs and images of children/vulnerable adults

The church will comply with Methodist Church policy regarding the appropriate use of photographs of children and vulnerable adults. Guidance and the relevant consent forms will be made available to leaders. (See Methodist Guidance on Church Photography, the Internet and Publicity on the Methodist Church website).

o) 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 Church Council and who is currently **Rev Tim Perkins**. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to **Rev Tim Perkins** who will arrange to meet with the complainant and 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 **Rev Lesley Taylor**.

p) Record Keeping

All record keeping relating to Safeguarding will follow the 'Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church – Consultation Document (March – July 2014). The status of the Joint Practice Guidance is that it is recommended for Methodist Churches to follow. Failure to follow this recommended guidance could invalidate Methodist Church insurance cover.

q) 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. For workers with, and including pastoral visitors for, vulnerable adults, see also the guidance under 'Regulated Activity' for vulnerable adults in the 'Safer Recruitment Policy' (2013).
- 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.

r) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review will be before June 2018..

s) Burley Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy:

A copy of this policy, once approved by Church Council, will be displayed on Church premises. Full details of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy can be found in a reference copy of the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2017)* which is kept in the Minister's vestry and by reference to the above-stated documents produced by the Methodist Church from 2010, 2013 and 2014. All documents can also be downloaded from www.methodist.org.uk.

Dated

Signed Chair of Church Council