



The United Methodist  
Church, UK

®

Charity Number 1094560 Ethel Road, Evington, Leicester, LE5 5ND.

Tel: 01162101790

# **The United Methodist Church, UK**

## **Safeguarding Children and Adults policy**

### **2022**

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**Significant changes:** New

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## **1. Introduction**

The United Methodist Church in the UK is motivated by an Ethos which welcomes all looking for a place to worship God, or a place to find fellowship with other Christians, the mandate for the church is to create Christian communities of love and care, where good practice in this area becomes a way of life.

## **2. Basic Principles and Definitions**

### **What is Safeguarding Children and Young People**

In English law a child is anyone under the age of 18 and an adult is anyone 18 years of age or over.

Safeguarding children and promoting their welfare is defined in the Department for Education's statutory guidance on inter-agency working, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (revised December 2020) <https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

### **Significant Harm**

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold for compulsory intervention in the best interests of children. It gives Local Authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

There are no absolute criteria upon which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm; sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm. More often, however, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing which interrupt, change or damage a child's physical and psychological development.

Everyone who works with children and young people has a responsibility for their wellbeing and keeping them safe. Be vigilant – awareness is by far the greatest protection for children and people at risk.

## **Legislation**

### **Children Act 1989 and 2004 Guidance and Definitions**

The Children Act 1989, is the statutory framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It should be read alongside the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, (updated December 2020) <https://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/> and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (revised September 2021).

The Children Act 1989 defines harm as ill treatment or the impairment of health or development of the child. It is 'measured' in terms of:

- Harm - can be determined 'significant' by comparing a child's health and development; and that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.
- 'Development' means physical, intellectual, social, emotional or behavioural development;
- 'Health' means physical or mental health; and

-'Ill treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of treatment that are not physical, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

-The Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 placed duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. e.g. Police, NHS, Local Authorities, Probation, Prisons and Offending services.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1021914/KCSIE\\_2021\\_September\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf)

The Department for Education KCSIE document is statutory guidance for schools, colleges and other institutes of education. It applies to all school staff as well as to governing bodies, management committees and proprietors. Every member of staff must read either Part one or Annex A of the guidance. These set out what legal duties must be followed to ensure the correct safeguarding of children under the age of 18. It should be read alongside

statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children', [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942454/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_inter\\_agency\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)

and

'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' - Advice for practitioners' [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

### **Who may be the abuser and when?**

Children may be abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends, associates, and others who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers.

There is often particular concern when abuse is perpetrated by someone in a position of power or authority who uses their position to the detriment of the health, safety, welfare and general well-being of a vulnerable person. Within the church environment, any adult no matter the role they are working in paid or unpaid can be considered as a person in a position of trust.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may take many forms e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as "fabricated or induced illness" (this has also been known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy).

### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It is important to note that some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

### **It may involve:**

Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of

exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Causing children to feel frightened or in danger.
- Exploitation or corruption of children.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening .

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g., vaginal or anal rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non -contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, sexting, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse .Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. This may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing; failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or being unresponsive to, a child's basic emotional needs, including the need to feel loved and secure.

•Neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food and clothing.
- Provide shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment.
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

### **Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 became law in April 2021  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents>

Section 1 of the Act defines "Domestic Abuse" as:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if— (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and  
(b )the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

- (a) physical or sexual abuse.
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour.
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour.
- (d) economic abuse. Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—
  - (1) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
  - (2) obtain goods or services.
- (e) psychological, emotional or other ;abuse.

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

The new law defines Domestic Abuse and is gender neutral. The law applies to anyone over the age of 16. This new legislation accommodates previous Acts

Whatever form it takes, domestic violence is rarely a one-off incident, however where this is the case it can be serious and should not be ignored. It is more commonly a pattern of controlling or abusive behaviour occurs through which the abuser seeks power over their victim. It occurs across all sectors of society, regardless of class, ethnicity, sexuality or geography however, figures show that it consists mostly of violence by men against women. The new law stipulates those children living in families where domestic abuse is happening are themselves legally also victims of domestic abuse regardless of whether they have been physically or emotionally targeted.

In addition to the definitions above Children and young people may also be the victims of:

### **Child Criminal/sexual exploitation**

### **Bullying and Harassment**

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

### **Abuse using social media**

### **What is Adult Safeguarding?**

In England and Wales, adult safeguarding is the process of protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse or neglect (referred to as “adults or adults at risk” within this policy).

The adult safeguarding duties under the Care Act 2014 apply to an adult, aged 18 or over, who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and.
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Care and support is the mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives and be independent – including older people, people with a disability or long-term illness, people with mental health problems, and carers (Care and Support statutory guidance 2014. pg 497)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. It is fundamental to creating high-quality health and social care.

**Core values that underpin Safeguarding Adults are that all individuals are entitled to:**

Respect for privacy

Be treated with dignity

Lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so

Be able to choose how they lead their lives as far as their mental capacity appropriately allows.

the protection of the law

have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

Where an adult is deemed not to have the capacity to make informed choices the priority in deciding which action to take must be to ascertain which of those available is in the person's 'best interests' ('common law' and 'Mental Capacity Act 2005').

**Spiritual abuse**

Coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply personal attack. This may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of Scripture or the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context. Lisa Oakley and Kathryn Kimmond, 2014, Journal of Adult Protection

**3. Scope of the Policy**

This document sets out the policy, procedures and guidance relating to safeguarding both children and adults within the United Methodist Church. The provisions outlined are informed by current legislation and accepted good practice from within the Church, statutory agencies and other community organisations with safeguarding responsibilities. It will clarify roles and responsibilities of our trustees, managers, staff, and volunteers when faced with suspected abuse or inadequate care of an individual. The policy defines

abuse, outlines legislation and sets out the procedure to be followed if abuse of a child or adult is suspected.

The church recognises that there are differences which direct safeguarding work nationally within the United Kingdom and more locally within specific local authorities/communities. It is important therefore that relevant local policies and procedures, and contact information is available for all churches. **The policy applies to all United Methodist Church Staff and volunteers who have grounds to suspect that a child or adult with care and support needs has been abused or is at risk of being abused.** If an allegation involves a member of staff or volunteer any actions taken against the individual must be in line with the organisation's disciplinary or problem-solving procedures in all circumstances.

The policy and procedures have been developed to:

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of abuse.
- Increase awareness of issues concerning the abuse of children or adults.
- Provide a process if issues of concern are disclosed or discovered.
- Improve the quality of life and protection of children and adults with whom we work.
- protect people from harm
- make sure anyone can raise safeguarding concerns
- handle allegations or incidents
- report to the relevant authorities

Following consultation, the policy and procedures laid down in this document have been approved by the United Methodist Council/Conference and therefore are mandatory.

### **Putting the policy into action:**

The Church needs to ensure that these commitments are followed as per the safeguarding policy. The policy is an active statement underpinning safeguarding work within the Church and the drive to improve practice.

All local churches need to:

- ensure that all officeholders have a copy of the policy
- promote and publicise the policy
- communicate the Church's safeguarding message as reflected in the policy
- develop processes to assess how well the policy is being implemented, lessons that are being learnt and what difference it is making
- undertake an annual progress review, which is recorded.

#### **4. Purpose of the Policy**

##### **Ecumenical context**

In churches, there is a continuing growth in ecumenical agreement and cooperation on safeguarding. Our participation in Churches' Agency for Safeguarding and the Christian Forum for Safeguarding is of great benefit in building and maintaining relations with all Churches, especially the Baptist Union of GB and the United Reformed church, Church of England, Methodist church, the Salvation Army, the Church of Scotland, the Assemblies of God. Furthermore, these bodies enable and enhance our participation in discussions with government departments and agencies.

Faith organisations representing all denominations need to apply best practice and learning from national and international cases in relation to safeguarding, both historical and to prevent/detect issues currently. The United Methodist Church recognises the importance of employing a current and relevant safeguarding policy to all church practices, enabling church goers, church staff and the community the church serves to confidently recognise and report potential/actual safeguarding issues.

#### **5. Safeguarding Statement**

The United Methodist Church is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of its life and ministry.

Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer community and culture.

This means we will:

- promote the welfare of children, young people and adults
- work to prevent abuse from occurring
- seek to protect and respond well to those that have been abused.

1. We will take care to identify where a person may pose a risk to others and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.

2. The United Methodist Church affirms that safeguarding is a shared responsibility.

3. Everyone associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and adults has a role to play. This is supported with consistent policies promoting good practice across the whole Church.

4. The Church and its individual members undertake all appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all. It will practice fully and positively Christ's ministry towards children, young people and adults who are vulnerable and respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.

#### **6. Safeguarding Governance**

It is important to recognise that it is people who protect — not just procedures. The aim is to create a culture of informed vigilance at all levels in the Church.

The United Methodist Church UK Mission Area has an obligation to support churches and those working with children and adults in exercising their primary responsibility entrusted to them. Based on the foundations above, the United Methodist Church commits to the following key safeguarding roles and responsibilities:

### **At local church**

The Pastor in Charge, lay leader and the Safeguarding Officer shall liaise with the MA Safeguarding officer to provide support and oversight in implementing safeguarding as stated above and ensure that activities with children and adults, within the local church, are provided according to good practice and safeguarding procedures all the time. The local safeguarding chair who is a member of the church executive to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy.

### **Charge level**

The nominated charge safeguarding officers will support the local and the MA activities and ensure safeguarding policy is followed at all charge activities. The Pastor in charge and the charge lay leader must provide support and oversight for all safeguarding officers in implementing the safeguarding policies and procedures in local churches with guidance from the MA Safeguarding chairperson.

### **MA level:**

Safeguarding lead and Safeguarding Team, The Mission Area Safeguarding Team, led by the Safeguarding Lead, undertakes support, coordination and development activities in relation to a broad remit of safeguarding areas working with the local Safeguarding officers, the United Methodist Conference, lay leaders. Its responsibilities works with BOT, DS, COS Secretary,

MA Lay leaders to ensure all policies are in place, being followed and are effective to Support and provide the management of safeguarding issues, principally through liaison with the safeguarding agencies. The team is responsible for the commissioning and management of the Church's risk assessments and manages and coordinates the clearance process for blemished DBS checks and has a monitoring role in relation to Pastoral DBS renewals.

Current safeguarding best practice is promulgated for development and maintaining the safeguarding training strategies, reviewing of safeguarding policies and procedures and regular liaison with relevant agencies, including government departments, relevant voluntary sector organisations and other Churches in Britain. The Safeguarding Council which deals with case discussion brought through to MA is composed of the Safeguarding chairperson/Lead, Associate Chair, District Superintendent and the MA Lay leader.

Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding lead MA

Charge safeguarding officers  
Local safeguarding officer

### **Responsibilities of the team**

**PREVENT** harm through best practice and the creation of a culture of informed vigilance

**PROTECT** through responding effectively when safeguarding concerns arises

### **Safeguarding committee**

#### MA Level

Superintendent, Lay leader, safeguarding officer and Board Of Trustees  
Charge and local level

Pastor in charge

Safeguarding officers

Lay leaders

### **Roles of the committee**

The Committee identifies actions that should be taken when receiving a safeguarding concern. This may relate to a situation where allegations are made about an officeholder, employee, member or volunteer or about someone not connected with the Church where a church member or other person is seeking help or support from someone in the Church.

The concerns may be about current or past events, but the response should be the same. Past events can still give rise to current safeguarding concerns.

Allegations that do not appear to fall into the above categories but still amount to inappropriate conduct within the Church may mean that consideration needs to be given to invoking disciplinary processes or handling it by way of advice, supervision and training. In these situations, the pastor in charge DS will need to consider the course of action considering the safeguarding policy and informing the safeguarding officer.

Where the concern that has been raised relates to domestic abuse the church should quickly respect their limits and advise noticing the domestic abuse law/act. It is imperative that in any safeguarding role, confidentiality is maintained at all times.

## **7. Consent and Capacity**

Consent is a legally defined decision given by someone who is competent, who has been adequately informed (and has adequate understanding), and who is free from undue influence enabling them to make a voluntary decision.

The person can provide consent themselves (provided they are competent). Otherwise someone else who is empowered by law can provide it (e.g. a parent in the case of a child). A child who is not capable of giving consent alone can still be involved in the decision-making process with others who are able in law, to provide consent.

It is a fundamental principle of English law that adults have the right to make decisions on their own behalf, and are assumed to have the capacity to do so. This is known as the 'presumption of capacity' and extends to decisions that may entail personal risks and that may not be in accordance with an objective view of their best interests.

Where an adult has refused to consent to information being disclosed for safeguarding purposes, then the Designated Safeguarding Officer must consider whether there is an overriding public interest that would justify information the sharing (e.g. because there is a risk that others are at risk of serious harm) and wherever possible, the appropriate Caldicott Guardian should be involved from the local authority.

Confidentiality is an important part of the culture within any church environment and underpins, ethos and values. However, there are certain situations where interventions are needed in order to protect children and adults. In fulfilling its safeguarding duties we will ensure that:

**Confidentiality is not confused with secrecy.**

Abuse exists within a culture of secrecy and silence, those who wish to harm others depend on this fact, allowing abuse to continue unrecognised or reported.

- Church staff and volunteers do not give assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about harm, abuse or neglect of either children or adults at risk
- Information regarding a safeguarding concern is shared on a 'need to know' basis
- Informed consent is obtained. If this is not possible and other children or adults are at risk of abuse or neglect, it may be necessary to override the requirement. Consent can be given verbally or in writing. It's important to record if the person has given consent or not, how it was given and when, and to record if a decision has been made to share information in order to safeguard the person without their consent and why.

**Adults Lacking Capacity**

Adults lacking capacity to make decisions that would protect and promote their own interests are potentially extremely vulnerable. Although, in accordance with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, adults lacking capacity should be at liberty to participate as far as possible in decision-making, and express their views and emphasis should shift to ensuring that decisions made on the adults behalf promote their overall best interests.

Where an adult lacks capacity, information can be disclosed in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, where, in the opinion of the member of

staff, officer or volunteer, it would be in the incapacitated person's best interests.

On the rare occasions that the our staff or volunteers have to make a decision on behalf of an adult who is lacking capacity they will do so in that person's best interest, using the common checklist of factors outlined in the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/921428/Mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921428/Mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.pdf)

Where an adult lacks capacity to consent to disclose it is usually reasonable to assume that they would want people close to them, or directly involved in their care to be given appropriate information about their situation unless there is evidence to the contrary.

## **8. Sharing Information**

The lawful sharing of information relating to a safeguarding concern about a child or an adult is defined clearly within legislation. Within The United Methodist Church it is essential that all church staff are aware of the law in this regard.

Effective sharing of information between The United Methodist Church and local organisations, Safeguarding Boards/partnerships and agencies is essential for the early identification of need, assessment and intervention in order to keep children and adults who may or are at risk safe.

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults, especially those adults identified as being at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. Sharing the right information at the right time and with the right people is fundamental to good safeguarding practice.

Personal information held by The United Methodist Church is subject to a legal duty of confidentiality and will not normally be disclosed without the consent of the individual. The only exceptions to this are where confidentiality can be overridden either by a court order or other legal authority (e.g. Prevent Duty), or in the public interest i.e. in order to safeguard a child or adult at risk. However, the right to confidentiality and respect for private and family life (Article 8, Human Rights Act, 1998) must be a consideration. The need to disclose information to relevant partner agencies, for example: Police or social care must be recorded and shared appropriately as set out within this policy.

Public interest justifications usually relate to disclosures to prevent significant or serious harm to third parties or to prevent or to prosecute a serious crime. e.g. suicide pacts, terrorist threats, an unsupervised young child.

The United Methodist Church recognise that information sharing between key organisations is essential to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse, harm, neglect and exploitation.

The Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation law (GDPR 2016) set out the rules for information sharing. Information can be shared lawfully within the parameters of this legislation.

We ensure that where staff or volunteers need to share special category personal data, they are aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 includes 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent.

We will ensure that confidential information is only shared where it is lawful and ethical to do so. All staff and volunteers must be clear about situations when they can share information with appropriate agencies and professionals working together within local information sharing protocols i.e. when they believe a child or adult at risk of harm.

All church staff and volunteers will give due regard to relevant legislation, guidance and local information sharing protocols when making decisions on sharing information including the following:

- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Information Commissioners statutory code of practice 2021
- The Children Act 1989 and Section 11 Children Act 2004
- Local Safeguarding Partners - Multi agency sharing agreements or protocols- see Chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2020)
- The Care Act 2014
- The Care Act 2014: supporting implementation (updated January 2022)

### **Pastoral conversations and confidentiality**

It is possible that relevant information may be disclosed in the particular context of a pastoral conversation. The United Methodist Church does not authorise liturgies for the sacraments of individual confession and the Service of Reconciliation. A pastor is not prevented from disclosing details of any crime or offence which is revealed in the course of a pastoral conversation or a confession within that context that may still pose risks.

Pastors should be aware that convicted offenders can sometimes come forward with new information. There is no bar in law to prevent Pastors passing on such information to the authorities.

## **Recording and reporting a safeguarding concern**

It is essential that all safeguarding concerns are recorded and the UMC incident form is completed and forwarded at the earliest opportunity to the relevant safeguarding officer. (unless the concern is about them)

Records need to be:

Dated and signed

A factual account of the concern, allegation or disclosure, records of disclosure need to use the language used by the individual making the disclosure.

Completed in a timely manner, this means as soon as is practicably possible.

Details about the concern are essential in order to safeguard and make immediate decisions. This means that as much information as possible about the concern, personal or identifying information, who the concern has been shared with and what immediate action has been taken should be recorded.

[https://www.unitedmethodistchurchuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Safeguarding\\_Log\\_Form.docx](https://www.unitedmethodistchurchuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Safeguarding_Log_Form.docx)

## **9. Recruitment Selection and safer recruitment**

The aim of safeguarding within the Church is to create safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse. Critical to good safeguarding is safer recruitment and safer working practices. The Church has developed procedures for both these areas, informed by legislation and government guidance. As such, we aim to:

- Carefully select and train all those with responsibility within the Church in line with safer recruitment principles through lay trainings and other trainings listed below
- ensure that any church activities are organised in such a way to avoid the risk of harm to everyone participating
- promote safe spaces that are inclusive and welcoming.

The following procedures are intended for use by anyone involved in the recruitment of people working with vulnerable groups and for those responsible for organising and running activities with vulnerable groups..

### **A. Safer recruitment and DBS checks**

The United Methodist Church UK strictly carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks of all employees and post holders who have contact with children, young adults and vulnerable adults when serving in Church. Church staff who may be delivering regulated activities for children or adults within our local churches will also require Enhanced DBS checks

[www.churchsafe.org.uk/resources](http://www.churchsafe.org.uk/resources)

### Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)

The DBS helps employers to make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups. It replaced the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Authority. Referrals are made to the DBS when an employer or organisation has concerns that a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to vulnerable groups. An employer or volunteer is breaking the law if they knowingly employ someone in 'regulated activity' with a group from which they are barred from working

### **B. Code of safer working practice**

Every local church and charge working with children and adults at risk of harm, should prepare and adopt a code of safer working practice.

At all levels the following should have DBS checks and training;

Lay leaders, organisation leaders and advisors, CYM co-ordinators,

Local preacher, all Pastors, Christian education teachers

The United Methodist Church UK lay training should give details of their roles as per book of Discipline.

### **C. Employment**

Pastors of all grades; employment is by calling and appointment by The Bishop but Mandatory areas needed include:

DBS check, signed contracts stating salaries/wages, millage claiming, relevant safeguarding training to be undertaken.

Secretary: Employment is by safe and fair recruitment system, job description and signed contracts in place. DBS check done.

This policy recognises that those providing a service to the United Methodist Church may be assigned roles through formal processes, as volunteers and as community/church members who wish to support the church. Regardless of the status, role or capacity within which an individual is supporting United Methodist Church philosophies and activities, it is essential that safeguarding information and understanding is available to all.

The Disclosure and barring service provides information about safer recruitment and selection of staff dependent on their roles within an organisation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dbs-works-with-partners-to-create-animated-guide-to-dbs-checks>

## **10. Training**

In order for this Safeguarding policy to be effective in supporting church staff to recognise, report and contribute to managing safeguarding issues it is essential that all employees and volunteers have Safeguarding training and fully understand the expectations set out within this document.

Safeguarding Children/Adults training should be available to church staff as they commence their work for the church regardless of role. Particular attention to UMC policies and procedures and the local expectations for safeguarding, dependent on where in the U.K the church is located.

**Level 1** Safeguarding basic awareness. Should be available to all church staff

**Level 2** Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk. For all church staff with specific roles where they are more likely to come across abuse. For example: Sunday school staff, nursery staff, Pastors and regular members of church staff.

**Level 3** Designated safeguarding Lead/Champion training. For all church staff who are named at local church level, charge level or within the Mission area safeguarding team.

**Trustees safeguarding training.** All senior church officials and trustees should have completed safeguarding training specific to their role within the United Methodist Church.

Further training needs may be identified as national and local safeguarding reviews are completed or following an incident within the United Methodist Church or other faith organisation.

Additional training for church leaders, safeguarding champions, designated leads and those in specific church roles must also be accessible, up to date and relevant.

Training should be reviewed and updated dependent on role as a minimum every 3 years.

### **11. Safeguarding Allegations against staff / volunteers**

Any individual undertaking work on behalf of The United Methodist Church regardless of role may be considered as Persons in a Position of Trust (**PIPoT**) as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and The Care Act (2014). It is essential therefore that all contributing to church activities understand the responsibilities and limitations to their roles, have knowledge of the Safeguarding policy expectations and are supported appropriately should an allegation be made.

#### **LADO/ relevant local authority officer Contact**

We will deal appropriately and promptly with such allegations or concerns and refer all safeguarding concerns or allegations about its staff or volunteers immediately to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Social Care services safeguarding team (adults or children). The DSO will be responsible for making initial enquiries to determine if the concern should be referred to the LADO.

There may be occasions where the church is alerted to an allegation made in reference to a member of the church congregation, decisions to share information must be made in conjunction with the safeguarding officer

Immediate action should be taken where an individual has behaved in a way that has harmed a child/adult at Risk or committed a criminal offence which suggests that they may pose a risk to children/adult at risk if allowed continued contact with children/adults at risk.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service requirement and Duty to Report**

Under legal duties to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service, we will report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of our staff, faculty and student volunteers to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Consideration must also be given to the impact of an allegation on the congregation.

The safeguarding officer should discuss the provision of support with the superintendent who will be responsible for coordinating it. This should be done in consultation with the statutory authorities and the following areas considered:

- What information can be shared
- When and how information can be shared - this may include a statement to the congregation delivered by the agreed Pastor (local Lay leader, superintendent and Charge Lay leader)
- Where and to whom people can go for support based on needs.

At the end of an investigation or actions taken to deal with an issue, which has had a significant impact on the church, consideration may be given to a visit by one or more of the following: Charge Lay leader, Pastor in Charge and superintendent organisation leaders and advisors.

It can be difficult to define the right moment for this as the church may continue to manage the situation and the subject's involvement in the church for many years to come but it is good pastoral practice to review the differing needs within the church and its wider community.

Aim of visit: To acknowledge people's pain and listen to how people are feeling, identify, support, enable recovery and support future ministry.

### **Additional actions of the Church where the safeguarding concern relates to a pastor, employee or volunteer of the local church:**

Whether an allegation is made about a Pastor, member or volunteer, the Church Council will need to consider what additional action, aside from a referral to the statutory agencies, may be necessary to safeguard other people from potential harm.

**Suspension:** This would be the expected action during any enquiries irrespective of role. However, there are some differences in procedure if the

person is a pastor or officeholder, an employee or a volunteer. The Standing Order sets out the process for suspension of a Pastor, probationer, student and lay office holder. This Standing Order should be considered prior to any suspension and clarity obtained from SO 013.

**Resignations:** A lay office holder in the Church may resign from their role or a member may stop worshipping at the local church. It may also be that an employee resigns from their role. However, in all cases this does not negate the Church's responsibility for investigating any safeguarding concerns and reporting these to the statutory authorities for further investigation. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of a child/adult, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

**Lay employees** — disciplinary action If a risk assessment raises concerns about a lay employee continuing in their current role, legal advice must be obtained before any steps are taken to address the concerns raised by the risk assessment and the conclusions of a Safeguarding Panel through misconduct or disciplinary proceedings.

**Notifying the media** It is the role of the DS, MA Safeguarding officer and /MA lay leader to discuss communicating about the matter with the media office and designated officer/adult safeguarding (local authority)/police. The safeguarding officer will help with preparing a range of communications including:

- Statements to be prepared in advance and issued if there is an approach by media
- Statements to the congregation by Pastor in Charge
- Responses for individuals within the church who may be impacted by specific situations.

The Local safeguarding officer will alert the Church Safeguarding Team to any matter that may be of media interest or need sensitive communications. This is to ensure that any information provided is coordinated and for ongoing support. Public statements delivered to the congregation will be made by the Pastor and safeguarding officer deemed most appropriate to deliver them following consultation with those managing the case at MA level.

The MA safeguarding officer is available to receive any information on

[safeguarding@unitedmethodistchurchuk.org](mailto:safeguarding@unitedmethodistchurchuk.org)

or their phone numbers in the directory provided. They should be made aware of matters as soon as possible to allow suitable statements to be prepared.

## Notifications

1. Notification to The United Methodist church UK Insurance:

The Church safeguarding officer will do this as soon as possible with the Board of Trustees input, awareness and consultation with the team.

2. Notification to the Charity Commission:

Serious Incidents Report to the Charity Commission (England and Wales) or Notifiable Events to the OSCR (Scotland) The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales and Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR) for charities in Scotland. Both regulators have a responsibility to investigate mismanagement or misconduct in the administration of a charity. For the purposes of this guidance, reference is made to a serious incident report but in Scotland it is known as a notifiable event.

A serious incident report is a notification made by or on behalf of the trustees to the Charity Commission, to inform the Commission about an incident or suspected incident that could have a significant risk to the assets, reputation or to the beneficiaries. Safeguarding allegations involving allegations of abuse against children or vulnerable adults that are alleged to have occurred in a local church, charge, and MA context must be reported to the Charity Commission. If there is doubt about whether an incident should be reported to the Charity Commission, please contact the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice.

A serious incident report to the Charity Commission should be made to:

[rsi@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rsi@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk)

Further guidance is available from the Charity Commission.

[www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity/](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity/)

A notifiable event to OSCR should be sent to:

[notifiable@oscr.org.uk](mailto:notifiable@oscr.org.uk)

Further guidance is available from OSCR at:

[www.oscr.org.uk/media/2155/2016-03-15\\_guidance-for-notifiable-events webversion.pdf](http://www.oscr.org.uk/media/2155/2016-03-15_guidance-for-notifiable-events-webversion.pdf)

When reporting a serious incident, the following information should be provided:

- Whether the incident happened or whether there have been serious allegations or suspicions that it happened
- Who was involved when the incident happened (and their position in the church)
- Whether this person is still involved with the church — and if so, what actions have been taken to minimise safeguarding risks
- What action, if any, has been taken since the incident
- Whether there has been any publicity about the incident
- Whether investigations or inquiries are being undertaken, by whom and what the outcome is of any concluded inquiries
- Whether the police, another regulator, law enforcement or government agency is involved, the name of the agency and what action it has taken, if any (where relevant, provide a reference number)

- confirm that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are being followed — and if not, explain why not

The Charity Commission and OSCR are likely to respond either by asking to be kept updated on the matter or for further information. The Charity Commission and OSCR want to be assured that the trustees are taking all appropriate and prudent actions to protect the reputation and assets of the church, and all children and vulnerable adults that the church has responsibility for.

**N.B** Confidential and sensitive information: The Charity Commission is a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. There is a possibility that they may have to disclose a report or documents to a third party.

There is likely to be a need in most cases involving safeguarding allegations to preserve confidentiality. To try to preserve confidentiality, churches may wish to consider redacting the names of individuals in any documents that are sent to the Commission and/or not disclose names at all in a report or anonymise names by using initials only or use more generic labels, if appropriate, such as "a child" to protect identity.

All serious incident reports (SIR) should usually contain the following wording:  
Note — In this Serious Incident Report and the information contained in it, is strictly confidential and is disclosed to the Commission in confidence. Please contact the Charity Commission before disclosing any information relating to this SIR to any third party, whether under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

**Consideration of action prior to any court case:** There may need to be an interim safeguarding agreement (Covenants of Care) when people are facing statutory investigation (this might also apply when a formal complaint has been made about them to the Church).

Statutory agencies will expect that such an agreement has been assessed to consider if it is possible for the alleged abuser to still attend church. The Safeguarding committee will ensure arrangements are put in place.

### **References/court proceedings/representative meetings**

On occasions lay office holders, employees or pastors in the church may receive requests for references either in relation to employment, to give evidence in court proceedings or to attend meetings as a representative of the church with statutory agencies (police, Children's Services or Adult Social Care) relating to a safeguarding matter.

When being called to court as a witness, there is a legal requirement to attend in order to provide confirmation of a factual account. This is different from being asked to provide a statement relating to the good character of the

party in court for the defence. It is important to clarify on which basis involvement is being sought.

Character references should not be provided except in exceptional circumstances which should be discussed with the DS.

### **Notifying other churches and community organisations**

Ecumenical colleagues or those from other community organisations may need to be informed of concerns where the subject has involvement with another organisation.

The nature of the person's involvement at the current time should be established before disclosing information.

### **Risk assessments**

The United Methodist Church initiates various forms of risk assessment in a response to safeguarding matters. These are commissioned by the MA CSO, completed by the charge safeguarding officer or conducted at church or local level dependent on the circumstances and level of activities at hand. Proportionality is a fundamental principle in considering the nature or risk assessment that is appropriate in each case.

Risk Assessments are mandatory at all activities, venue, equipment and potential incidents.

Assessment should clearly identify the potential risk, incidents/accidents action plan and reflective evaluation. (Refer to health and safety incidents.)

An interim Covenant of Care may be put in place while a police, Children's Services or Adult Social Care initial assessment or investigation are ongoing. This should also be considered when the Church becomes aware of external employment disciplinary procedures relating to a safeguarding matter that may impact on roles and activities undertaken by church members, staff, pastors or volunteers. However, detailed risk assessments which include in-depth inquiries and interviews with related parties should not be initiated until the statutory or external employment processes are concluded. This is to ensure that actions undertaken in the course of the risk assessment do not contaminate evidence or impact on such proceedings or assessments.

### **Abuser/ Offenders**

The Church aims to provide pastoral care for all its members, including those who are suspected of causing harm or have caused harm to others. However, in this context, such care must be provided in a way that prioritises the safety of other church members, while enabling the person who poses a risk to worship and be a part of the church community.

Leaders with a criminal conviction or caution for a sexual offence against children or vulnerable adults,

Permission to be obtained from the safeguarding committee for such people to hold an office, role or responsibility within the Church.

The following process was created to support but can be used to manage all those who present a risk which does not involve sexual offences and may be referred to as informal agreements as distinct from a full Covenant of Care agreement

**a) Covenants of Care (Updated July 2017) — What are they?**

The Church and Sex Offender Report (2000) recommended the setting up of "support and monitoring groups" to manage sex offenders within the church and Book VI Part 4 of the Guidance section of CPD).

These arrangements are known as Covenants of Care and set out in writing the boundaries and terms of involvement in the Church of the person about whom there are concerns.

**b) Arranging a Covenant of Care**

- When a local church becomes aware of a person who is considered to be a risk, a representative of the local church should be in contact with the appropriate professions. This may include a probation officer and the police and may also require attendance at a 'Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements' (MAPPA) meeting.

Guidance for the MAPPA states that religious communities must put in place effective arrangements, which allows them to ensure they are able to protect their community whilst allowing a sex offender to maintain their right to worship in a safe way when possible.

- At all levels in the structure a group of five people should be set up (the Covenant of Care monitoring group). This should include the Pastor, PPR /COS, SO and any 2 people who have agreed to offer pastoral support for the offender and accompany them in worship and other church activities. It is helpful if at least one member is from outside the local church, as this helps to promote objectivity. It should also include someone with expertise and experience in this field and someone to represent the wider church community.

- A risk assessment must then be carried out. This should include reviewing the nature of the concerns and risk posed and looking at the church building and range of activities carried out. The police or probation service should be consulted for advice where they are actively managing the subject as part of the risk assessment. If the church was originally aware of the subject, an independent risk assessment may have already been undertaken (because of a blemished DBS check or previous notification to the Church Safeguarding Team and decisions of a safeguarding panel).

Where the concern is new and shared by the statutory agencies with the church, basic safety checks should be undertaken and inform the covenant agreement what access to rooms in church buildings when other activities are taking place, whilst a more comprehensive risk assessment is planned and discussions had with the CSO

Safeguarding Team and CSO about who will undertake this.

- A Covenant of Care group can be set up prior to a prison release, or following one, where the offender is no longer supervised by probation and where there have been no convictions but serious concerns exist. Advice should be sought from the Safeguarding officer.
- Once a group is set up, a meeting should be held with the subject and a written contract drawn up.
- Opportunities for development of the person's church life once they have demonstrated cooperation and trust with the agreement.

### **Support for staff and the church community**

The United Methodist Church UK employs a survivors' counselling service in order to be able to offer short-term counselling to survivors and those affected by abuse in the Church.

- If an allegation has resulted in a referral to the statutory agencies, then the provision of support will be discussed and agreed with those agencies.
- Whether or not a referral is made, the support is needed to all those affected by the allegations (including the individual and family members, the accused and his/her family members, the minister and other church workers) must be considered and should be coordinated by the Church safeguarding officer.
- Support for historical allegations will be treated in the same way as for current allegations.
- Pastoral support will always be offered but there may be times when additional support is identified or requested, such as counselling or financial help. Any such requests must be referred to the CSL and district safeguarding group and the insurers consulted. The CSL will be responsible for communicating with the insurers.
- Where additional support is agreed, the CSL together with the local church will make the necessary arrangements and ensure a written agreement will be drawn up clarifying the terms of the support offered.
- Where support is offered, it will be provided in a way that respects race, culture, age, language, religious beliefs, gender and disability.
- Any support offered will be decided by focusing on the best interest and welfare of the children and adults involved.

### **Helping recovery and responding well**

Recovery after any form of abuse is complex and will vary among individuals. For sexual abuse particularly it involves a process over a long period of time.

Essential elements to the process that need to be borne in mind when responding to those who have been sexually abused.

- The opportunity to tell the story (to name the sin and share the experience)
- For someone to hear their story (that is, to believe and acknowledge the harm done and the fact that the victim is not to blame)
- An effort to protect the vulnerable from further harm (both the victim and any others who may be at risk)
- An act of restitution in as far as this is possible (though this does not necessarily include institutional or financial liability).

It is important to be clear about what a survivor of abuse expects at any time when he or she shares his or her experience. While it is understandable that those in authority might be anxious regarding any suggestion of institutional culpability, this should never eclipse our higher duty to provide pastoral care or additional support if appropriate.

### **Disagreement**

If there is any disagreement about the support to be offered, the person affected must put their views in writing to the LSO who will share and discuss it with the CSC

Following such a consultation, the insurers may need to be consulted before a reply is sent.

### **Complaints**

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisations or individuals concerned.

However, a complaint may be made to a person who is in the Church executive or anyone in the church or organisation leader or advisor it should be passed to the lay leader (if not involved) who will involve the Pastor in charge, the safeguarding officer should be notified as soon as the complaint is made and followed up in writing. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of the United Methodist Church which will involve initially speaking with the local safeguarding officer.

### **12. Whistle-blowing**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 introduced protection for workers from reprisals for disclosing information in the public interest. It emphasises the importance that the role 'whistleblowing' can play in deterring and detecting malpractice and abuse of children and adults at risk.

We will promote practical arrangements for whistleblowing to enable our staff and volunteers to voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Any of our staff and volunteers who uses the 'whistleblowing'

policy and procedure will be made aware that their employment rights are protected.

Our staff and volunteers will be supported in this individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior church officers and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children, and adults that may be at risk.

We will:

- Ensure we have appropriate whistleblowing procedures in place.
- Ensure that it has clear procedures for dealing with allegations against our staff, faculty, student and student volunteers.
- Empower and support our staff and volunteers to report any behaviour by colleagues or professionals that raises concern regardless of source.

If concerns are identified about unsafe or illegal practices within the church, there is a duty for all regardless of status or role to raise concerns, whistleblowing should be seen as an essential component to promote a supportive safeguarding culture within all churches.

### **13. Quality and Review**

In order to be sure that the United Methodist Church safeguarding policy is effective and is being understood and implemented across all charges and local churches it is essential that governance arrangements exist. Governance arrangements include the following as agreed by the board of trustees and senior church officials

- The safeguarding policy and any affiliated procedures are agreed and ratified by the relevant senior church personnel and that there is an annual review of the safeguarding policy.
- All records of safeguarding concerns are reviewed and audited with any learning cascaded throughout the church in a timely manner
- Safeguarding training and the impact from attendance is evaluated with frequent updates and revisions to materials as required.
- Safeguarding officers and those within the church with specific safeguarding roles are offered support and supervision to confidently exercise their roles.
- The United Methodist Church actively engages with other faith based organisations to share learning from serious incidents where appropriate and contributes to local reviews (child learning practice reviews/adult safeguarding reviews/domestic homicide reviews) appropriately.
- The United Methodist Church engages with local partners across all sectors to maximise safeguarding activities for communities.

## **14. Equality and Diversity**

The United Methodist Church is fully committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity, valuing and embracing diversity and ensuring a holistic and inclusive approach in all fields of its activity. The church seeks to adhere to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following specific protected characteristics: gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage & civil partnership and pregnancy & maternity.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is central to the mission of the United Methodist Church. This is embodied in the values of the church as an environment that welcomes all. The UMC in UK has a special motto which is open hearts, open minds and open doors to everyone regardless of colour, race or social status. As an employer, the United Methodist Church is committed to 'respecting others and striving for excellence whilst watching over one another in love and working together with a generous spirit'. It seeks to build a culture that values professionalism, openness, fairness and transparency and holds equality of opportunity at the heart of what it does.

## **15. Local Safeguarding Boards/Partnerships (Children and Adults)**

Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children's Partnerships are defined in relevant Statute and are supported by statutory guidance.

In both cases the board/partnership exists to provide independent scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements for defined local authorities.

Boards/Partnerships membership are directed by statutory guidance, all partners across all sectors including The Faith Sector are expected to contribute to the work undertaken by the board/partnership.

The majority of boards and partnerships are responsible for local safeguarding policy and procedures as directed by the national safeguarding agenda and law.

It is important to recognise that there are slight differences to the legislation which directs safeguarding policy and process across the nations of the United Kingdom.

Faith based organisations have a duty in law and to the communities they represent to contribute to the work of Boards/Partnerships. The United Methodist church should seek to work transparently with Boards/Partnerships and external partners locally to contribute to safeguarding activity.

## **16. Underpinning Legislation and Guidance**

Relevant reports and legislation relating to safeguarding practice with adults and children include:

### **The Data Protection Act 2018 & General Data Protection Regulation**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

Regulation of the possessing of information relating to individuals, including obtaining, holding, using or disclosing such information. Provisions including those relating to processing information about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Independent Safeguarding Authority established (later to become Disclosure and Barring Service)

### **The Human Rights Act 1998**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

Article 8 Respect for private and family life, home and correspondence

Article 9 Freedom of thought, belief and religion

Article 10 Freedom of expression

### **The Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents>

Act to make provision for preventing antisocial behaviour with references to children

### **Serious Crime Act 2015**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/contents/enacted>

Includes offences relating to child cruelty, sexual communication with a child and female genital mutilation (FGM) and coercive or controlling behaviour in an intimate or family relationship

### **Relevant reports and legislation relating to safeguarding practice with children include:**

#### **Children Act 1989**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

Introduced comprehensive changes to legislation in England and Wales

#### **Children Act 2004**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Result of Lord Laming's report into the death of Victoria Climbié

#### **Bichard Inquiry 2004**

<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Society/documents/2005/03/15/Bichardfinalreport.pdf>

Inquiry into the Soham murders resulting in a registration scheme for those working with vulnerable groups and the introduction of safer recruitment principles across the voluntary and statutory sectors

#### **Safeguarding children in whom illness is fabricated or induced 2005**

[https://www.londoncp.co.uk/files/sg\\_ch\\_fab\\_ill.pdf](https://www.londoncp.co.uk/files/sg_ch_fab_ill.pdf)

Statutory guidance on protecting children where carers or parents fabricate or induce illness in a child

#### **Safeguarding children from abuse linked to a belief in spirit possession 2007**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/175437/Action Plan Abuse linked to Faith or Belief.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf)

Non-statutory good practice guidance intended to help practitioners and line managers apply Working Together (see below) to the particular needs of children who are abused or neglected because of a belief in spirit possession. This deals with concepts of child abuse linked to witchcraft and possession of children by evil spirits to make children to create fear and compliance with other forms of abuse. It may include making a child or young person with difficult behaviour or disability the scapegoat for other sources of difficulties within the family context.

#### **Safeguarding children and young people from exploitation 2009**

<https://www.basw.co.uk/resources/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance-working>

Statutory guidance outlining how organisations and individuals should work together to protect young people from sexual exploitation

#### **Children and Families Act 2014 Practice guidance**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

**Relevant reports and legislation relating to safeguarding practice with vulnerable adults include:**

#### **No Secrets 2000**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-secrets-guidance-on-protecting-vulnerable-adults-in-care>

Department of Health document developing and implementing inter-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults and create local authority safeguarding boards (Replaced by the Care Act 2014)

#### **The Mental Capacity Act 2005**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents>

Identifies principles for the purposes of the Act including issues around capacity and decision-making

#### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Defined a vulnerable adult ISA established The Mental Health Act 2007 Amends the Mental Health Act 1983, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

#### **The Care Act 2014**

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Introduces well-being principle and the term adults at risk of abuse or neglect Care and Support Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014

Local responsibilities for sharing information under the Care Act 2014

States local authorities must set up safeguarding boards and cooperate with relevant partners

## Appendix 1.

### • **Creating a safer church environment**

Appropriate conduct for lone workers:

#### **1.Children**

You should:

- treat all children with respect and dignity • ensure that your own language, tone of voice, and body language is respectful
- always aim to work with or within sight of another adult • ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet (toilet breaks should be organised for young children)
- ensure that children know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around
- if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand • administer any first aid with others around
- obtain consent for any photographs/ videos to be taken, shown or displayed (see Section 6.5.7.2)
- record any incidents of concern and give the information to your group leader, sign and date the record (see Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church)
- always

share concerns about a child and the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or safeguarding officer.

#### **2.Adults**

- treat all adults with respect and dignity
  - ensure that your own language, tone of voice, and body language are respectful
  - Always inform the lead safeguarding officer of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise
  - liaise with the Church Council/local church executive i.e. Home visits
- Most visits to adults in their own home will be straightforward as they will be well known to the church. However, when visiting someone new for the first time, visitors should let someone else know whom they are visiting (and when).
- Visiting in twos may be advisable, especially if the adult lacks capacity. It is also advisable to take a mobile phone.
  - Do not call unannounced. Call by appointment, telephoning the person just before visiting if appropriate.
  - Be clear about what support can be offered to the adult if they ask for help with particular problems and refer back to the church if uncertain.
  - Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact.

- Never offer 'over the counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so (also relates to Section 6.11 Health).
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If someone wants to make a donation to the church, put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the treasurer
- Pastoral visitors are encouraged to note the date when they visit people, to report back about their visit to the PPR and say what is concerning or going well. The pastor will report safeguarding concerns to the safeguarding officer as appropriate, agree what action should take place and who should record the incident.

### **Church Activities**

Church-sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children, young people and adults whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's/adult's needs and not the worker's. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think there is any inappropriate behaviour.

. Positive Working Together:

. Procedures for church-sponsored activities with children

. Recommended staffing levels

It is the responsibility of the CYM officer to consider individual circumstances and make appropriate arrangements for sufficient supervision to ensure the safety and effective management of all activities.

The following issues must be considered when determining appropriate numbers of helpers:

- the gender of the group — if mixed, then staff members should also be mixed, where possible
- Children with additional support needs — extra staff may be necessary. It is important that CYM and appropriate volunteers are made aware of the children with special needs within their congregation and where appropriate and parent or guardian is willing, to share their support/ care plan when they are being cared for by other adults and amongst their peers. This will ensure that issues of aggression, bullying by other parties or sub-standard care are addressed.
- Where a child with special needs is the perpetrator, any response to keep them and others safe should be done in the most little restrictive way.
- Any behavioural difficulty identified
- The layout of the room
- Young people attending who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping (they should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding)
- First aid cover
- The nature of the activity

- NSPCC guidance on staff to child ratios: there should always be a minimum of two adults present at any activity (it is recommended that there be at least one male and one female) and the ratios agreed should also be based on a risk assessment (see

#### b. Mixed-age activities

Care should be taken to ensure that children in mixed-age activities such as choirs, music and drama groups are appropriately supervised. DBS checks are required for adults in those groups who do not have specific responsibility for children.

Separate changing facilities should be provided where necessary for adults and children and the different sexes. Children should be supervised only by those authorised to do so.

### **Safe environment**

When evaluating an appropriate venue, the following should be considered:

- the meeting place should be warm, well-lit and well ventilated. It should be kept clean and free of clutter
- Electric sockets should be kept covered
- Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity
- Food is regularly prepared for children or others on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health Office and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired for caterers used and this should be copied and filed. Safeguarding officers to be made aware.

### **Additional needs**

If a child or adult has additional needs, welcome them to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for their needs

Ask the parents/carers how best to meet the person's needs. If premises are being redesigned or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future children and adults.

Disability legislation requires organisations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of people with disabilities, and this includes children.

### **1. Activity risk assessments**

While the Church recognises that it is not possible to avoid all risk when working with vulnerable groups, it is possible to try and minimise those risks. This can be achieved through careful planning and preparation and by providing a written record of the thought processes and action taken. Activity risk assessments should be undertaken before any activity takes place, given approval by the event leader/minister and retained securely in case they need to be seen at a later date ( as a result of an accident taking place).

Activity risk assessments should include:

- The nature of the activity
- The location
- transport needed and associated issues (eg insurance)
- staffing levels/gender Ratios

The NSPCC advises voluntary organisations that when working with groups of

children or young people, it is important that the level of supervision is appropriate to their age group and their needs, which may be very specific. In general, young children need to be more closely supervised and will require a higher adult to child ratio.

## **2. The following are the adult to child ratios recommended by the NSPCC**

0 - 3 years Parent 1:1

4 - 7 years 1 adult to 4 children

1:4 8 -12 years 1 adult to 8 children 1:8

13 - 18 years 1 adult to 10 children 1:10

- Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that there should

be at least one male and one female.

The link to the NSPCC page on recommended staffing levels is:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children>

## **Church photography and video recordings - the Internet and publicity**

Please also refer to the UMC Zoom Media Policy as a guide with issues concerning Zoom use.

### **A. Photographic records**

Photographs and video recordings of children and young people under 18 years

Photography and video recording are important ways of recording church activity and providing a historic record — illustrating and validating important moments in people's lives and the life of our Church or to share with others. It is, however, a powerful and personal process, and we must therefore respect the rights of everyone to make the choice whether or not to be photographed. Use the consent form (see Forms Section) is mandatory.

### **B. Procedures for photographers at church events.**

Individual recording of events at revivals and activities should be done carefully to avoid breach of laws and human rights—Announcements to remind people might be necessary all the time

- Do not photograph any child who has asked not to be photographed or who is under a court order (where this is known).
- Photography or recording should focus on the activity, not on a particular young person.
- Images should focus on small groups rather than individuals.
- If a young person is named, avoid using their photograph.
- All children must be appropriately dressed when photographed.
- All people taking photographs or recording footage for official use at the event should register with the nominated media officer.
- All concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour or intrusive photography should be reported to the media and safeguarding officer

### **C. Social media**

The United Methodist church UK has a Facebook and a website, these are

encouraged to observe these safeguarding guidelines and to regularly review the pages of their sites so that they remain up to date, effective and safe.'

- Photographs are personal data as far as data protection legislation is concerned and must be used responsibly.
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs of anyone under 18 on a website regardless.

#### **D. Using the Internet with children**

There may be occasions when church officers, youth or children's co-ordinators wish to demonstrate the internet to children or young people or encourage them to access information online as part of an activity. When this happens, co-ordinators are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

- Ensure that parents or carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their written permission in advance.
- To have 2 lead coordinators of programmes at all times such that there is always a witness should a safeguarding concern arise.

#### **Hire or use of church premises-**

Each local church should have the United Methodist Church hiring policy, flowchart and guidance:

[www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use](http://www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use)

The entire United Methodist churches hire buildings from the community groups and other churches. Note that the observance of 'reasonable care' by both parties is a standard insurance condition.

BOT is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring and must carry full liability insurance for this involve the safeguarding officer and BOT to do these checks.

For both one-off and regular hiring, it is recommended that a written hiring agreement be used. Please refer to the TMCP website for further information and hiring agreements, including the declaration:

<https://www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use>

#### **Venue hire**

- Meeting places should be warm, well- lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Electric sockets should be covered.
- Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities.
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity.
- If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by an Environmental Health officer and a food handling and hygiene certificate acquired.
- Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.
- Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.

#### **Faith and beliefs**

Exorcism/ deliverance

Whilst it is accepted that there is a long history of Exorcism and/or Deliverance within various Christian communities it must also be recognised that current safeguarding research highlights the dangers of some practices designed to help dispel or cast out unwanted spirits.

For children and adults it is important to recognise that apparent possession is often, in fact, undiagnosed mental illness and the performance of an Exorcism in such cases exacerbates the condition and can even be considered abuse. For children and some adults at risk, it is very unlikely that even in the most controlled and compassionate circumstances that an Exorcism does not contribute to existing trauma, therefore the need for a ritual of this nature to be performed should be carefully considered with support from partner agencies, particularly where children or adults at risk are the subject of the sacrament.

If there is enough evidence that Exorcism/Deliverance prayers should take place this should be done carefully with privacy and dignity. Some deaths have been recorded during this sacrament, churches have been criticised in the past for undertaking rites of this type without considering the potential for:

- Abuse, historic or current
- Mental ill health
- General wellbeing and safety of the individual
- Consent and capacity
- The overall need for discussion with other partners to ensure safety.

1. Clergy are involved in this which is multi-faceted exercise.
2. Knowledge of psychology and psychiatry is necessary.
3. The UMC UK will maintain privacy and dignity during deliverance prayers
4. Children and young adults can attend the service only if consent is obtained, however the needs of the child should be considered at all times with appropriate safeguards in place as safeguarding needs to remain at the heart of all church practice. Consent can only be given by an individual with parental responsibility for a child under 18 due to the sensitive nature of this practice.
5. Exorcism will only be delivered with the consent of all involved and will not take place during regular church services.
6. No recording or photo taking in a deliverance service
7. Invited guests need to be informed of the safeguarding policy of the UMC UK
8. Prayer rooms need to be used for such act in promoting privacy, dignity, and human rights protection.
9. Children are not to be exposed to a deliverance service unless the legal guardian/parent is able to consent.

If the hired premise is registered with Ofsted then the church should ask to see the registration certificate and record that it has been seen. Local Churches are required to ensure that the premises we use are under licence. The person signing the letting agreement BOT will be given a copy of this policy. All rent will be notified to the church safeguarding officer who will keep the records

and take advice as appropriate from both the Pastor in charge, DS, BOT and lay leaders.

### **E-safety**

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not create any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site.
- Maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.
- Ensure that parents or carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their written permission in advance.
- When demonstrations are being given, plan beforehand to ensure that all websites visited have material that is appropriate for the age group taking part.
- Children and young people should be regularly informed and reminded of safe Internet use and accessing social media. They must be encouraged to access websites such as NSPCC or Childline helpline.

- **Health and safety**

It is the responsibility of the Church Council to ensure that proper health and safety processes are in place. Health and safety should be managed as part of all activities and reference should be made to the following policies and guidance:

- Health and safety regulation - a short guide (HSE) [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsc13.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsc13.pdf)

### **1. Equipment**

The use of electricity or electrical equipment in church buildings must comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. Church members can reduce or remove risks by, for example:

- reporting all faulty equipment
- switching off all equipment when not in use and disconnecting the equipment when leaving the room
- Not undertaking electrical repairs unless qualified
- securing trailing leads and cables
- removing trip hazards
- ensuring plug sockets are covered.

All electrical items to be used during a church gathering should be tested annually and labelled passed Bot at all levels to keep a record

### **2. Accident book**

Any injury suffered by an employee or volunteer, church member or visitor during an church activity must be recorded together with such particulars as are a requirement by statutory regulations in the accident book any recorded incident to be notified to the CSO MA.

At all places where activities take place with vulnerable groups and be easily accessible.

### **3. First aid**

A first aid kit should be available on the premises where an activity is taking place even church services. The contents of the first aid kit should be stored in a watertight container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals.

The church should have first aiders register and the updated training certificate ( not every nurse is a first aider and not only nurses are first aiders) . The register is passed from the local church to charge then MA for appointment of first aiders at all gatherings. A compliant first aid kit should be carried on all activities off-church premises and in all vehicles used by the church (both church-owned and private).

During every church activity including church services two first aiders must be appointed from the register and easily identification attire should be worn.

### **4.Fire procedures**

The Church to have a register of the trained fire marshals and certificates to be filed at the local church copies passed to charge safeguarding officer then to the CSO

Two fire officers to be appointed at every church activity even weekly church service.

Easily identified attire to be worn

Ensure the church is made aware of the fire procedures including visitors.

### **5.Consent forms**

Where the church is running a dedicated service for children or vulnerable adults best practice requires that all activities should have: a. a registration form

A consent form should be completed for every child/adult attending the event.

- Consent for emergency medical treatment
- Consent for photographs/videos if relevant.

### **6.Transport/ transport hire**

Transport arrangements to and from church activities are the responsibility of parents (when transporting children)/individuals (when transporting adults) if they make arrangements among themselves but are the responsibility of the church if the church or church activity organises them. Transport or travel between church activities will usually be the responsibility of the church. It should be clearly understood by all concerned at which point responsibility for the child is passed from parent to church worker and at which point it is returned.

#### **a. Drivers**

- All those who drive children/adults on church-organised activities/rotas should have held a full and clean driving licence for more than two years, DBS check should be clear.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of six points or more on their licence should inform the safeguarding officer.

- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children/adults for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state (not overtired, not under the influence of alcohol, not taking illegal substances and not under the influence of medicines that may induce drowsiness).
- Drivers of church-owned vehicles should provide a copy of their driving licence annually.

#### **b. Private cars**

- All cars that carry children/adults on behalf of the church should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use.
- The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.
- All cars should be in a roadworthy condition.

Children should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

Care should be taken in assisting adults to board or leave vehicles and putting on seat belts. Drivers need to be aware of moving and handling issues when assisting adults and transferring their mobility aids.

#### **c. Use of Minibuses/coaches**

Before using a minibus, ensure you know the most up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

### **7. Insurance**

The United Methodist church UK Insurance covers:

- a)** Churches, in use for worship the building insurance is with the Landlord a copy is required for compliance.
- b)** Property insurance

### **8. Financial integrity**

Financial dealings can have an impact on the Church and the community and must always be handled with integrity. Those with authority for such matters should maintain proper systems and not delegate that responsibility to anyone else.

- Church workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances.
- Church workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Church workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart and should avoid any conflict of interest.
- Money received by a church should be handled by two unrelated lay people.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those who may be vulnerable (the recently bereaved).

### **9. Forms in relation to safeguarding matters**

- Covenant of Care agreement/contract
- Incident report form.
- Risk assessment for activities — checklist
- Consent forms-for activity

- Confidential declaration form

### **Confidential declarations**

All office holders should complete a confidential declaration forms.

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 and 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.

As the people of the United Methodist Church UK 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 United 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, 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.

### **Commitment**

#### **The United Methodist Church UK 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.
2. Ensure the **IMPLEMENTATION** of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and 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. **AFFIRM** and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and also acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are in our churches

### **Manage and support the work of the safeguarding officers.**

- Through the safeguarding officer, ensure that superintendent, pastors are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and enable skills training opportunities to be made available.
- Through the safeguarding officer, ensure that all charges and local churches implement the policies.
- Support the safeguarding officers in their work by ensuring they are capable of taking forward reports of incidents and allegations promptly and in accordance with good practice.
- Ensure that, where there are meetings and events, the policy is implemented.
- Ensure the CSO completes an audit/monitoring form at the end of the year or as needed confirming that policies are in place in each church and that these have been annually reviewed. Each safeguarding officer shall send a copy of their audit to the CSO.

### **Annual reviews and updates**

These give a way to see the effectiveness of the policy, improvements needed to safeguard and promoting good practice according to the laws and the legislation reviews

- The MA Lay leader, superintendents and local safeguarding officers are updated on any changes to safeguarding policy, practice and guidance.
- Two meetings are organised annually.

### **Appendix 2.**

#### **Contact details**

<https://www.unitedmethodistchurchuk.org/ministers-and-office-holders/>

The link above provides current information about contact information for the United Methodist Church

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Resources**

Thirtyoneeight website has information in the Resources section about culture and faith.

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/>

#### **The United Methodist Church website**

<https://www.unitedmethodistchurchuk.org/>

#### **NSPCC website**

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

### **Appendix 4**

#### **Glossary**

A full list of terms is available on the UMC website

<https://www.unitedmethodistchurchuk.org/>

Approved by the United Methodist Church UK

Date

Signatories .....

Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the United Methodist Church

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