

Statement of safeguarding principles

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of humans in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Principles

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

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

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

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our Church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

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

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Hove Methodist Church



This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on 23rd February 2023.

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Hove Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

Hove Methodist Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether by disabilities or by reduction in capacities or by their situation. 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.

Hove Methodist Church fully agrees with the statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space* 2007:

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

Hove 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.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Hove Methodist Church



1. **Hove Methodist Church** commits itself to: **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. **Hove Methodist Church** commits itself to ensuring the **IMPLEMENTATION** of Connexional Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance, and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
3. **Hove Methodist Church** commits itself to the **PROVISION** of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.
4. **Hove Methodist Church AFFIRMS** and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

Hove Methodist Church Council appoints **Robert Winton** as church Safeguarding Officer (Adults) and (Children) and supports him in his role, which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with circuit and district safeguarding officers
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers
- v) ensure proper records are kept of all incidents/concerns according to Methodist policy and practice (see *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church* - Updated Jan 2015)
- vi) ensure that all safeguarding training which is required is undertaken by those in post and appropriate records kept and made available
- vii) attend training and meetings organised to support the role
- viii) oversee safeguarding throughout the whole life of the church (eg lettings, groups, property etc)
- ix) report to the Church Council annually
- x) ensure the church completes a yearly audit/monitoring on safeguarding confirming that policies are in place for the church and all groups and lettings in the church and that these have been annually reviewed
- xi) ensure that the church recruits safely for all posts

- xii) ensure that the church has a safeguarding noticeboard with a copy of the current, signed safeguarding policy, contact numbers for local and national helplines and other suitable information.

a) Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2019)*.

b) Good practice

We believe that good practice means:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed by the church safeguarding officer with the property steward and/or their representatives at least annually for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Church Council in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The Church Council will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
- iv) Any church-organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate. An agreed record to be kept in the church file for each driver/car.
- v) Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. Approval will be obtained from the event leader/minister. A written record of the assessment will be retained securely in case they need to be seen at a later date.
- vi) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Church Council will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

These things are to safeguard those working with children, young people and those adults who may be vulnerable.

c) Appointment and training of workers

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure and following safer recruitment procedures of the Methodist Church. Each worker will have an identified supervisor who will meet at regular intervals with the worker. A record of these meetings will be agreed and signed, and the record kept. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first 6 months of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (eg food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc) and each worker will have an annual review conducted by a named member of the Church Council and another worker within the organisation.

d) Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, pastoral visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

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

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems will be produced and given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This leaflet will be reviewed annually.

f) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council.

g) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing, a risk assessment and notification of the event to be given to the church safeguarding officer PRIOR to the agreement for any event or off-site activity. Notification of the event will be given to the ROBERT WINTON. The Church Safeguarding Officer will forward it immediately to the Circuit Safeguarding Officer in order that an appropriate response can be made. The District Safeguarding Officer and District Safeguarding Group will need to be informed of all off site events.

h) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement will be given a copy of this policy and the leaflet¹. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings. All lettings will be notified to the church safeguarding officer who will keep the records and take advice as appropriate from both the DSO and CSO.

i) Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisation. However, a complaint should be addressed to a person who will be appointed by the Church Council and who is currently **Rev Andy Lowe**. If a complaint is made to another person it should be passed to **Rev. Andy Lowe** who will meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of the Methodist Church which will involve initially speaking with the Local Complaints Officer who is **Rev. Andy Lowe**.

j) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review is: **June 2024**

¹ Such as the code of safer working practice leaflet in the appendices or the quick reference guide <https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/pe750-sg-16/safeguarding>.

k) Key concepts and definitions

- i) Vulnerable Adults: Any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- ii) Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- iii) Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- iv) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person, or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers, by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated . 23rd February 2023



Signed Chair of Church Council