Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for

Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on 29th June 2022

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.

Cheadle Hulme 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.

Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether as a result of disabilities or 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 our wish 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 which will 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.

Cheadle Hulme 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.*

Cheadle Hulme 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, child sexual exploitation 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.

Cheadle Hulme 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, or suffer harm, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

IMPLEMENT the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy Procedures and Guidance; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

PROVIDE support, advice and training for lay and ordained people to 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.

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 children and vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

Church Council

The safeguarding officer should be a member of the Church Council or have the right to attend at least annually to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy.
Ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the church lies with the Church Council.

Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church appoints Gill Smith as Church Safeguarding Officer and supports her in her role which is to

i) provide support and advice to the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding

ii) ensure that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is displayed at all times in the church on a safeguarding noticeboard, along with names of current safeguarding officers, national helplines and other suitable information. This must be renewed annually

iii) record all safeguarding issues that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist policy and practice and promote the requirement for others to do the same.

iv) identify and inform those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance. Work with the circuit safeguarding officer and DSO to arrange training

v) attend training and meetings related to the role

vi) work in partnership with the lettings officer, stewards and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. This will include gaining written confirmation that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy or are using an appropriate policy of their own.

vii) check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Church Council meetings and report to the Church Council annually

viii) inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures

ix) advise the circuit safeguarding officer and/or DSO of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the church safeguarding policy is to check that procedures are in place and provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities of those trusted with promoting the church as a safe space for all its users. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church* (2018). (2020)

2. Good practice

We believe that good practice means:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- 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 record will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- 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 a written risk assessment report will be given annually to the Church Council. 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.
- Any church-organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure that 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.
- 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 record of the assessments will be retained securely in case they need to be seen at a later date.
- 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.

3. Appointment and training of workers

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure and following the 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.

Volunteers will be appointed following safer recruitment procedures of the Methodist Church, including a

satisfactory DBS disclosure where necessary. Each volunteer will have a person to whom they are responsible and role descriptions will be reviewed annually.

Each worker and volunteer, including Pastoral Visitors will be expected to undergo Foundation Module (2020 edition) safeguarding training, within the first 6 months (agreed by Methodist Conference in 2011 - *Creating Safer Space Report*) of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc).

4. Pastoral visitors

Pastoral visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of Foundation Module (2020 Edition) safeguarding training upon appointment. Pastoral Visitors will have a Pastoral Enabler whom they can consult and whom they may meet along with other Pastoral Visitors. Pastoral Enablers will meet at least annually with the minister and a record of the meeting kept.

5. Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

Appendix A (children and young people) and Appendix B (vulnerable adults) outline good practice and systems to supplement the church's Safeguarding policy and will be reviewed annually with the policy and given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Other Office Holders

- All those appointed to an office, duty or responsibility within the life of the church will sign an agreement that they have read an understood the church's policy and that there is no reason why they should not hold office
- All key holders will sign an agreement acknowledging the conditions of issue.
- All members of CHMC (including children) should be informed how to obtain advice, support and help if they have a concern or suspect a child is being harmed.

6. Ecumenical events

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

7. 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 involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. If the activity is unusual or considered to be high risk the church safeguarding officer will contact the circuit safeguarding officer in order that it can be ratified or any queries raised.

8. Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the hirer signing the letting agreement will be given a copy of the church safeguarding policy with the appendices. The Church Administrators will consider the various

users of the building in making lettings. All lettings will be notified to the church safeguarding officer (records will be held in the church office) and take advice as appropriate from both the District Safeguarding Officer and Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

9. Complaints procedure

There is a formal complaints procedure within the Methodist Church, which allows issues to be raised about actions or behaviour by a member or officer of the Church. In addition, employed staff will be subject to relevant contractual procedures. All complaints will be responded to with care, diligence and impartiality. The provisions of Part 11 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church will be followed.

Safeguarding officers must be informed of any complaint or issue relating to the potential abuse of children or adults who may be vulnerable. They will support prompt action to respond to the circumstances of any safeguarding concern, whether or not any party involved wishes to make a formal complaint through the Methodist Church.

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisation. However, if the complaint is of a safeguarding nature, relating to possible abuse of children or vulnerable adults, then it is very important that your DSO is consulted as statutory services may need to be informed.

A complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the Church Council and who is currently Gill Smith (Church Safeguarding Officer). If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to the Minister, Rev'd Louise Gough. Meetings will be arranged with the person making the complaint and, usually, the person against whom the complaint has been made, in an attempt to resolve it. If the complaint is regarding the Church Safeguarding Officer or a member of their family it will be referred to the Minister. If the complaint relates to the Minister it will be referred to the Circuit Superintendent Minister, Revd Ian Smart.

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'd Ian Smart, who is the Circuit Superintendent Minister.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review is June 2023.

11. Key concepts and definitions

11.1. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, a member of the armed forces, in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

11.2. Vulnerable Adults: Any adult aged 18 or over who, owing to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.

11.3. Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing

impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

11.4. 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.

11.5. Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, community, or 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 **29/06/2022**

Signed Chair of Church Council.

Review June 2023

Appendix A – Good Practice in Safeguarding Children and Young People

Leaders should also refer to the code of safer working practice with children and young people in section 6 of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and Policies for the Methodist Church in Britain available on line on the Methodist Church website under 'Safeguarding.'
A child or young person is defined in this document as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

Registration
A registration form should be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities organised by the church. The form should be updated annually and include the following: Name and address, Date of birth, Emergency contact details, Medical information, Any special needs including activities which the child is unable to take part in, Consent for emergency medical treatment, Consent for photographs/videos if relevant.
Separate consent should be obtained for one off events and activities e.g. swimming and also for outings, weekends away, etc.
All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely to comply with the current general data protection regulations (GDPR).

Recommended staffing levels The recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups as recommended by the NSPCC are given below: More help may be required if children are being taken off the church premises, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances require it.

0 – 2 yrs 1 adult for every 3 children 1:3
2 – 3 yrs 1 adult for every 4 children 1:4
3 – 8 yrs 1 adult to every 6 children 1:6
9 - 12 yrs 1 adult to every 8 children 1:8
12-18 yrs 1 adult to every 10 children 1:10

Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female. Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping or volunteering, 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.
Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process and undertake DBS checks.

Safe Environment
Leaders of groups of children and young people should do their utmost to ensure everyone in the building is safe and to be extra vigilant when there are other users in the building.
Leaders are asked to be vigilant and ensure all children and young people are safe when being dropped off or collected.
Children and young people should not be left unsupervised in a room, or permitted to be in any areas of the building other than the designated meeting place.
Children are not permitted to be in the kitchen at any time unless supervised by an adult.
Please ensure you check the toilet areas are clear and supervise use of the toilets so children and young people are not put at risk especially when the building is being used by other groups or individuals.
If a group are the only users in the building, please ensure the entrance doors are put on the 'ten past setting', (this enables people to leave the building in an emergency but not enter the premises)

Rooms should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter. Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activities.
Leaders should undertake a risk assessment for each activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location. (See advice in Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church 6.7 Activity risk assessments)
Drinks should always be available. Any food offered must be prepared and served under the guidelines adopted by the church, see food and hygiene handbook in kitchen drawer. Anyone involved in food preparation needs to have completed the online food safety course approved by the church.
Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.
Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. A fire drill should be carried out regularly.

A First Aid kit and accident book is available in the kitchen. Any injury, however slight, should be recorded in the Accident Book and the church office informed and given the copy of the accident report. A defibrillator is stored on the wall in the narthex, to the left of the kitchen hatch and opposite the main hall.
The telephone number for Childline and other organisations is displayed in a number of places in church, in the toilet areas and in room 6 where children & young people can see them.

E – Safety Leaders must ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional. Leaders must not contact or make 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.

Photographing children and young people. Photographs are personal data as far as data protection legislation is concerned and must be used responsibly. Leaders must ensure they have parental consent to take photographs of any children or young people and if used in a display or on a website. Children over the age of 12 must give their permission to have images taken, used and stored. Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by name or other personal details given. When using photographs of children or young people it is preferable to use group pictures.

Transporting children on behalf of the church
Drivers - All those who drive children on church-organised activities should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years and an annual licence check undertaken. Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process. Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church Safeguarding Officer. Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the church. Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.

Private cars Children & young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to formally arranged lifts to and from a church activity. All cars that carry children 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 that carry children should be in a roadworthy condition and all children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts additional children should not be carried. At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number. 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.

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Appendix B- Good Practice in the Safeguarding of Adults when they are Vulnerable

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy Guidance and Policies for the Methodist Church in Britain available online, especially section 6.4 Code of safer working practice with adults, 6.6 Additional Guidelines working with adults, and 7.2.1 Guidance relating to adults who may be vulnerable.

'Adult safeguarding incorporates the concept of prevention, empowerment and protection to enable adults who are in circumstances that make them vulnerable to retain independence, well-being and choice and to access their right to a life free from abuse and neglect.' The Association of Directors of Adult Services.

A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right in common with all people to:

* be treated with respect and dignity and with recognition of abilities and gifts
* have their privacy respected
* be able to lead as independent a life as possible
* be able to choose how to lead their life and make their own decisions
* have the protection of the law have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background
* be able to use their chosen language or method of communication
* be heard.

Good Practice

Plan to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults may occur or where situations can be misinterpreted e.g. ensure the presence of more than one adult where possible, make arrangements for safe transport.

Ensure safe recruitment practices and that checks and references are always undertaken and institute a probationary period for each new worker.

Train all workers in safe practice and safeguarding including updating training

Buildings should be assessed to check that they are as accessible as possible and that aids and adaptations have been used. This may include the use of ramps, loop systems, etc.

Care should be taken when helping with any physical needs, washing and toileting, always respecting the choices of the individual concerned. It may be necessary for specialist training to be given in these areas and workers should always consider whether this help can be given in terms of their own safety and that of the vulnerable adult.

Groups should do their utmost to ensure any vulnerable adults are safe and be extra vigilant when the building is being used by other users.

A register of any members of a group run by the church for vulnerable adults, like the church Cameo, should be maintained with next of kin contact, any relevant medical and or dietary information, consent for emergency medical treatment and the taking of photos. This information must be held securely.

Leaders of any groups that include vulnerable adults should ensure rooms are warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter to ensure there are no trip hazards.

Groups should have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.

Leaders should be aware of fire procedures and ensure any vulnerable adults are supported in the case of emergency evacuation.

A first aid kit and accident book is available in the kitchen. Any injury, however slight, should be recorded in the Accident Book and the church office informed and given the copy of the accident

report. A defibrillator is stored on the wall in the narthex, to the left of the kitchen hatch and opposite the main hall.

Drinks should always be available
Any food must be prepared and served under the guidelines adopted by the church, see handbook in kitchen drawer and anyone involved in food preparation needs to have competed an on-line food safety course approved by the church.

Transporting on behalf of the church
Drivers –
All those who drive on church-organised activities should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years and an annual licence check should be undertaken for all drivers.
Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church Safeguarding Officer.
Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.

Private cars
All cars that 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 and all passengers must wear suitable seat belts.
At no time should the number of passengers in a car exceed the usual passenger number.

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Appendix C - Safeguarding Contracts

For the protection of the whole church community, it is recognised that careful consideration and preparation is required before any person deemed to be a risk to vulnerable individuals may participate in worship and other church activities.

Standing Orders 690 and 690A specify the arrangements for involvement not only of those convicted of or cautioned for offences but also of those who, following a risk assessment and a recommendation by the Safeguarding Committee, represent a significant risk of serious harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults.[i]

This assessment of risk will explore the circumstances of the safeguarding concerns, identification of risks and the establishment of a safeguarding contract that is specific to the individual and the nature of their engagement with the Church.

At all times, the church will follow the processes laid down in policy for managing and supporting individuals under a safeguarding contract[ii], including the establishment of a Monitoring and Support Group (MSG).

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[i] For further information see The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church Vol 2 – 2020 revision Part 4 The Church and Public Protection (from p768)

[ii] For further information see Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church in Britain – July 2020 revision Section 4.7 Responding well to those who might pose a risk (from p53)