



Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit of the **Methodist Church**

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of humans in God's own image. This implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to value the potential in everyone. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. We all have duty 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 concern raised which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been victim of abuse, 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 Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit

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

The Circuit 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 Circuit 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.

The Circuit fully agrees with the Connexional statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space* 2007:

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

The Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

In the light of the above principles:

1. Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit commits itself to **RESPOND** without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of commits itself to ensuring the



IMPLEMENTATION of Connexional Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the Circuit and in the Churches. This can be found by clicking on this link:-

https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/18740/safeguarding_policy_procedures_and_guidance_for_the_methodist_church_sept_2020.pdf

2. Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit commits itself to the **PROVISION** of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

3. Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit **AFFIRMS** and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises. Birmingham (West) and Oldbury Circuit appoints Rev Brian and Helena Taylor as Circuit Safeguarding Officers and supports them in their 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 Church and District Safeguarding Officers
 - iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local Churches with the support of Circuit Ministers
 - v) Ensure proper records are kept of all incidents/concerns according to Methodist policy and practice.
 - 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) Report to the Circuit Meeting annually.

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 (2017).

h) Complaints procedure

If a safeguarding concern or complaint is brought to the attention of any Church Officer, the Church Safeguarding Officer should be informed as soon as possible. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to the Minister who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. In either



case a 'Record of Concern' form must be completed and given to the Safeguarding Officer. 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.

i) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Circuit meeting.

j) 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 _____

Signed _____ Superintendent Minister