



The Methodist Church  
Bude & Holsworthy Circuit

## **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy**

### **Preamble**

***This policy takes account of the Safeguarding Policy of the Methodist Church and should be read in conjunction the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook.***

The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults. This may take the form of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse either on their own, or far more likely, in combination. It acknowledges the effect abuse may have on people and all aspects of their development.

The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit recognises that children and young people are always vulnerable, and that any of us may be vulnerable at some time. We have a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by their situation, by disabilities or by a reduction in capacities. This increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible.

The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit fully agrees with the Connexional statement set out 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 Bude & Holsworthy Circuit 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, perpetrators, 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.

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. All key concepts and definitions in this policy are taken from the *Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010)*.

## Policy

This policy applies to all involved in the life and work of this Circuit of the Methodist Church.

1. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit is committed to:
  - a. the care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults.
  - b. the safeguarding and protection and support of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
  - c. the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.
  - d. ensuring that the principles of safer recruitment are always strictly adhered to. Appendix A has links to further information and guidance on safer recruitment.
2. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will ensure that the needs and the support of victims, whether they are children, young people or vulnerable adults are paramount, and come before any other considerations.
3. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
4. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit is committed to following statute, guidance and recognised good practice.
5. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will ensure that, where there are Circuit meetings and events, this Circuit Policy is always implemented.
6. Each Methodist Church in the Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will prominently display up to date Safeguarding information including the contact details for the Circuit Safeguarding Officer and any information provided through the District Safeguarding Officer. Each Church shall adopt a Safeguarding Policy which will be reviewed annually.
7. A Local Ecumenical Partnership [LEP] shall decide, through its governing body, to abide by the Safeguarding Policy of one of the partner denominations, notifying the Circuit and District Safeguarding Officers and the District Ecumenical Officer.

8. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will 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, and we will support such people when dealing with any safeguarding concerns
9. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will respond without delay to every allegation made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been or is being abused,  
**co-operating** with the police and local authority in any investigation, and always **focusing** on the needs of the victims and **adhering** to the recommendations of the police and local authority.  
For details of this process, see Appendix B
10. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will seek to offer informed pastoral care and appropriate support to anyone who has suffered because of abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry
11. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will seek to offer appropriate pastoral care and support to perpetrators and families of perpetrators, taking into account the circumstances of the incident/offence. This could include supervision and referral to proper authorities of any member of a church community known to have behaved inappropriately against a child, young person or vulnerable adult. ***This support should always be provided by someone from another Circuit. Please note that it is impossible for the same person to support both victims and perpetrators.***
12. The District Safeguarding Executive Officer [DSEO] must always be made aware of any safeguarding issue/concern and after consultation (if required) liaise with Circuit Staff about any actions that may be required. If, for whatever reason, it is inappropriate for Circuit Staff, to be involved either individually or as a group, the DSEO will liaise with both the District Chair and the Independent Chair of the District Safeguarding Group.
13. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will support the DSEO in taking forward incidents and allegations promptly and in accordance with good practice.
14. The Bude & Holsworthy Circuit maintains a Circuit Safeguarding Team.
15. The Circuit Safeguarding Team will ensure that this policy is implemented and adhered to. They will continue to review both the policy and the supporting Safeguarding structure and training in order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults associated with our churches.
16. The monitoring of this policy will be undertaken by the Circuit Safeguarding Team and will report to the Circuit Meeting whenever it meets.

## **Training**

In order to fulfill the requirement of this policy, the Bude & Holsworthy Circuit will enforce the requirement of the Methodist Conference about attendance at relevant modules of the *Creating Safer Space* training.

a. Foundation Module

Office holders, as set out in Appendix C to this document, must complete the *Creating Safer Space* Foundation Module. Each Circuit must ensure that the Foundation Module is offered at least once every six months, although this can be done in conjunction with other Circuits.

b. Leadership Module

It is for Superintendent Ministers to ensure that relevant post-holders are aware of the requirement to attend this training.

The District Safeguarding Team will facilitate the sharing of training opportunities with Circuits in the District - via the Circuit Safeguarding Officers - and audit completion of these modules by those required to have attended this training.

## **Covenants of Care**

The Circuit, with the DSEO in attendance, must review Covenants of Care at least annually.

## **Visiting Preachers**

Where worship is led and/or a sermon preached by anyone other than a Methodist minister, accredited Local Preacher and Worship Leaders, the inviting church should either:

- a. seek evidence that the person leading the worship has been trained in safeguarding matters and request sight of a current DBS Disclosure, OR
- b. ensure that the person leading the worship is accompanied by an appropriate adult throughout the time that they are on our premises and/or ministering in one of our churches/societies.

It is the responsibility of the Circuit Superintendent, when making the Circuit Plan, to ensure that the requirements of this policy are fulfilled.

**Photography of children and young people at church events, including junior church and youth events**

Where it is desired to photograph children or young people taking part in any event organised by or through the Methodist Church, a consent form signed by their parent or appropriate carer is required for every child and young person under the age of 16 who may be photographed. (A model consent form is attached at Appendix D.)

**Social Media and Internet**

Whilst social media and the internet are widely used and have enormous benefits, there are also many dangers associated with them, for example exploitation and cyber-bullying. Every attempt should be made to follow the guidelines on this topic. Appendix A has links to social media guidelines.

**Conclusion**

This policy is intended to promote and facilitate good practice. None of the foregoing should prevent anyone from taking appropriate and prompt action to ensure the well being of children and vulnerable people.

Dated .....

Signed ..... District Chair

## **Bude & Holsworthy Circuit of the Methodist Church: Circuit Safeguarding Policy**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Safer Recruitment**

The Methodist Church's Safer Recruitment Policy requires the careful selection, support and training of all those with any responsibility within the Church for Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures.

1. The Safer Recruitment Policy replaces the 2010 interim policies and the supplementary guidance issued for the Methodist Church and Church of England in September 2012.
2. The policy is based on legislation which applies to the mainland of England and Wales, in particular the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended) and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. It forms part of the safeguarding framework for the Methodist Church and the Church of England.
3. No District is entitled to amend the policy although additional references to local arrangements can be inserted as an attachment.
4. The policy complies with the Government requirements for 'faith communities' as for other organisations - see Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 which sets out as one of the requirements: 'Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check'. (Page 48)
5. The information sheets issued May - August 2012 provide detailed information about the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. They will remain available on the Methodist Church websites.
6. The Methodist Church provides further 'Human Resources' guidance about, for example, recruitment, management of staff, conduct and discipline. This policy is intended to supplement all such policies, and it applies to arrangements for all types of work: employment; office-holders; volunteers; students as well as other types of activity such as internships. All this other guidance should cross-refer to this policy.
7. The policy is written to guide the appointment for all roles at local levels - church or Circuit. For appointments in other contexts - for example, at District level - then the body with responsibility for the appointment must work with their lead safeguarding representative, to translate the principles and detailed provisions of this policy into their specific context.
8. Private arrangements made between families or friends are not covered by this policy, even where the people involved know each other through their church links. Only activities formally provided by the Church are covered.
9. The Safer Recruitment Policy applies to the Methodist Church in Scotland, for which there is separate guidance relating to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme.

For further information, see: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding>. This will also have the latest guidance in an area where there are frequent and often last minute changes to practice and policy.

## Social Media

Social media, whilst bringing many benefits also has some inherent risks for people of all ages. This is a fast-moving area, and it is recommended that reference be made to the following link;

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/technology-and-church/social-media-guidelines>

This includes specific information for

- Children and Youth Workers in the Methodist Church
- Training ideas for Children and Youth Workers
- Children 5-10yrs
- Young people 11-18yrs
- Parents

## The Methodist Church Social Media Policy is:

- You should participate online in the same way as you would with other public forums. You take responsibility for the things you do, say or write.
- Never share personal details like home address and phone numbers except with someone you know and trust, and if you decide to do so then use a private message. Be aware an address can be disclosed in many ways for example via photos or a GPS position as well as in written form.
- Always remember that participating online results in your comments being permanently available and open to being republished in other media. Once something is posted to a blog or other internet site, it should be assumed to be still available even if it is later deleted from the original site.
- Stay within the legal framework and be aware that safeguarding, libel, slander, copyright and data protection laws apply, as well as the [Constitutional Practice and Discipline \(CPD\)](#) of the Methodist Church.
- For general guidelines on confidentiality, refer to [With Integrity and Skill](#) - if telling a story about anyone, ask yourself - **Is this my story to tell?**
- Be aware that this may attract media interest in you as an individual, so proceed with care whether you are participating in an official or a personal capacity. If you have any doubts, take advice, but remember that you are responsible for your online activities.
- Staff should be aware of and act in line with [Speaking for the Methodist Church](#), as well as "With Integrity and Skill" and the whistle blowing policy where necessary.

# **Bude & Holsworthy Circuit of the Methodist Church: Circuit Safeguarding Policy**

## **Appendix B**

### **Keeping Records - (see Safeguarding Records in Practice and Guidance Policy)**

In the church context, records are needed in order to:

- Ensure that what happened and when it happened is recorded
- Provide a history of events so that patterns can be identified
- Record and justify the action/s of advisers and church workers
- Promote the exercise of accountability
- Provide a basis of evidence for future safeguarding activity
- Allow for continuity when there is a change of personnel

### **Responding to concerns and allegations**

There are many different ways that suspicions may arise or allegations are made, so guidance must be general, although there are some important principles that should be followed.

Once a person becomes aware of or suspects safeguarding concerns, there is a duty to make a referral.

At the very least the Circuit and District Safeguarding Officer (DSEO) should be consulted and/or advised. If there is a delay in making contact with them this must never be a reason for delay in making a referral either to the police or Children's or Adults Social Services.

There must be no delay in reporting concerns even if not all the relevant information is available.

When making a referral you will be asked for information for which it is recommended that the following information is recorded:

#### **What to record - also see (5.2 in Safeguarding Records Practice and Guidance Policy)**

- **who** was involved: the names of key people
- **what** happened: facts not opinions
- **where** it happened
- **when** it happened: date and time
- **how** it happened
- **why** it happened
- **whom** it was referred to
- **date** record completed and by whom

#### **Informing the alleged perpetrator**

Where the alleged perpetrator is known and is involved in any activities in the church that person should be suspended and told not to attend the church(es) where either the activity took place OR where any victims may be present. Whilst the suspension can be given verbally, it must also be followed up immediately in writing.

The information about the suspension should simply state the fact of the suspension and that it will be reviewed as enquiries progress. It is crucial that no further information and/or comment is provided as this could easily compromise any enquiries by either the police and/or Children's or Adult Services.

### **Informing the alleged victim**

It is very important that the alleged victim is made aware of the action that has been taken, and in the case of a child their parent/guardian should also be advised. They should also know that they may be interviewed by either the police and/or Children's or Adult Services.

### **Informing the congregation(s)**

It is important that the congregation should be advised if someone has been suspended. The timing and wording is crucial and no action should be taken without reference to the District Safeguarding Officer. They will ask for a draft statement that is likely to be shared with the police and local authority so that any enquiries and actions are not prejudiced.

Further guidance can be found in the Leadership Module Safeguarding Manual.

# **Bude & Holsworthy Circuit of the Methodist Church: Circuit Safeguarding Policy**

## **Appendix C**

**Creating Safer Space Foundation Module** - Who Needs To Attend. (This list was approved by the Methodist Conference 2012, where it formed an appendix to the *Creating Safer Space* report.)

In order to fulfil our Safeguarding Policy, the East Anglia District will enforce the requirement of the Methodist Conference that the following office holders must complete the *Creating Safer Space* Foundation Module:

### **ATTENDANCE PROVISION**

From Appendix 2 Safeguarding Report, The Methodist Conference 2012

#### **Foundation Module**

##### **Core List – Required Attendance**

- ◇ Presbyters with an active preaching or pastoral ministry
- ◇ Deacons with an active preaching or pastoral ministry
- ◇ Pre-ordination students and probationers
- ◇ Lay employees and volunteer workers with pastoral responsibility
- ◇ Pastoral visitors
- ◇ Anyone working with 0-18 year olds in the name of the church
- ◇ Anyone working in activities targeted at adults who are vulnerable (eg luncheon club for the housebound)
- ◇ Church stewards
- ◇ Circuit stewards
- ◇ Local preachers
- ◇ Worship leaders
- ◇ Those training for local preaching or worship leading
- ◇ Church and circuit safeguarding representatives
- ◇ Choir/music group/drama leaders – where there are 0-18 year olds or vulnerable adults in the group.
- ◇ District staff especially policy committee members, complaints and discipline, mediators
- ◇ Core teaching staff at Methodist Church Training Institutions
- ◇ Connexional staff with direct safeguarding links eg children and youth workers
- ◇ 'Covenant of Care' group members

##### **Warmly invited but not mandatory**

- ◇ Evangelism/mission enablers
- ◇ Leaders of other organisations, working with 0-18yr olds or vulnerable adults, who use church premises
- ◇ Remaining Choir/music group/drama leaders
- ◇ Any other group leaders within the church, who may have adults within their particular group who are vulnerable.
- ◇ Property stewards and other keyholders
- ◇ Caretakers
- ◇ Church/circuit meeting secretaries
- ◇ Church/circuit/district administrators
- ◇ Remaining District and connexional staff
- ◇ Remaining teaching staff at Methodist Church Training Institutions

All those who have not completed the Foundation Module will be suspended from office until such time as the course has been successfully undertaken. The one exception will be for those who are new to one of the roles or offices listed above.

A new office holder will be required to successfully complete the Foundation Module within six months of taking up such a post and if not, be suspended until the training has been completed.

The District Safeguarding Group will ensure that each Circuit offers the Foundation Module at least once every six months, although this can be done in collaboration with other Circuits.

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**Bude & Holsworthy Circuit of the Methodist Church: Circuit Safeguarding Policy**

**Appendix D - Model consent form for photographs and publicity**

**xxxx Methodist Church**

**Consent Form for Photographs and Publicity**

At xxxx Methodist Church (“the Church”) we take the issue of child safety very seriously and this includes the use of images of children. We ask that parents or carers consent to the Church taking and using photographs and images of their children. Any use of images is underpinned by our Safeguarding Policy. We will never include the name of a child alongside an image.

**Please complete, sign and return this form to .....**

I consent to the taking of photographs and digital images (including DVD recording) of the child named below which will only be used for the following purposes:

- For display within the Church premises;
- In Methodist Church printed publications or websites; or
- In publicity for events held by the Church.

I understand that the images will be used only for the purposes of the Church and/or the Methodist Church and the identity of my child will be protected. I acknowledge that the images may be used in and distributed using a variety of media including CD, CD-ROM, DVD, memory stick, email and printed form.

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Queries regarding this form should be addressed to:  
(Church/Circuit Safeguarding Officer)