

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 protecting 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 safeguarding concern made which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, working in partnership 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.

Working with the District Safeguarding Officer, we will support risk assessment of those who present a safeguarding risk within a church environment. We will ensure appropriate pastoral care is offered and measures are taken to address identified risks including referral to statutory agencies, suspension and the use of safeguarding contracts. We will recognise and apply the restrictions to appointment laid down in Standing Order 010 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Roundhay Methodist Church

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held 2nd March 2020

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.

Roundhay St John agreed at their PCC meeting on 3rd March 2015 that they agree to follow the Roundhay Methodist Church safeguarding policy.

Roundhay Methodist Church and Roundhay St John Church are in covenant partnership and their church life is entirely united under the name of Oakwood Church. This policy is held legally by the trustees of Roundhay Methodist Church, but will operate for the congregation and church known as 'Oakwood Church'. This name will be used in the statements below.

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

Oakwood Church recognizes that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether as a result of disabilities or by reduction in capacities or by their situation. It is recognized 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. 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.

Oakwood Church 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.

Oakwood Church recognizes the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognizes 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.

Oakwood 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 may 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.

Oakwood 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.

Oakwood Church commits itself to provide support, advice and training for lay and ordained people to ensure that people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Oakwood Church affirms and gives 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.

It is the responsibility of each Church Council to appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. It is not appropriate for the minister to fill any gap, because of the potential conflict in roles. The role will usually be undertaken on a voluntary basis although expenses should be met. Ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the church lies with the Church Council.

Oakwood Church appoints Anne Kirkland as Church Safeguarding officer for Adults and as Church Safeguarding officer for Children and supports her in that role which is to:

1. Support and advise the minister and the stewards and other members of the leadership team in fulfilling their roles
2. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
3. Liaise with Circuit and District Safeguarding Officers
4. Promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers
5. 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)

6. Ensure that all safeguarding training which is required is undertaken by those in post and appropriate records kept and made available
7. Attend training and meetings organized to support the role
8. Oversee safeguarding throughout the whole life of the Church e.g. lettings, groups, property etc.
9. Report to the Church council annually
10. 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
11. Ensure the church completes a risk assessment on each area of activity in the church and this is stored and reviewed at least annually and that it is readily available on request.
12. Ensure that the church recruits safely for all posts.
13. Ensure that the church has a safeguarding notice board with a copy of the current, signed safeguarding policy, contact numbers for local and national helplines and other suitable information.

a) 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 users. It is to be read in conjunction with the

Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (2019).

b) Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- 1 All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- 2 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 of this will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- 3 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 a written 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.

- 4 Those who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults or who are in a position of trust or office holders, will attend a refresher training every 4 years
- 5 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 kept in the church file for each driver/car
- 6 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
- 7 Promotion of safeguarding is recognized 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.

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 six months of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.)

d) Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, the visiting team will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment. If they are undertaking tasks for which a DBS would be required, this will be undertaken prior to 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 each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The leaflet will be reviewed annually with this policy. Church Council may produce their own material or use appropriate Connexional leaflets (*Quick Reference Guide and Code of Safer Working Practice Leaflet*).

f) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council. All united church events in partnership with Church of England Parish of Roundhay St John's, under the name, Oakwood Church, are referred to in this clause.

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 Anne Kirkland who will also inform the church council secretary. 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

h) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement (www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use) will be given a copy of this policy and the leaflet. 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 District Safeguarding Officer and Circuit Safeguarding Officer

i) 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

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 the District Safeguarding Officer 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 Anne Kirkland

If a complaint is made to another person, it should also be passed to Anne Kirkland who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint.

If the complaint is regarding this person 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 superintendent minister. 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 Robert Creamer the Superintendent Minister. 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.

j) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review is March 2021.

k) Key concepts and definitions

- 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 his/her status or entitlements to service or protection.
- 2) Vulnerable Adults: any person 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.
- 3) Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care
- 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.
- 5) 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 2nd March 2020

Signed.....Chair of Church Council