

## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Welshpool Methodist Church, Welshpool

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014**

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of male and female 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.

The Welshpool Methodist 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 are paramount.

The Welshpool Methodist Church recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. 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.

The Welshpool Methodist 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.*

The Welshpool 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 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.

The Welshpool 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.

The Welshpool 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.

The Welshpool 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.

The Welshpool Methodist Church 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.

The Welshpool Methodist Church appoints **Derek PAINTER** as Church Safeguarding Adults Representative and Church Safeguarding Children Coordinator 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 Coordinators
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers.

a) **Purpose**

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for vulnerable adults in our

care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

**b) Good Practice**

We believe good practice means that:

- 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 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.
- v) 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. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first year of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. 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 will be produced (*see Appendix 1*) and reviewed annually to be given to each worker with children young people outlining good practice and systems. The leaflet will be reviewed annually with this policy.<sup>1</sup>

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 will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to **Derek PAINTER**.

h) **Other groups on church premises**

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement [which should include Safeguarding Form E],<sup>2</sup> will be given a copy of this policy and the leaflet<sup>3</sup>. The lettings secretary – **Anne SMITH** - will consider the various users of the building in making lettings.

i) **Complaints procedure**

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisations. However, a complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the Church Council and who is **Rev Sue LAWLER**. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to **Rev Sue LAWLER** who will arrange to 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 appointed Local Complaints Officer.

j) **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. The date of the next review is **July 2015**.

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<sup>1</sup> These have yet to be produced for vulnerable adults.

<sup>2</sup> To be found in Recruiting Safely in the Methodist Church 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix1

k) **Key concepts and definitions**

- i) Vulnerable Adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.
- 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.
- v) The Methodist Church Code for Safer Working Practice is attached as an Appendix to this policy.

Dated: **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014**

Signed .....

Rev. Sue Lawler

Chair of Church Council

## Code of Safer Working Practice

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**1. Guidelines for Individual Workers**

**2. Additional guidelines for group leaders**

**3. Responding to child protection concerns**

- imminent risk
- what to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused

**4. Good practice guidelines for church sponsored activities for children and young people**

- special needs
- consent
- registration
- recommended staffing levels
- safe environment
- e-safety
- transporting children on behalf of the church
- Important telephone numbers

Terminology used in this Code:

- The word 'child' refers to any child or young person under the age of 18.
- The term 'group leader' is used to refer to the person with overall responsibility for a group or activity, who is answerable to the Church Council/Circuit meeting.

For guidance and good practice support resources and free downloadable forms for work with children, visit: [www.childrenandyouth.org.uk](http://www.childrenandyouth.org.uk)

## 1. Guidelines for Individual Workers

### You should:

- Treat all children and young people with respect & dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Record any incidents of concern and give the information to your Group Leader. Sign and date the record.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding representative.

### You should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young people.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

### Touch

Church sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Church or Circuit Safeguarding Representative.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

## 2. Additional guidelines for group leaders

- In addition to the above the group leader should:
- Ensure any health & safety requirements are adhered to
- Undertake risk assessments with appropriate action taken and record kept
- Keep register and consent forms up to date
- Have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present
- Create space for children to talk – either formally or informally
- Liaise with safeguarding representative over good practice for safeguarding.
- Always inform the safeguarding representative of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The safeguarding representative will liaise with the district safeguarding coordinator.
- Liaise with the church council/circuit meeting.

## 3. Responding to child protection concerns

Do not try to deal with any child protection concern on your own. Always tell your group leader and/ or safeguarding representative. Agree between you *who* will take *what* action and *when*.

If you are not sure if child abuse is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then again you should contact your group leader or safeguarding representative. The Local Authority Children's Services Duty Officer can also be a source of advice.

Always make notes about a possible child protection incident or disclosure as accurately as possible, as soon as possible. These should cover what has happened, in what context, and anything that seemed particularly significant. Quote the child's words exactly where possible. Try if possible to note from the register the child's full name, age/date of birth, address, telephone number and GP. Remember to sign the record and add your name, role, date of incident and date of the recording.

Ensure all notes are kept in a safe place

If a child asks to talk in confidence **do not** promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child/young person who is at risk to the statutory agencies. Always explain that you may have to get other people to help.

- Stay calm.
- Listen to the child attentively.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Allow the child to talk but do not press for information or ask leading questions.
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell.
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told and why.

- Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand.
- Reassure the child that he or she will continue to receive support during the difficult time to come.

#### **Imminent risk**

- If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child. Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to Local Authority Children's Services.
- If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

#### **What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused**

- Agree with your group leader or safeguarding representative, who will make the referral.
- Make an immediate telephone referral to the Local Authority Children's Services. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral.
- Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family e.g. the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP (if known).
- Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (sometimes available on the Local Authority web site) or letter. If there is no acknowledgement within 48 hours, chase it.
- Remember that the child & family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child or another person at further risk. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
- For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team or where urgent, the police.

## **4. Good practice guidelines for church sponsored activities for children and young people**

### **Special needs**

Welcome children and young people with special needs to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent about how best to meet the child's special needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent. If premises are being designed or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future children and adults; advice is available.

Disability legislation requires organisations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people and this includes children.

### **Consent**

Consent needs to be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. It can be from the child/young person if he/she has sufficient age and understanding in relation to the specific issue. So for example, whilst parental consent is always required for a group residential holiday, a teenager would usually be able to consent to the photos from the holiday being displayed in church. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity.

### **Registration**

A Registration Form should be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. 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

Any group that includes children who are under 6 years old and that meets regularly for more than 2 hours in any one day or for more than 14 days a year must register their group. Please contact your local branch of OFSTED for advice.

### Recommended staffing levels

The recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are given below: More help may be required if children are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances require it.

0-2 yrs	1 person for every 3 children	1 : 3
2 – 3 yrs	1 person for every 4 children	1 : 4
3 – 8 yrs	1 person for every 8 children	1 : 8
Over 8 yrs	1 person for the first 8 children then 1 extra person for every extra 12 children	

- Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.
- If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.
- Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping, 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.

### Safe Environment

Display both the *Childline* telephone number in a prominent place where children & young people can see it and the *Parentline Plus* number for parents.

Undertake a risk assessment for each activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location.

Insurance, First Aid Kit and fire precautions should be checked and a Health and Safety Check should be completed regularly with reference to the following minimum standards:

## Venue

- Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Electric sockets should be covered.
- Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities.
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity.
- If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health Officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired.
- Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.
- Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.
- Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked and smoke detectors fitted throughout the premises. A fire drill should be carried out regularly.
- Unaccompanied children and young people should be encouraged not to walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.
- A First Aid kit and accident book should be available on the premises. The contents of the First Aid Kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals.
- All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged have some First Aid knowledge and the church or circuit should encourage access to First Aid training. A list of first aiders should be compiled and kept available.
- All accidents should be recorded in an Accident Book.

## E-Safety

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not 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.

## 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.
- 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/circuit safeguarding representative.
- 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 Car

- 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.
- 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.

## Minibus/Coach

- Workers/helpers should sit amongst the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored
- Before using a minibus, ensure you know the up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive

## IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS:

### LOCAL AGENCIES

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)	101 from within the area or 01267 222020
Local Police Child/Family Protection Unit	Dyfed-Powys Police – telephone 101
Local Council Children’s Services/Social Care	Powys Social Services – telephone (01597) 827128
Local Emergency Social Work Team	Conwy Social Services out of hours contact - 0845 054 4847
Local General Hospital	Victoria Memorial Hospital Salop Road, Welshpool. SY21 7DU 01938 558900
<b>CHILDLINE</b>	0800 1111
<b>PARENTLINE PLUS</b>	0808 800 222

## DISTRICT CONTACTS

All email enquiries to [ws.safeguarding@gmail.com](mailto:ws.safeguarding@gmail.com) 07909 734668

Role	Name	Phone
District Safeguarding Coordinator – Northern	Peter Ackerley	01492 547336
District Safeguarding Coordinator – Southern	Revd Susan McIvor	029 208 42207

## CHURCH and CIRCUIT CONTACTS

Role	Name	Phone
Superintendent minister	Sue Lawler	01938 552794
Minister	Sue Lawler	01938 552794
Group Leader/organiser	Junior Church – Anne Smith	01938 553818
	Playgroup – Karen Kerr	01938 556772
Church safeguarding Coordinator	Derek Painter	01938 556117 07527222505
Circuit Safeguarding Coordinator	Eleri Williams	01686 420364