

Nunthorpe Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy

This policy was agreed at the Church Council Meeting held on 13th October 2022
(It will be reviewed and reaffirmed at the October 2023 meeting).

1. Policy

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 humans 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.

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

Nunthorpe Methodist Church 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 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.

Nunthorpe 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.'

Nunthorpe 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.

Nunthorpe Methodist Church commits itself to:

1. **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. It commits itself to providing informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.
2. **IMPLEMENT** the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance, government legislation and guidance to achieve safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
3. 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.
4. **AFFIRM** and give thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledge the shared responsibility of us all for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults on our premises.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to ensure that procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (2020).

The full implementation of these policies should ensure that:

- , The Church (and all associated activities) is a safer place for everyone.
- , The community we serve can have confidence that children and vulnerable adults are as safe as possible and that their wellbeing is enhanced in the life of the Church.
- , People in the church are alert to unsafe practices and are able to challenge them.
- , Office holders are safely recruited, trained for their roles and are accountable for their activities.
- , People who have experienced abuse are accepted, empowered and supported in maintaining control over their lives and making informed choices without coercion.
- , People who abuse are held accountable to the law and the risk they pose is managed while they are supported and challenged to address their motivations and behaviour.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Church Council - It is the responsibility of the 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 in pastoral charge or circuit superintendent to fill any gap, because of the potential conflict of roles. The role will usually be

undertaken on a voluntary basis, although any reasonable expenses should be met.

Ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the church lies with the Church Council as the Trustee body. The church 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.

Nunthorpe Methodist Church appoints **Mark Braithwaite** as Church Safeguarding Officer (Adults and Children) and supports him in his role.

The Church Council holds the following responsibilities, which may be delegated to the Church Safeguarding Officer, if appropriate:

1. Support and advice to the minister in pastoral charge and the church stewards regarding safeguarding matters.
2. With the support of the minister in pastoral charge, prompt recording and reporting of any safeguarding concerns of which they are made aware. This will include appropriate referral to statutory agencies and DSOs, as required by Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance.
3. Making appropriate arrangements for the secure storage, retention and appropriate sharing of safeguarding information held by the church.
4. Promoting the safety and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults within the church.
5. Presenting a report to each Church Council meeting about safeguarding events (noting the need for confidentiality regarding specific cases) and reminding relevant parties (where necessary) that safeguarding should be a standing item on the Church Council meeting agenda.
6. Receiving and reviewing church risk assessments and training schedules and sharing with the church council meeting annually.
7. Attending the church steward meetings as necessary to discuss concerns brought to their attention.
8. Ensuring that the church is compliant with Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance.
9. Working with the minister with pastoral responsibility and the DSO regarding safeguarding concerns.
10. Attending and active participation at safeguarding training, district safeguarding events and meetings.
11. Work with local ecumenical partners and their safeguarding representatives.
12. Reviewing the church safeguarding policy annually prior to presentation to the Church Council Meeting.
13. Supporting the circuit superintendent with the annual review of the circuit safeguarding policy and sending a copy to the DSO.
14. Maintaining of a record of all people within the church who have received Foundation Module, Foundation Refresher Module, together with dates of attendance.
15. Ensuring that training is offered to those working with children and vulnerable adults, holding an office of responsibility, or are in other applicable roles as defined in Appendix III of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance.

16. Overseeing timely delivery of appropriate training, in liaison with the accredited Circuit Trainers.
17. Advising where necessary of the requirement to adopt a safer recruitment policy and to carry out required procedures when appointing staff or volunteers.
18. DBS verification on behalf of the church and wider circuit.
19. Retaining records of names of those at church level who have DBS checks.
20. Providing reminders about the need to apply or reapply for checks in accordance with the Methodist Church policy (for updates, the period is currently every five years).
21. Assisting the DSO with setting up Monitoring and Support Groups for those subject to safeguarding contracts and reminding the chairs of groups when reviews are due.
22. Maintaining a directory of useful names and contact details.

Where a church safeguarding officer carries out the above activities, there is a requirement for supervisory oversight, which will be arranged by the superintendent minister and carried out by them or a nominated substitute. Records of oversight meetings will be signed and agreed. Supervision will include consideration of wellbeing and discussions of the areas of activity included within the role on a regular basis.

Minister in pastoral charge

1. Ensure that the church has an appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policy in place.
2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church July 2020.
3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in the management of those who present a safeguarding risk.
4. Ensure that training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for members of the church, in accordance with Appendix III of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance.
5. Ensure that the Church Council meeting appoints a church safeguarding officer and that the details of this person are passed to the district office.
6. Ensure that the Church Council meeting reviews this policy annually.
7. Support the church safeguarding officer in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

Church stewards

The church stewards must ensure that agreed procedures are in place for events that involve children, young people or vulnerable adults.

It is essential that events that involve children or vulnerable adults do not slip through the net because they are not owned by the church. Any such events must be notified to the District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) prior to final agreement with the event organiser to ensure that all permissions, risk assessments and good practice guidelines are in place. These include:

Responsibilities for those planning and leading the event.

All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of the requirements involved.

The event should have been planned effectively and attention given to the following issues:

1. Risk assessment and suitability of the activity/premises.
2. The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, including safeguarding and first aid personnel (particular health or ability needs should be taken into account).
3. Numbers of children, young people or vulnerable adults involved.
4. Transportation following good practice guidelines.

This information is to be sent to the DSO for approval PRIOR to the event being agreed.

Key concepts and definitions

i) 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 services or protection.

ii) **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.

iii) **Safeguarding**: protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

iv) **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.

v) **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.

Signed Revd. D. Godfrey (Minister in pastoral charge & Chair of meeting)

Dated 13th October 2022.