

# Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for the Harrow & Hillingdon Circuit

It will be reviewed at the Circuit Meeting to be held in September 2016

## **Our conviction and purpose**

The Harrow and Hillingdon Circuit accepts and affirms:

- the words of Genesis that humankind has been created in the image of God,
- the words of Jesus that the Kingdom of God is within us,
- the life, ministry and teaching of Jesus that cares for and equally values all people regardless of their age, gender, wealth, power or any other distinction which society may make.

It follows from this that:

- each human being should be given the respect which Jesus would give
- the spiritual gifts of each human being should be encouraged to grow and develop as God intends
- all Christians have a duty to ensure that each human being is protected from harm and their welfare promoted.

The Harrow & Hillingdon 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 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. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

## Key concepts and definitions

- i. *Abuse and neglect* may occur in any situation in which a human being is including 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.
- ii. *The Circuit*, Methodist churches located within the London Boroughs of Harrow and Hillingdon and which form part of the Harrow and Hillingdon Circuit of the Methodist Church of Great Britain
- iii. *Connexional policy*; the policy in respect of safeguarding approved by the Conference of The Methodist Church of Great Britain
- iv. *Connexional statement*; The statement in respect of safeguarding approved by the Conference of The Methodist Church of Great Britain
- v. *District Safeguarding Groups*; Groups set up by The London District of The Methodist Church of Great Britain to promote safe practice
- vi. *Safe practice*; promoting and complying with guidance as to safeguarding contained within The Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010)
- vii. *Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment*; promoting a safe environment in which children and vulnerable can grow and develop their spiritual gifts and preventing impairment of their wellbeing.
- viii. *Safeguarding policies*; policies approved by the annual meetings of churches in the Circuit in respect of safeguarding and which are in accordance with this policy
- ix. *Vulnerable Adults*: any adult who may be exposed to significant harm or exploitation.

## Our commitment

The Circuit is therefore committed to:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. implement Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the Circuit and in the churches.
5. provide 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.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **A. The Harrow & Hillingdon Circuit appoints:**

Aelwyn Taylor as Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and as Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports her in her role.

### **B. The Circuit Superintendent will:**

1. Ensure all churches in the Harrow and Hillingdon Circuit have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for staff of the circuit and for members of the local churches in the circuit.
5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and a Safeguarding Children Coordinator and that the details of that person are passed to the District office.
6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy biennially.
7. Support the Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and the Safeguarding Children Coordinator in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

### **C. The Circuit Stewards will:**

Ensure agreed procedures are in place for Circuit and ecumenical events that involve children or vulnerable adults.

### **D. The Circuit Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Circuit Safeguarding Children Coordinator will:**

1. Support and advise the Circuit Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards in fulfilling their roles.
2. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues.
3. Liaise with the District Safeguarding Group(s).
4. With the support of the Superintendent ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.

## **Procedures for circuit events involving children or vulnerable adults**

It is essential that circuit events that involve children or vulnerable adults do not slip through the net because they are not owned by one church.

## **Responsibility for those planning and leading the event**

All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of the procedure. The event should have been planned effectively and attention given to the following issues:

1. Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the 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 have been taken into account.
3. Numbers of children or vulnerable adults involved.
4. Transportation following good practice guidelines.

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014