

# Safeguarding Update

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## Message from your DSO

Happy New Connexional Year to you all, and a very warm welcome to all those new to the District.

The recent months have brought us all new challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic and this subsequent period looks like being equally challenging as we consider and action how we “do church” differently.

This means risk assessments and safety measures, hand sanitisers and face masks, social distancing and waving and worst of all, no singing!!!

What has not changed, and for many has become worse during this time, has been their vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, poverty and loneliness.

And so we are challenged to use our new means of communication - online, telephone and alternative pastoral support services - to identify and then respond

breaking point, a vulnerable older person who is isolated and alone, a young person whose mental health is fragile or a relationship that is going sour and possibly turning nasty.

What hasn't changed is that if we do see or hear something of concern, or something just feel right, we must share it with someone in our church - a presbyter, a safeguarding officer, a pastoral visitor. Because, safeguarding is the responsibility of us all,

God bless,

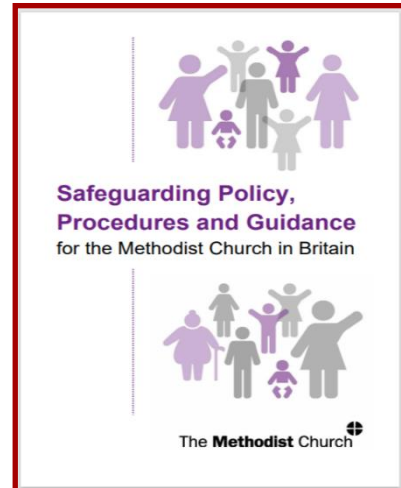
*Helen*



# Safeguarding Policy

Last updated July 2020 — *now available online*

*Summary of main changes and what it means for us*



## Section 1 and Appendix V

**Clarification that ministers in pastoral charge should not hold safeguarding roles.**

*“at local church/circuit level it is not appropriate for the minister in pastoral charge or circuit superintendent to hold safeguarding officer roles, because of the potential conflict with their own responsibilities”.*

Where we have ministers fulfilling the role of Church and/or Circuit Safeguarding Officer this should only ever be a temporary measure.

If it persists, the concern should be taken to the Church Council and/or Circuit Meeting.

If this still cannot be resolved, it should be taken to the District Safeguarding Group.

## Section 4.1.4.1

**The policy now contains that information required to support a referral to statutory agencies.**

Even if any of the required information is not available, the referral should not be delayed.

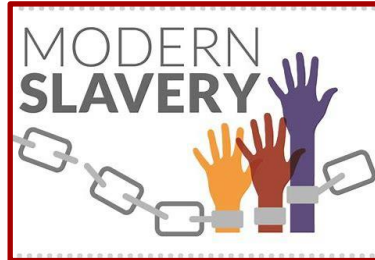
## Section 4.1.4.3

**Inclusion of a flow chart for management of a safeguarding concern about a vulnerable adult.**

This had now been incorporated within our *Local Guidance for Good Safeguarding Practice in Pastoral Care (Connexional Year 2020-21)*.

## Section 4.4

**Additional information reflecting modern slavery when considering support.**



## Section 4.5.4

**A new reporting process for serious incidents agreed with the Charity Commission.**

*Trustees should liaise with the District Safeguarding Officer and seek support for reporting.*

All reporting of serious incidents should continue to be undertaken by trustees where the situation meets the serious reporting criteria.

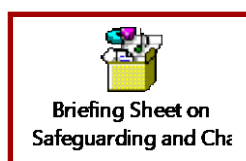
The Charity Commission guidance should be consulted regarding all aspects of serious incident reporting.

### [How to report a serious incident in your charity](#)

## Section 4.5.6

### **Character references**

A reminder of the potential impact of character references being provided by those associated with the Church. Although covered within the Safeguarding Policy, briefing notes are attached below.



*If you are ever requested to provide a character reference for court or a potential safeguarding situation, please contact Helen before doing so*

## Section 6.3.6

**Additional provisions relating to unaccompanied children and church activities.**

This has now been incorporated into the local *Code of Safer Working Practices with Children and Young People (Connexional Year 2020-21)*.

## Section 6.8

**Acceptable use notice where public access to Wi-Fi is advertised on church premises.**



A template is due to be made available on the Connexional website.

## Section 6.10.6 and Appendix VI

**Retention period for registers of children's activities clarified:**

*"The register should be retained until all children and young people contained within the document reach the age of 21. If this is unknown, a standard retention period of 20 years from the creation of the document may be applied".*

This has now been incorporated into our local *Code of Safer Working Practices with Children and Young People (Connexional Year 2020-21)*.

## Section 6.17.2

**Failure to attend required training**

Includes steps to identify any issues or support needs that may be affecting the person's ability to participate.

## Section 8.1

**Updated reference to social media guidance.**

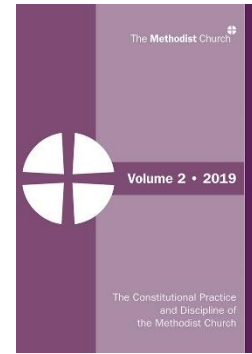


## Appendix I

### Changes to Standing Orders 690, 010 and Book VI Part 4

The following amendments were approved at the Methodist Conference 2020:

- > Inclusion of those on barred lists in Standing Order 010
- > Changes to Standing Order 690 and Book VI Part 4 to replicate procedures already approved by Methodist Council and contained in the Connexional Safeguarding Policy.



## Appendix II



is now **“Forms and Information Lists”**, which were previously a separate section of the main policy.

## Appendix IV

**Safeguarding Training Attendance** now starts with the Foundation Module and gives clarity on attendance by leaders of other groups.

## Appendix V

### Model Church Safeguarding Policy



Now gives further information around responsibilities of, and to, the Church Council and now cross references the main policy regarding driving/escorting.



It also now clarifies that a Safeguarding Officer may cover more than one church/circuit but must be able to fulfil all the commitments in both areas.

## Brief reminder of major changes made in the previous update and where to find in the July 2020 Policy



### Recording Guidance

The previous Recording Guidance (2015) has been amalgamated into the main policy (**section 4.2**) and information on data storage updated (**section 5.1.8**).

**Please ensure that all who work with Children and Young People are aware of:**

\* consent for photography and video for children over 12 in line with NSPCC recommended practice (**section 6.7**)

\* updated child to staff ratios (**section 6.3.5**).



This has now been incorporated into the local *Code of Safer Working Practices with Children and Young People (Connexional Year 2020-21)*.

*If you have any comments on or suggested amendments to the policy, please contact [Alice Heard](mailto:hearda@methodistchurch.org.uk) [hearda@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:hearda@methodistchurch.org.uk) and copy Helen in [mands@dso.methodist.org.uk](mailto:mands@dso.methodist.org.uk)*

# Safeguarding Posters

These posters have now been sent out to Circuit Superintendents for display within their churches and each church will need one copy of each poster, which both feature the Methodist Church logo.

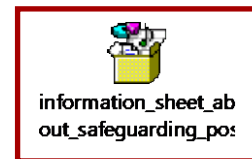
There are also similar posters for those churches which are LEP's and who have chosen to adopt the Methodist Safeguarding policy. These have similar colouring but do not include the Methodist Church logo.



Further digital copies are now available online:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/policies-procedure-and-information/posters/>

For further information please see the briefing below:



# Safer Recruitment Policy



Redrafting of a revised safer recruitment policy has continued with recent guidance from the Connexional HR Department.

An extended consultation period is to be initiated to allow time for review and amendment prior to being put before the Safeguarding Committee later in the autumn.



# Safeguarding Training Update



Following the launch of the revised Foundation Module earlier this year and retraining of the current trainers, we were struck by Covid 19 and all planned training ceased.

However, consideration has been being given connexionally to how we can resume, albeit in a different manner.

## Interim Extensions

Interim Extensions of **6 months** to the timescales for completion of both safeguarding modules were agreed by the Safeguarding Committee in May 2020.

*This is to be reviewed every six months connexionally.*

## However

All local preachers and worship leaders **MUST** have completed the Advanced Module by the end of **August 2021**.

Anyone who is now overdue as a result of the Covid pandemic **MUST** have completed it within **3 months** of the district returning to face to face training.

Please remind them of this and support them to attend.

This date will be determined by the District Safeguarding Group and in the light of any local guidance.

***Remember that online safeguarding training will be available before this time before this time.***

## Remember

Updating of safeguarding training still needs to be undertaken every four years, and within six months of starting in role for those who need it.



**Online Foundation Training**

**Manchester and Stockport  
Methodist District have  
volunteered to be a pilot  
site**



*The Pilot will run from 14th  
September to 9th October*

**We have currently agreed  
to plan two Zoom  
sessions**

**The aim is that the  
online module be  
launched across  
the Connexion  
from the 2nd  
November**

*This will enable us to train  
approximately 40 people*

Following feedback from the pilots, the learning will then be used to review and adapt new materials as required. The content will then be modified to enable online delivery.

*Therefore, we be approaching  
Foundation Trainers to see if they  
would feel able to train to support  
online training.*

*Please note: the  
Foundation  
Module will now  
be updated  
every 4 years  
and so each will  
be very  
different to the  
previous  
version.*



*Therefore, no  
future modules  
will be referred  
to as  
“Refresher”;  
updates will be  
the most  
current version  
available at that  
time.*

The Safeguarding Committee has agreed to the development of a 'blended' learning approach, which will be hosted on the Theology X website.

A working group is reviewing the current Advanced Module and developing the online content.

Following feedback from the pilots, the learning will then be used to review and adapt new materials as required. The content will then be modified to enable online delivery

**Advanced  
Module Training**

**It is anticipated that the online module will be available from December 2020**

## **Other Potential Training**

Also check whether your **Local Safeguarding Partnership** offers any training for volunteers e.g.

Manchester  
Safeguarding  
Partnership (MSP)  
Training Website

The MSP provides access to free face to face and online learning to multi-agency practitioners who work with adults, children and families in Manchester.



**<https://manchestersafeguardingpartnershiplearning.co.uk/>**

# Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)

## Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/investigation/child-protection-religious-organisations-and-settings>

This thematic investigation reviews the current child protection policies, practices and procedures in religious institutions that have a significant presence in England and Wales, and the Methodist Church has been a core participant. The final report is planned to be available by early summer 2021, and Methodist Conference will, of course, review any recommendations made.

However, it was clear from questioning by Counsel for the Inquiry that there was particular interest in the following areas:



- \* Redress schemes for survivors
- \* Common safeguarding training standards
- \* External audit of policy, training and casework
- \* A new external audit body or a current body given that role
- \* Information sharing agreements between statutory and faith organisations
- \* Child protection qualification for voluntary organisations

## New Research and Guidance

### COVID-19: expectations and effects on children online

South West  
Grid for  
Learning  
(SWGfL) and  
David Wright  
2020

This report looks at evidence relating to expectations and effects of the coronavirus pandemic on children online.

It found that the emerging impact of coronavirus on children online includes an increase in individuals searching for child sexual abuse content online, as well as an increase in access to adult content online.

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/covid-19-expectations-and-effects-on-children-online/>

### Children in lockdown: the consequences of the coronavirus crisis for children living in poverty

Childhood  
Trust, 2020

This report looks at the consequences of the coronavirus crisis on children and young people living in poverty in the UK.

It draws together emerging evidence from studies and need to address

Topics covered include

- \* emotional and physical abuse
- \* learning loss
- insecurity
- \* wellbeing
- \* mental health
- \* hunger and food
- \* homelessness

<https://view.publitas.com/the-childhood-trust/children-in-lockdown-the-childhood-trust-report-june-2020/page/1>

## Advice to parents and carers on keeping children safe from abuse and harm

**UK Govt  
Guidance,  
June 2020**

This guidance provides advice for parents and carers about keeping children safe from abuse and harm during the coronavirus pandemic. It highlights the risks that children may be particularly vulnerable to, and signposts help and support available.

It includes sections on:

- \* protecting children from domestic abuse
- \* child sexual abuse/exploitation
- \* crime, criminal exploitation and county lines, violence and gangs
- \* protecting children from radicalisation
- \* online safety
- \* mental health issues

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-from-abuse-and-harm/advice-to-parents-and-carers-on-keeping-children-safe-from-abuse-and-harm>

## Psychological factors influencing religious congregation members' reporting of alleged sexual abuse

**Journal of  
Sexual  
Aggression  
(Vol.26, Iss.1),  
2020, pp 129-  
144**

This report examines the psychological processes by which congregation members of the Church of England judge the credibility of alleged child sexual abuses, or whether they would intend to report such allegations to the police and was compared to the responses of non-religious controls.

It analysed data on 454 congregation members and 457 non-religious controls and found that churchgoers were consistently more sceptical of allegations of abuse.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/pJRPuRVZPibUpR9CyGbW/full?target=10.1080/13552600.2019.1599453>

**"People don't talk about it": child sexual abuse in ethnic minority communities**

**Independent  
Inquiry Into  
Child Sexual  
Abuse  
(IICSA) and  
Race Equality  
Foundation**

This report examines child sexual abuse in ethnic minority communities. It draws on findings from 11 focus groups with victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and members of the public with no experience of abuse.

The findings include:

- \* cultural stereotypes and racism can lead to failures to identify and respond to child sexual abuse
- \* shame and stigma around child sexual abuse lead to a 'code of silence' within communities
- \* the way child sexual abuse is seen and responded to is linked with expectations about gender within ethnic minority communities.

**<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/publications/research/child-sexual-abuse-ethnic-minority-communities/executive-summary/introduction>**

## Local Safeguarding Information

### District Safeguarding Officer

Helen Bolton      07498 800427  
mands@dso.methodist.org.uk

### Connexional Safeguarding Casework Supervisor - North West

Christine Kennedy      07817 424504  
kennedyc@methodistchurch.org.uk

## Remember

Copies of all Safeguarding Bulletins can be found on the District Website, together with word and PDF versions of the localised documents for Connexional year 2020-21 below:

- \* District safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy
- \* District Safeguarding Group terms of reference
- \* Code of safer working practice with children and young people
- \* Code of safer working practice with adults
- \* Local Guidance for good safeguarding practice in pastoral care
- \* Directory of safeguarding contacts
- \* Key points for external user groups when hiring church premises—checklist

<http://mandsmethodists.org.uk/governance.html>

**If you have any suggestions for  
content of future Safeguarding  
Updates please let Helen know**