

The Methodist Church, mindful of its Christian duty of care, has been developing its policy on safeguarding since the publication of the Home Office guidelines "Safe from Harm" in 1993.

In line with this developing policy Afterhours Youth Groups has created and approved a safeguarding policy of its own (see below).

The Farnworth and Worsley Methodist Circuit, and the churches it contains, accept the principles of safeguarding in the developing policy of the Methodist Church which can be found in The Methodist Church publication "Safeguarding," a policy for good practice in the care of children and young people.

All of the above can be summed up in the following policy statement:

As the people of the Methodist Church and members 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. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent neglect and the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people.

Afterhours Youth Groups SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

As the people of the Methodist Church and members of The Afterhours Youth Groups, 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. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent neglect and the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people.

2. The Afterhours Youth Groups Management Team will:

- (a) oversee implementation of the policy
- (b) appoint a Safeguarding Officer to be a member of the Church Council
- (c) maintain day to day practices that best safeguard children and young people by ensuring the recommendations of the Home Office Code of practice *Safe From Harm* are fully implemented.
- (d) approve all new work and new workers with children and young people but where necessary delegate this approval to the Safeguarding Officer.
- (e) initiate a risk assessment by all groups and organisations within the church concerning the safeguarding of children and young people and ensure this is reviewed regularly.
- (f) review Safeguarding Policy and Procedures annually
- (g) provide adequate resources for the full implementation of the policy

3. Appointment of Workers with Children and Young People:

All those working with children will need to apply for the Criminal Records Bureau police check according to current Methodist Church procedures, with the appropriate Job Description completed highlighting the role and responsibilities of that worker. Should the role significantly, then a further disclosure will be required. If a disclosure has been received for work in another field and is less than 6 months old, the safeguarding officer will decide if it is acceptable, but this will be wholly dependant on the worker and the previous job description and proposed role.

All new workers with children and young people will:

- (a) apply for the Criminal Records Bureau police check, according to current Methodist Church procedures
- (b) be interviewed by an experienced Children & Young People's Worker within the church
- (c) provide adequate references
- (d) undertake a probationary period
- (e) undertake appropriate training

4. Managing the Work with Children and Young People:

- (a) all workers will have access to a current copy of The Methodist Church's booklet "Safeguarding a policy for good practice in the care of children and young people" and a copy of the Safeguarding Policy of the Church.
- (b) all workers will be provided with a job description informing them of their responsibilities and the person to whom they are accountable.
- (c) workers will undertake appropriate training.
- (d) workers will implement the policies of the Afterhours Youth Groups Management Team and Walkden Methodist Church Council (as required) with regard to matters of safeguarding children and young people

5. The Safeguarding Officer will:

- (a) be the designated person for matters to do with Safeguarding within the life of the church
- (b) devise necessary procedures to administer the Safeguarding Policy of the church.
- (c) liaise with groups working with children and young people who are the responsibility of the Afterhours |Youth Groups to ensure appropriate job descriptions for all workers are completed and filed with the Afterhours Youth Groups Management Team / Walkden Methodist Church Council.
- (d) administer the procedures for job references.
- (e) oversee the completion of Safeguarding Form A parts 1 and 2 applications for CRB Certificates and the completion of all other relevant forms as recommended by The Methodist Church's booklet "Safeguarding a policy for good practice in the case of children and young people"
- (f) maintain a current Church list of all: (i) accredited workers with children and young people (ii) church groups (iii) outside groups working with children and young people within the groups remit.
- (g) liaise with the circuit Safeguarding Officer.
- (h) ensure the Afterhours Youth Groups Management Team is kept up to date on matters related to Child Protection and make recommendations as appropriate.
- (i) liaise with the person responsible for church lettings to ensure organisations using the church are aware of their responsibilities.
- (j) liaise with groups and organisations within the church concerning a risk assessment of the safeguarding of children and young people and its impact on the working of the group
- (k) liaise with groups as to appropriate training needs and make recommendations to the Church Council

6. Recognising and Dealing with Abuse

- (a) If abuse is suspected, workers must report this to the person to whom they are responsible.
- (b) Workers must be aware of what to do in the event of a child making a disclosure to them (see Safeguarding Booklet).
- (c) Appropriate training in this area will be offered.

7. Good Practice

- (a) Workers must record and report any incidents concerning the welfare and wellbeing of a child or young person.
- (b) Workers will be made aware of procedures relating to practical issues, e.g.
 - 1) when only one worker is available
 - 2) transporting young people in cars and minibuses
 - 3) meeting children or young people off church premises
 - 4) fire drill

8. Office Holders within the Church

- a) Church members who are asked to consider taking on office within the church (these officers outlined in Safeguarding Booklet) must be made aware that they cannot hold office if they have any conviction or caution for sexual offences against children and young people.
- b) The office holder is responsible for immediately bringing a conviction/caution to the notice of the Afterhours Youth Groups Management Team if he/she is holding office

9 Rehabilitation of Sex Offenders

The church is aware of procedures as laid down in the Conference 2000 Report, *The Church and Sex Offenders*, which must be adhered to in the event of a known sex offender being integrated into the life of the church.

10. Lettings

- a) When contemplating letting either another church or its premises, where the use would involve work with children and young people, the Afterhours Management Team will confirm that they are familiar with the Home Office Code of Practice Safe From Harm and have an understanding of it and undertake to follow the Code of Practice contained therein in relation to work with children and young people under the age of 16 years.
- b) Letting in any other Church the Afterhours Management Team will confirm that they are aware of the Safeguarding Policy of the particular Church being hired and will undertake to ensure that they work within it in conjunction with Afterhours Youth Groups own Policy.

11. Resources

A variety of resources exist to assist and support churches in the well-being of their children and young people:

- (1) The District Taking Care Group
- (2) The Taking Care Resource Pack
- (3) Safeguarding — A policy for good practice in the care of children (MPH)*
- (4) Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service
- (5) Worth Doing Well. (MPH)