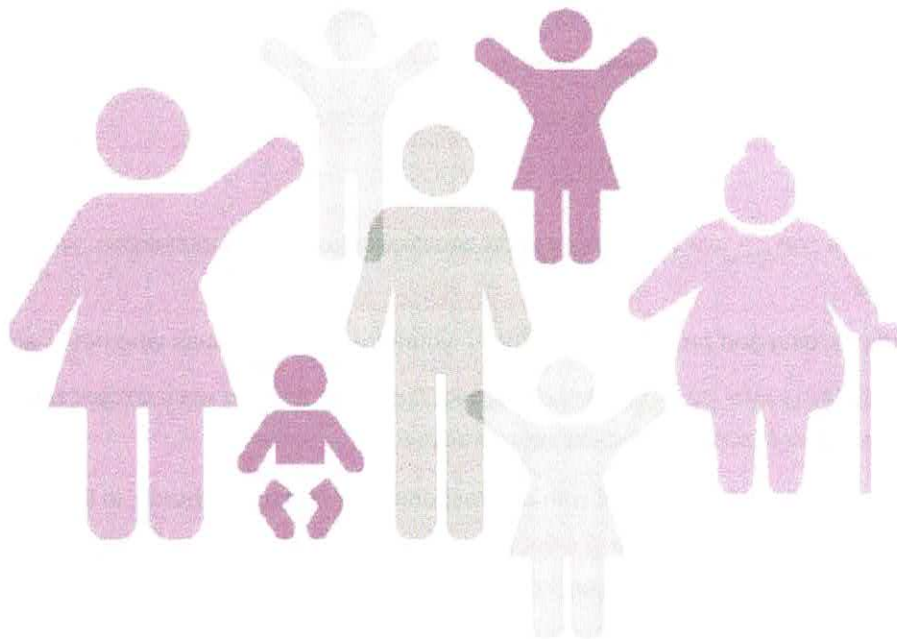


Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for South Wigston Methodist Church

September 2023



A Model Church Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for South Wigston Methodist Church

Purpose

The purpose of the church safeguarding policy is to check that procedures are in place and provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities of those trusted with promoting the church as a safe space for all its users.

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on 28 September 2023

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

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

South Wigston Methodist Church recognises that it has a particular care for all who are vulnerable whether as a result of disabilities or reduction in capacities or by their situation. 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 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 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.

South Wigston Methodist Church recognises the serious issue of

the abuse of children, young people 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 promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

South Wigston 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 or may suffer harm, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.
2. **IMPLEMENT** the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

to the Church Council annually.

- inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures.
- advise the Circuit Safeguarding Officer and/or District Safeguarding Officer of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.

a) Good practice

We believe that good practice means:

- 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 record will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The church premises will be assessed by the Church Safeguarding Officer with the property steward and/or their representatives at least annually for safety for children, young people and vulnerable adults and a written risk assessment report will be given annually to the Church Council. 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, young people or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure that the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort (where required) are appropriate. A record should be kept in the church file for each driver/car.
- v) Activity risk assessments will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. Approval will be obtained from the event leader/minister. A written record of the assessment will be retained securely.
- vi) 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.

b) Appointment and training of workers in the church

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory criminal records check and following the safer recruitment procedures of the Methodist Church. Each worker will have an identified supervisor who will meet at regular intervals with the worker. A record of these meetings will be agreed and signed and the record kept. Each worker will be expected to undergo safeguarding training, within the first 6 months of appointment. The other training needs of each worker will be considered (such as food hygiene, first aid and lifting and handling).

c) Pastoral visitors

Pastoral visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of safeguarding training upon

i) Definition of Key Terms

- ii) A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.
- iii) Vulnerable adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, owing to disability, mental function, age or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves.
- iv) Safeguarding: protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- v) Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity, which is undertaken to protect children, young people and/or adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- vi) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, a community or an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child, young person 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.
- vii) Worker: anyone working with children or vulnerable adults in the name of South Wigston Methodist Church, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Signed



Frances Ballantyne, Chair of Church Council

Dated 28 September 2023