

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for the Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 8th September 2022. It will be reviewed in September 2023.

1. 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.

The Redhill and East Grinstead 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 Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit 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 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.

The Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit commits itself to 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.

The Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit commits itself to 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.

2. Purpose

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 Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance* (2020).

The Redhill and East Grinstead Circuit appoints;-

Rosemary Willock as Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Children and Young People)

Jacqueline Waters as Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Adults)

Helen Greaves as Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Training)

and supports them in their role.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Superintendent

1. Ensure all churches 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 the members of the local churches in the Circuit.
5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Circuit Safeguarding Officer (CSO) and that the details of that person are passed to the District Office.
6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
7. Support the CSO in her work providing access to resources to enable her to fulfil her responsibilities.

Circuit Stewards

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

Circuit Safeguarding Officers

Support and advise the Circuit Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards in fulfilling their roles and provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding matters. (The role and responsibilities of the CSOs are set out in a separate job description).

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. Circuit events are to be notified to the District Safeguarding Officer **prior to** these being agreed to ensure that all permissions, risk assessments and good practice guidelines are in place.

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:

- Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises.
- 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.
- Numbers of children, young people or vulnerable adults involved.
- Transportation following good practice guidelines.

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 secure estate, does not change his/her status or entitlement to services or protection.
- ii) **Vulnerable Adults:** any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care of or protect themselves.
- iii) **Safeguarding and 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.

Dated: 8th September 2022