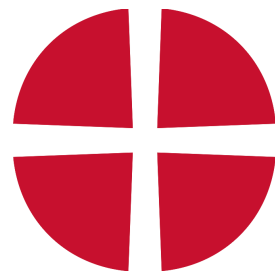


Burscough Methodist Church



Safeguarding Policies & Practices

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Purpose and scope

The purpose of the BMC safeguarding policy is to ensure that the safeguarding policies and practices of the Methodist Church are implemented within the Burscough society. It should be read in conjunction with the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance (2020).

In the BMC policy:

- **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 the secure estate, does not change **their** status or entitlements to services or protection.
- **Vulnerable adults** are 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.
- **Safeguarding:** protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
- **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.
- **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 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.

Methodist Safeguarding Principles

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.

Methodists are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, and adults
- safeguarding and protecting all children, and adults when they are vulnerable
- establishing safe, caring communities, which provide a loving environment where

there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

- carefully selecting and training all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with¹ the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- responding without delay to every safeguarding concern, which suggests that a child or adult may have been harmed, working in partnership with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- seeking to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- seeking to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- Working through District Safeguarding Officers, to support risk assessment of those who present a safeguarding risk within a church environment. Ensuring appropriate pastoral care is offered and measures taken to address identified risks including referral to statutory agencies, suspension and the use of safeguarding contracts. We will recognise and apply the restrictions to appointment laid down in Standing Order 010 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church.

In all these principles, we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Burscough Methodist Church (BMC) Safeguarding Policy Statement

Burscough Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults in line with the Methodist Safeguarding Principles. It affirms that the needs of children and adults when they are vulnerable and at risk are paramount.

BMC fully agrees with the statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space* 2007:

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness

¹ Or membership of (PVG scheme Scotland).

of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

BMC 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 is a dynamic policy which will develop as we learn more of how to be effective. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

BMC 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, 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.

BMC commits itself to:

1. **PROMOTING** the well-being of children and adults through a culture of shared responsibility for safeguarding within clearly assigned roles.
2. **PREVENTING** harm through best practice and the creation of a culture of informed vigilance.
3. **PROTECTING** through responding effectively when safeguarding concerns arise.
4. **RESPONDING 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.

5. **IMPLEMENTING** the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.
6. **PROVIDING** support, advice and training for lay and ordained people **to** ensure **that** people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.
7. **AFFIRMING** and give thanks for those who work with children and vulnerable adults and also acknowledge the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding children **and** vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

Organisation and responsibilities

The BMC Church Council is ultimately responsible for safeguarding within the church.

BMC appoints **Mrs Anne Comber** as church Safeguarding Officer² (Adults and children) and supports her in this role, which is to:

- provide support and advice to the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding.

² It is the responsibility of each Church Council to appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer and there should be no gaps in this crucial provision. The safeguarding officer should be a member of the Church Council or have the right to attend at least annually to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy. Where an individual covers the role in more than one location, they must be able to cover the activities identified in the relevant role outline and be facilitated to attend meetings to report on safeguarding in each location.

It is not appropriate for the minister in pastoral charge to hold the church safeguarding officer role because of the potential conflict with their own responsibilities. It is acknowledged that to avoid any disruption in safeguarding provision, it may be necessary for the minister in pastoral charge to take responsibility for some or all of the activities temporarily while other arrangements are made. However, this should only be for a very short period to enable the sharing of the role with another church or the identification of an **alternative person** to take on the role.

The role will usually be undertaken on a voluntary basis although expenses should be met.

- ensure that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is displayed at all times in the church on a safeguarding noticeboard, along with names of current safeguarding officer(s), national helplines and other suitable information. This must be renewed annually.
- record all safeguarding issues that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist policy and procedure.
- promote appropriate routes for reporting of concerns
- identify and inform those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance. Work with the circuit safeguarding officer and DSO to arrange training.
- attend training and meetings relating to the role
- work in partnership with the lettings officer, stewards and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. This will include gaining written confirmation that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy or are using an appropriate policy of their own.
- check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Church Council meetings and report 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 DSO 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.

Arrangements for implementing the policy

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 by another adult 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) When there are theatrical productions additional, supervision, chaperones and separate changing rooms for each gender and age range will be provided to satisfy the relevant children's performance requirements.
- iv) The church premises will be assessed by the church safeguarding officer with the property committee at least annually for safety for children and adults and a written report will be given annually to the Church Council. The assessment 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 to secure the health and safety of all persons.
- v) Any church-organised transport of children 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. (See 6.10.7.1 of the Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church). A record to be kept in the church file for each driver/car.
- vi) Written health and safety risk assessments covering all activities will be undertaken before any activity takes place to minimise the risk of harm to those involved. The property committee will check to ensure the assessments are suitable and sufficient. Copies of assessments will be maintained.
- vii) 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 and adults including those who may be vulnerable.

b) Appointment and training of employed workers in the church

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure 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 Foundation Module (2020 Edition) safeguarding training, within the first 6 months (agreed by Methodist Conference in 2011 -*Creating*

Safer Space Report) 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 Foundation Module (2020 Edition) safeguarding training upon appointment. If they are undertaking tasks for which a DBS would be required, this will be undertaken prior to appointment.

d) Guidelines for working with children

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems should be given to everyone who works with children and vulnerable adults. This leaflet will be reviewed annually³.

e) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of this Church Council.

f) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing, a safeguarding risk assessment and notification of the event will be given to the church safeguarding officer PRIOR to the agreement for any event or off-site activity. Notification of the event will also be given to the church stewards.

If the activity is unusual or considered to be high risk the church safeguarding officer will contact the circuit safeguarding officer in order that it can be ratified or any queries raised.

g) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the **hirer** signing the letting agreement (www.tmcp.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use) will be given a copy of that agreement [...]. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings. All lettings will be notified to the church safeguarding officer who will keep the records and take advice as

³ The Code of Safer Working Practice can be found at Appendix V of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance.

appropriate from both the DSO and circuit safeguarding officer.

h) Complaints procedure

There is a formal complaints procedure within the Methodist Church, which allows issues to be raised about actions or behaviour by a member or officer of the Church. In addition, employed staff will be subject to relevant contractual procedures. All complaints will be responded to with care, diligence and impartiality. The provisions of Part 11 of the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church will be followed.

A complaint should be addressed to the superintendent minister, the Revd Michael C Tindsley. If a complaint is made to another person it should be referred to them. Meetings will be arranged with the person making the complaint and, usually, the person against whom the complaint has been made, in an attempt to resolve it. If the complaint is against the superintendent, it should be sent to the District Chair, the Revd. Dr Sheryl Anderson at 49 Queens Drive, Mossley Hill, Liverpool. L18 2DP

Safeguarding officers must be informed of any complaint or issue relating to the potential abuse of children or adults who may be vulnerable. They will support prompt action to respond to the circumstances of any safeguarding concern, whether or not any party involved wishes to make a formal complaint through the Methodist Church.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council. Next review date: February 2023.

This policy was agreed at a Church Council held on:

Signed ...Rev Michael Tindsley Chair of Church Council

Date:13 March 2023

Burscough Methodist Church (BMC) Domestic Abuse Charter and Policy

Charter

Domestic abuse is extremely serious, and contrary to a Christian way of living. BMC seeks to support those affected by domestic abuse, and their families.

This Church:

- holds that domestic abuse, in all its forms, is unacceptable
- believes domestic abuse is inconsistent and incompatible with the Christian faith
- acknowledges that domestic abuse is a serious and widespread problem that occurs in church families as well as in wider society
- undertakes to listen to, support and care for those affected by domestic abuse
- prioritises the safety of survivors and children affected by domestic abuse
- works with specialist agencies, learning from and supporting them in appropriate ways, and publicising their work
- will play its part in teaching that domestic abuse is unacceptable and contrary to God's purposes and the teachings of the Bible.

Contact numbers:

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (This is a freephone, 24-hour service).

Local number: (Please fill in the details of organisations in your local area.)

Policy

Aims and intentions

This policy aims to ensure that domestic abuse is acknowledged and responded to appropriately within the BMC Methodist Church. To do this we will:

1. raise awareness about domestic abuse and its impact on individuals, children, the wider family and community
2. ensure that the safety of individuals suffering abuse or seeking help is the first priority, and be aware of the need for confidentiality (unless there are safeguarding concerns)
3. consider how best to provide support and information for anyone seeking help, including working with specialist agencies
4. encourage discussion of how our church can be a safer space for victims and survivors of domestic abuse
5. regularly discuss the Domestic Abuse policy, procedures, theology and principles that underpin it

6. adopt the Domestic Abuse Charter and display this in our churches and on social media
7. discuss domestic abuse with church leaders, including at the Church Council and Circuit Meetings
8. review this policy annually and monitor it continually.

This policy was adopted by BMC Church Council on: 14 March 2023

Next review date is: February 2024

Burscough Methodist Church

Code of Safer Working Practice with Children

Definitions.

In this code:

- 'child' refers to *anyone* under the age of 18.
- 'group leader' is used to refer to the person with overall responsibility for a group or activity, who is answerable to the Church Council/Circuit Meeting.

For guidance and good practice support resources and free downloadable forms for work with children, visit:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/the-well-learning-hub-equipping-and-supporting-workers/>

1. Application

The code outlines the conduct that is expected of anyone undertaking duties with children within the Methodist Church. The content of this code forms part of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church which are therefore required practice. The code applies to volunteers, paid staff, clergy, students on work placement, members and non-members working in a Methodist context. By complying with this code, you will help the Church to protect children from abuse and mistreatment and minimise the likelihood of unfounded allegations against those who are involved in youth work.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code within the Methodist Church, you must report them to your group leader, safeguarding officer or minister in pastoral charge as soon as possible.

2. Required practice for anyone working with children

You should:

- be aware of and understand the local safeguarding policy
- treat all children fairly and without prejudice, discrimination or favouritism
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity,

disability and faith and challenge behaviour that demonstrates discrimination, prejudice

- ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful
- always aim to work with or within sight and hearing of another adult
- ensure that another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet (toilet breaks should be organised for young children)
- ensure that children know who they can talk to or contact if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern and encourage them to speak out if they feel uncomfortable or concerned. They should be made aware of organisations that can provide support.
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but this should not involve physical comfort e.g., cuddles.
- advise children, and their parent/carers/guardians in advance if any activity requires physical contact and provide an opportunity to opt out or agree alternative activities.
- administer any necessary first aid with others adults around
- obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed via any medium. This should be from the parent, carer or guardian and the child if 12 years or over. Images should not be taken or stored on personal devices.
- record any incidents that concern you or make you feel uncomfortable and give the information to your group leader in the first instance. Although you must also contact the church, circuit or district safeguarding officer immediately if you believe you have acted in a way which others may have interpreted as inappropriate or if a child has acted inappropriately towards you. Records must be signed and dated.
- always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding officer.

3. You should not:

- initiate physical contact and if this is initiated by the child, do not pull away abruptly but do so gently, so physical contact is for the minimum amount of time.
- invade a child's privacy whilst they are washing or toileting
- play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- use any form of physical punishment
- be sexually suggestive in the presence of or to a child, even as a joke
- touch a child inappropriately or forcefully
- scapegoat, ridicule, reject or ignore a child, group or adult
- allow abusive peer activities (e.g., initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying)
- show favouritism to any one child or group
- allow a child to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is clearly physical or sexual in nature
- give lifts to children on their own or on your own
- smoke any substance, vape or consume alcohol in the presence of children or when responsible for them
- provide personal contact details to a child such as mobile number, email or social media contact
- share sleeping accommodation with children
- arrange social occasions with children or invite them to your home outside of organised group occasions (other than with the consent of parent, carers or guardians and where at least one other adult is present)
- allow unknown adults access to children (visitors should always be accompanied by a known person)
- allow strangers and those who are not authorised to give children lifts.

4. Dress

You should dress appropriately when working with children and not wear anything revealing or that is not practical for carrying out the tasks as part of your role.

5. Gifts

There may be occasions when children give you gifts. It is polite to accept a gift but your group leader should be informed. If you receive any gift of significant value e.g., more than £15.00, you should talk with your group leader about whether it is appropriate to accept it. As a general rule, expensive gifts should not be accepted.

6. Whistleblowing

Speak out if you think any adult is or has behaved inappropriately towards a child. Speak to the group leader in the first instance if appropriate or alternatively a church, circuit or district safeguarding officer or statutory services.

7. Responding to child protection concerns

Do not try to deal with any child protection concern on your own. Always tell your group leader and/or safeguarding officer. Agree between you who will take what action and when. If you are not sure if abuse of a child is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then again you should contact your group leader or church, circuit or district safeguarding officer. The local authority Children's Services Duty/Referral team are also a source of advice and support 24 hours a day.

Always make notes about a possible child protection incident or disclosure as accurately as possible, as soon as possible. These should cover what has happened, in what context, and anything that seems particularly significant. Quote the child's words exactly where possible. Take a note from the group records the child's full name, age/date of birth, address, telephone number and GP. Remember to sign your notes and add your name, role, date of incident and date of the recording.

Ensure that all notes are kept in a safe and secure place.

If a child asks to talk in confidence do not promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child who is at risk to the statutory agencies. Always explain that you may have to get other people to help to make sure they are safe.

- Try to stay calm and not appear shocked.

- Listen to the child attentively.
- Allow the child to talk but do not press for information or ask leading questions.
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell.
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told and why.
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand.
- Reassure the child that they will continue to receive support when a referral has been made.

8 Immediate risks

- If you encounter a child in a situation where they are in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child. Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to local authority Children's Services.
- If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents/carers, if available, should be kept fully informed.

9. What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused

- Agree with your group leader or safeguarding officer, who will make the referral.
- Make an immediate telephone referral to the local authority Children's Services. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral.
- Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family, e.g., the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP.
- Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (sometimes available on the local authority website) or letter. If there is no acknowledgement within 48 hours, contact them again until you receive a response.

- Remember that the child and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child or another person at further risk. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The duty social worker will give you advice on this if necessary.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
- For out of hours referrals, call the emergency social work team or where urgent, the police.
- You may need support for yourself when dealing with a safeguarding incident, so do speak to someone about this but remember to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

10. Children and young people who self-harm or who have mental health needs

Some children self-harm to help them express their emotions. Others may express thoughts of self-harm or suicidal intent. If any child expresses thoughts of suicide, advice should be sought immediately. The group leader should be informed and discussions should take place about the need to inform parents/carers and involve other services. If the situation is not urgent, consideration should still be given to contacting parents/carers and referring to appropriate agencies who can offer support.

11. Vulnerable Children

Some children are more vulnerable than others to being victims of child sexual exploitation, human trafficking and modern day slavery. If it is suspected that a child is affected by any of these issues, the group leader should be informed and further advice sought from the DSO and statutory authorities.

12. Drug and Alcohol Use

Drugs and alcohol are strictly forbidden while participating in Methodist activities,

This applies to staff, volunteers, visitors, children. If drug or alcohol use is suspected, the group leader must be informed and a discussion should take place about informing parents/carers. Consideration should be given to the need to inform the police and for a referral to appropriate support services.

13. Additional guidelines for group leaders

In addition to the above the group leader should:

- ensure that health and safety requirements are adhered to
- apply the results of risk assessments, take appropriate action in response to any identified risks or situations and *keep* records of any circumstances of concern. (In BMC risk assessments have been undertaken covering the premises, and equipment and materials used. This has included routine activities for all children's groups. Separate, additional risk assessments are required where activities are being considered beyond those already covered in the main assessments.).
- keep the register and consent forms up to date
- be aware, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present
- create space for children to talk – either formally or informally
- liaise with the safeguarding officer over good practice for safeguarding
- always inform the safeguarding officer of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise (the safeguarding officer will liaise with the DSO)
- liaise with the Church Council/Circuit Meeting.

14. Good practice guidelines for church-sponsored activities for children

Special needs

Welcome children with special needs to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent/carer and the child about how best to meet their needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent/carer. Monitor how the child is managing and review this if necessary, with the parent/carer and child. If premises are being designed or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future

children and adults; advice is available. Disability and equality legislation requires organisations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people and this includes children.

15. Consent

Consent to participate in activities needs to be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. In addition to this, where consent to take, store or use images is sought, any child who is 12 years or older should be asked for their consent, in addition to the person with parental responsibility. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity and retain any consent forms. Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church 6.7.1.1 in relation to images consent for 16–17-year-olds.)

16. Records

As part of initial registration for an activity, the following details should be obtained and updated annually:

- name and address
- date of birth
- emergency contact details
- medical information
- any special needs including activities in which the child is unable to take part
- consent for emergency medical treatment
- separate consent should be obtained for one-off events and activities (e.g. swimming) and also for outings, weekends away, etc.
- all personal details and consent forms must be stored securely and not shared with other children or adults unless it is legally permissible to do so. There is further information about when you can share information in the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church.
- consent for photography, video or film should be confirmed by completing the relevant form.

Any group that includes children under the age of eight that meets for more than two hours a day in England must register with Ofsted unless they are exempt, as detailed

in Annex A of the *Early Years and Childcare Registration Handbook* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childminders-and-childcare-providers-register-with-ofsted>. It is an offence to provide such childcare without being registered or on premises that have not been approved.

17. Register

For all children and young people's activities, a register must be taken of those attending on each occasion. This should include:

- the date of the activity
- the type of activity
- a list of adults present
- a list of children/young people present.

The register should be retained securely for a period 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.

18. Required staffing levels

It is the responsibility of the group leader to consider individual circumstances and arrange sufficient supervision to ensure the safety and effective management of all activities. The needs of the group, age, location, nature of activity and experience of staff should all be considered. Further information is available in Section 6 of the Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church.

Required Adult to Child Ratios (as recommended by the NSPCC)		
0 – 2 years	1 adult to 3 children	1:3
2 – 3 years	1 adult to 4 children	1:4
4 – 8 years	1 adult to 6 children	1:6
9 – 12 years	1 adult to 8 children	1:8
13 – 18 years	1 adult to 10 children	1:10

- Each group must have at least two adults. It is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.
- If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.
- Older children who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping, should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding. They should **not** be included in staff numbers for ratios unless they are over 18.
- Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

19. Safe environment

Display, in a prominent place where children can see it, both the ChildLine telephone number (0800 1111) and, for parents, the Family Lives number (0808 800 2222).

Undertake a risk assessment where activities fall outside the BMC assessments - see paragraph 13 above. Greater detail will be required for each new activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location.

Insurance, first aid kits and fire precautions should be checked and a health and safety check should be completed regularly with reference to the following minimum standards.

20. Venue

- Meeting places should be warm, well-lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Fire exits should be checked regularly and clearly marked. The fire exits should not be blocked or obstructed.

- Electric socket covers must never be used as they present a safety hazard.
- Toilets and hand basins with hygienic drying facilities should be easily available.
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity.
- If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by an Environmental Health officer and a food handling and hygiene certificate acquired.
- Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.
- Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.
- Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked and smoke detectors fitted throughout the premises. A fire drill should be carried out regularly.
- Unaccompanied children should be discouraged from walking along dark or badly lit paths in or outside of the premises.

21. First aid kits and accident books

- A first aid kit and accident book should be available on the premises. The contents of the first aid kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals.
- All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some first aid knowledge and the church or circuit should encourage access to first aid training. There should be an adequate number of qualified first aiders and a list of first aiders should be compiled and kept available.
- All accidents should be recorded in an accident book.

22. E-safety

- Suitable consents should be obtained before any pictures are taken at any event and posted on the BMC web site. See paragraph 15 above.

- Ensure that all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site.
- Maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.
- Ensure that parents or carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their written permission in advance.
- When demonstrations are being given, plan beforehand to ensure that all websites visited have material that is appropriate for the age group taking part.
- Where children and young people are given access to undertake their own searches on the Internet, search engines are recommended by the Department for Education and Skills (see section 6.5.8.1).
- Children and young people should be regularly informed and reminded of safe Internet use and accessing social media. If they have any concerns or fears, they must be encouraged to access websites such as NSPCC or ChildLine or talk to an adult.

23 Transporting children on behalf of the church

Drivers

- All those who drive children on church-organised activities should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years.
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of six points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church/circuit safeguarding officer.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the Church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state (i.e. not overtired, not under the

influence of alcohol, not taking illegal substances and not under the influence of medicine, which may induce drowsiness).

- Drivers of church-owned vehicles should provide a copy of their driving licence on an annual basis or provide consent and relevant details for a check to be made via the government website.

Private cars

- Children and young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to formally arranged lifts to and from a church activity.
- All vehicles that carry children to church activities must be covered by a comprehensive insurance policy for both private and business use. They should have up-to-date road tax and where applicable, MOT.
- The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.
- All cars that carry children must be in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried.
- At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.
- There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car. A signed and dated record must be kept of the reasons for this.

Minibuses/coaches

- Before using a minibus, ensure you know the most up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.
- Check your licence covers the vehicle group you are intending to drive.
- Workers/helpers should sit amongst the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle when safe to do so, until calm is restored.

Important telephone numbers

Local agencies

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)	101
Local police Child/Family Protection Unit	101 Lancashire 01772 614444
Local council Children's Services/Social Care	999 Lancashire County Council 0300123 6720/6722
Local Emergency Social Work Team	Lancashire County Council Social Services 0300123 6720
Local general hospital	Ormskirk – 01695 577111 Southport – 01704 547471
Domestic Violence help	Preston Domestic Violence Unit 01772 201601

Support and Advice Organisations

ChildLine	0800 1111
Family Lives (helpline for parents)	0808 800 2222
YoungMinds (parents' helpline, mental health)	0808 802 5544
Hopeline (suicide support for young people)	0800 068 4141
FRANK (drug and alcohol support)	0300 123 6600

Telephone Numbers for Staff

District Contacts

District Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Linda Locke safeguarding@liverpoolmethodist.org.uk
Learning Network Regional Coordinator (Training)	Melody Clark clarkem@methodistchurch.org.uk

Church and circuit contacts

Name	Role	Phone
Rev Michael Tindsley	Superintendent Minister	01704 620053
Peter Harrison	Circuit Safeguarding Officer (Children)	07843934725
Anne Comber	Church Safeguarding Officer (Children)	07984150018

Code of Safer Working Practice with Children

Next Review: February 2024

BMC Safeguarding procedures and forms to use

All completed forms should be stored securely in the locked file cabinets provided in the church.

What	Action
Seeking permission to use photography and/or video for children's events etc	Leader to complete Form BMC SG 001 for all children involved and BMC SG 002 for all children aged 12 years and over

Responding to a case of immediate concern where it is believed a child is at risk	<p>Leader to contact minister for referral to children's services.</p> <p>Where leaders believe a child may be at imminent risk, they should contact the police using 999.</p>
Making a safeguarding concern	<p>Anyone can complete a safeguarding concern. Form – Use BMC SG 003 or BMC SG 003a where there is a deviation from policy or good practice procedures</p> <p>These forms are in a folder on the Safeguarding notice boards in the hall and church.</p> <p>Completed forms should be given to the Minister or the Safeguarding Officer</p>
Responding to a safeguarding concern report	<p>Safeguarding Officer to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give privacy notice to person reporting concern Form BMC SG 004 2. Give notice to subject of concern using Form BMC SG 005 and obtain receipt (as required by that form).