

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

It is the Methodist Church's intention to value every human being as part of God's creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all.

Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift, which is offered to all people.

Principles

Safeguarding is about the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will:

- **promote** the welfare of children, young people and adults.
- work to **prevent** abuse from occurring.
- seek to **protect** and respond well to those that have been abused.

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults.
- safeguarding and protecting all children, young people 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.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will respond without delay to every safeguarding concern, which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, working in partnership with the police and social services in any investigation.

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

Working with the Church Safeguarding Officer, we will support risk assessment of those who present a safeguarding risk within a church environment. We will ensure appropriate pastoral care is offered and measures are taken to address identified risks including referral to statutory agencies, suspension, and the use of safeguarding contracts.

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

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Sandylands 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 **21st October 2025**

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.

Sandylands 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.

Sandylands 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.

Sandylands Methodist Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children, young people and

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) We will always have at least 2 adults present with a group on or off Church premises. Ratio of leaders as follows:

0-2 years = 1 adult to 3 children

2-3 years = 1 adult to 4 children

3-7 years = 1 adult to 8 children

8 years + = 1 adult to 10 children plus 1 additional adult for every 10 extra children (or part thereof)

- vi) Parents/carers will be responsible for their children at all times, other than those within which the group meets. It is a parent's/carers responsibility to ensure their child arrives at, and is collected from Church safely
- vii) All parents/carers are required to complete a consent form for their child, with personal details, medical history etc, and give permission for their child to take part in the activities of the group. These forms are kept on the premises when the group takes place.
- viii) 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.
- ix) 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 appointment. If they are undertaking tasks for which a criminal records check would be required, this will be undertaken prior to appointment.

d) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems should be given to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This leaflet should be reviewed annually.

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 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 be given to the church council secretary. Susan Cosham.

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 Church Safeguarding Officer should be informed. The Church Safeguarding Officer will keep the records and take advice as appropriate from the Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

h) Complaints procedure

There is a formal complaints procedure within the Methodist Church, which allows concerns 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.

A complaint should be addressed to Reverend David Newlove, Cumbria Circuit Superintendent. 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. James Tebbutt at 14 Monnington Way, Penrith CA11 8QJ.

Safeguarding officers must be informed of any complaint or issue relating to the potential abuse of children, young people 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: **June 2026**

i) Key concepts and definitions

- i) A child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

- ii) 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.
- iii) Safeguarding: protecting children, young people 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, young people and/or adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.
- v) 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.
- vi) Worker: anyone working with children, young people or vulnerable adults in the name of Sandylands Methodist Church, whether in paid or voluntary capacity.

Signed



Chair of Church Council

Dated

21st Oct 2025

Sandylands Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy Sept 2025