



Wesley Methodist Church
Cowbridge Road East
CARDIFF CF5 1JP
www.wesleycardiff.org

Child Protection Policy

A policy for good practice in the care of
children and young people

June 2004

Introduction

The Wesley Methodist Church Council takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care whilst associated with any person or organisation acting on behalf of, or using the premises of, Wesley Methodist Church.

This policy document, written in association with the Methodist Church publication 'Safeguarding', is intended to ensure that all workers, whether ordained or lay, and whether acting in a paid or voluntary capacity, act responsibly and with integrity towards children and young people.

The Methodist Church accepts the principles of the Children's Act 1989, and has readily adopted the recommendations of the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm', a summary of which is included as appendix 1 to this document.

In the unfortunate event of any allegation of abuse or risk of harm being suspected or reported, the matter will be immediately investigated in accordance with the requirements of 'Safeguarding' and appropriate consultation and advice sought.

However, the instigation of child protection procedures can only be carried out by statutory agencies, which have clearly defined inter-agency procedures. There is no role for Church members in investigation or ongoing direct management of these situations.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Methodist Church (ref. Standing Order 010) that:

- No person who has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children as listed in the First Schedule for the Children and Young Person's Act 1933 shall work with children or young people in the life of the Church;
- No person who has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children and young people shall be appointed to certain offices in the life of the Church.

In order to comply with this policy, it is necessary for:

- All who work with children and young people under the age of 18 to complete Safeguarding Form A and to observe good practice in their work;
- All ministers, deacons and local preachers to complete Safeguarding Form B and to observe good practice in their work;
- All members of the Church Council and all those involved in the new disciplinary procedures of the Methodist Church to complete Safeguarding Form C/D and to observe good practice in their work

- All reasonable care to be taken by those responsible to ensure that persons who have been convicted of or have received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences against children or young people shall not undertake work in the Methodist Church as listed below:
 - Any duty or responsibility exercised on behalf of the Methodist Church which involves
 - lone access to church premises
 - face to face contact with children or young people without the presence of another adult
 - carrying out duties off church premises in circumstances in which the person concerned may be seen as a representative of the church
 - Any office within the following categories:
 - **Representational** – including membership of the Church Council, Circuit Meeting, District Synod, Methodist Council or Methodist Conference;
 - **Pastoral** – including Local Preachers, Worship or Choir leaders, Organists, Pastoral visitors, Stewards, Workers with children and young people

Safeguarding – the bigger picture

This policy has come about because of a growing awareness that children need to be protected and nurtured in a safer environment, and that the Church is one place that should be safe. It is recognised as an important part of our ministry among children that all people need proper standards of Safeguarding in the Church context.

Apart from training, raising awareness, and producing clear guidelines and procedures, a key element of this policy is the procedure for recruitment of volunteer and paid workers, and the associated criminal record checks through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). We work closely with the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding (CAS), which handles CRB disclosure applications on our behalf.

Minimising Risk

In order to ensure the welfare of children and young people entrusted to our care, and to provide a duty of care for any workers or helpers responsible for them, all individuals or organisations acting on behalf of, or using the premises of Wesley Methodist Church will comply with the following guidelines. This is not a conclusive list, and good practice will prevail in any circumstance.

- **Recruitment**
 - All applicants, whether paid or voluntary, for posts involving the care or responsibility for children will complete the relevant application form (form A, B or C)
 - References will be taken up and the applicant interviewed

- Where appropriate, either an Enhanced or Standard Disclosure will be required from the CRB
 - Successful applicants will be provided with a full copy of the Safeguarding publication
 - If considered necessary, a probationary period will be served
 - Records of training will be maintained by the organisation
 - Persons engaged in posts not necessarily involving the care or responsibility for children but requiring lone access to the premises will complete form D
- **Use of Premises**
 - Any individual or organisation using or hiring our premises for occasional use will be required to complete a *Users Declaration* (form E)
 - They will also be required to declare that they are familiar with the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm' (appendix 1)
- **Supervision**
 - Wherever possible we will endeavour to achieve a minimum adult:child supervision ratio
 - Under no circumstances will this exceed 1:10
 - Under no circumstances will an adult be alone with a child or young person
 - A minimum of two adults will always be readily available
 - Where necessary, parents may be expected to accompany their children
- **Parental Consent**
 - An *annual consent form* will be signed by a parent or guardian, signifying their consent for the child or young person to participate in the normal activities of the organisation (see Appendix 3)
 - Basic *medical details* will also be provided by the parent or guardian, allowing those responsible to respond appropriately in the event of an accident or incident
 - Unless combined with the annual consent form, an *additional activity form* will also be required to cover any activity taking place away from the usual venue
 - These forms may contain confidential information, and will be kept securely by the group leader
- **Accidents or Incidents**
 - Each organisation will maintain a log book
 - Details of any accident, incident, or medical trauma involving children or young people will be recorded in the organisations log book (see Appendix 2)
 - Minimum reasonable first aid will be applied in the presence of at least one witness
 - If necessary, or if in doubt, emergency services will be called
 - Parents or carers will be informed as soon as practicable

Recognising Abuse and Taking Action

The four main areas of abuse, physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, may come to the notice of a person in a number of different ways:

- Disclosure by the child or young person
- Information from a third party
- Observation of unexplained injury or changes in behaviour

- **Disclosure** – we are not the investigating agency and the child or young person may need to talk later to a specialist
 - We will listen, but not question
 - We will reassure them that we take them seriously
 - We will let them know that we need to tell someone else, and cannot promise confidentiality
 - We will advise them what we are going to do next
 - We will keep a written record of exactly what was said, where possible using the child's own words

- **Information** – if another person wants to give us information about alleged abuse
 - We will listen rather than question
 - We will accept what the person has to say
 - We will ask them to make a note of what they were told or observed
 - We will let them know that we need to tell someone else, and cannot promise confidentiality
 - We will advise them what we are going to do next
 - We will keep a written record of exactly what was said, where possible using the person's own words

- **Observation** – some children may display one or more signs that could have an innocent explanation, but could also be the key to identifying potential abuse.

- **Taking Action** – if we suspect abuse
 - Without delay we will consult with the person responsible within the organisation for work with children or young people, or with another appropriate person e.g. the minister
 - The responsible person will contact the statutory services responsible for child protection in our area (Social Services, NSPCC or Police)
 - Advise our superintendent minister of our actions

We consider that such action, even if it later proves to have been mistaken or unnecessary, is justifiable if based on concern for a child or young person.

Appendix 1

Summary of guidelines from the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm'

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children
2. Plan the work of the organisation to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur
3. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person
4. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers
5. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles
6. Use supervision as a means of protecting children
7. Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children
8. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicants paid work or volunteering with children
9. Explore all applicants experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment
10. Find out whether any applicant has any convictions for criminal offences against children
11. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period
12. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse
13. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse

Appendix 2

Example Accident Form

Accident Report Form no..... (church copy)

Person affected/injured	
Name:	Section:
Address:	

Person reporting the incident	
Name:	Position:

Accident/incident	
Date:	Time:
Place:	
Equipment involved:	

Description of incident:
Action taken/recommended:

Signature Leader:	Guardian:
-----------------------------	-----------

Accident Report Form no..... (parent/guardian copy)

Person affected/injured	
Name:	Section:
Address:	

Person reporting the incident	
Name:	Position:

Accident/incident	
Date:	Time:
Place:	
Equipment involved:	

Description of incident:
Action taken/recommended:

Signature Leader:	Guardian:
-----------------------------	-----------

Appendix 3

Example Annual Consent Form

<u>Annual Consent Form 20--/--</u>	
Organisation:	
Person in Charge:	
Child's Details	
Full Name:	
Date of Birth:	
N.H.S. No.:	
Address:	
Medical Details	
Name of G.P.:	
Address:	
Tel. No.:	
Details of medicine, diet, or treatment:	
Details of any known allergies:	
Details of any conditions we should be made aware of:	
<i>He/She has/has not been immunised against Tetanus within the last 5 years</i>	
I am aware of the nature and type of activities undertaken by "the organisation", and give my permission for the boy/girl named above to take part in them.	
Parent or Guardian Details	
Name:	Parent/Guardian
Telephone :	day: evening:
Signed:	Date: