

Safeguarding Principles

The Methodist Church

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential 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.

Principles

We are committed to:

- the care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- the establishing of 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 disclosures and registration with¹ the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority 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.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

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

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for The Meeting Point Café

This policy was agreed at a Meeting Point Café Management Committee Meeting 01 April 2026

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

The Meeting Point Café is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

The Meeting Point Café recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. 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 seeks 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 be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Meeting Point Café 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 Meeting Point Café 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 Meeting Point Café 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 or institutional abuse or neglect. 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 Meeting Point Café 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 café or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

The Meeting Point Café 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 Meeting Point Café commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for staff and volunteers 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.

The Meeting Point Café affirms and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

The Meeting Point Café appoints Deacon Adelha Da Silva as The Meeting Point Café Safeguarding Adults and Children officer and supports her in her role which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister and management team in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with circuit and district safeguarding officers
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice with the support of circuit ministers
- v) ensure proper records are kept of all incidents/concerns according to Methodist policy and practice (see *Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church - Updated Jan 2015*)
- vi) ensure that all safeguarding training which is required is undertaken by those in post and appropriate records kept and made available
- vii) attend training and meetings organised to support the role
- viii) oversee safeguarding throughout the whole life of the cafe (e.g. lettings, groups, property etc)
- ix) report to the Management Committee annually
- x) ensure the completion of a yearly audit/monitoring on safeguarding confirming that policies are in place and that these have been annually reviewed
- xi) ensure that the cafe recruits safely for all posts
- xii) ensure that the cafe has a safeguarding noticeboard with a copy of the current, signed safeguarding policy, contact numbers for local and national helplines and other suitable information.

a) Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for vulnerable adults who visit The Meeting Point Café and use our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church (2019)*

b) Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of the Meeting Point Café 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 note of this will be made and kept, noting date, time and place of visit.
- iii) The Meeting Point Café premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Meeting Point Café Management Committee in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The Meeting Point Café Management Committee will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable

or should be made more suitable.

- iv) Any café-organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate. An agreed record to be kept in a 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 in case they need to be seen at a later date.
- vi) Students working in the café for work experience will be supervised at all times and a risk assessment and role description will be completed for each student.
- vii) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Meeting Point Café Management Committee 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.

c) Appointment and training of workers, paid staff and volunteers

Paid staff will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Each staff member/volunteer will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first six months of appointment and a refresher every 4 years. The other training needs of each staff member/volunteer will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.) and each staff member will have an annual review conducted by a named member of the Meeting Point Café Management Committee and another staff member within the organisation.

d) Pastoral visitors

Meeting Point does not engage in Pastoral Visiting but in terms of safeguarding, any visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

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

A leaflet outlining good practice and systems will be produced and given to each staff member/volunteer. This leaflet will be reviewed annually. The Meeting Point Café management committee may produce their own material or use as appropriate connexional leaflets (e.g. the Quick Reference Guide or Code of Safer Working Practice)

f) Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on The Meeting Point Café premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of Meeting Point Café Management Committee.

g) Events with The Meeting Point Café groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to Deacon Adelha Da Silva.

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

h) Other groups on The Meeting Point Café premises – Touchstone

In the event the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement (www.t MCP.org.uk/property/letting-property-and-third-party-use) will be given a copy of this policy. The Meeting Point Café Management Committee will consider the users of the building in making lettings. Lettings will be notified to the Safeguarding Officer who will keep the records and take advice as appropriate from the District Safeguarding Officer and the Circuit Safeguarding Officer

i) Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisations.

A complaint may be made to a person who will be appointed by the Meeting Point Café Management

Committee and who is currently Deacon Adelha Da Silva.

However, if the complaint is of a safeguarding nature, relating to possible abuse of children or vulnerable adults, then it is very important that your Circuit/District safeguarding officer is consulted as statutory services may need to be informed.

A complaint should be addressed to the superintendent minister, the Rev. Tanya Short, tanya.short65@gmail.com tel. 2666791. If a complaint is made to another person it should be referred to her. 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. Kerry Tankard, Yorkshire West District Office, Touchstone, 4 Easby Road, Bradford, BD7 1QX

j) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Meeting Point Café Management Committee. The date of the next review is March 2027

Signed. Chair of Meeting Point Management Committee

Deacon Adelha Da Silva

ADS

Date – 01 April 2026

Date of Review March 2027