

Methodist Evangelicals Together

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

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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

Within Methodist Evangelicals Together we are committed to:

- The care and nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults with whom we may have contact.
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- The careful selection and training of staff and Executive members of the Charity, in line with Safer Recruitment principles. These will include the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- Responding 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.
- Seeking to develop, with any who disclose having suffered abuse, an appropriate ministry appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care either through the direct support of Methodist Evangelicals Together (MET) if appropriate, or by referring or signposting them to support at a more local level.
- Challenging any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust within the charity.
- Seeking to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of the charity known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult. This may be pastoral care directly through MET or referral / signposting to support at a more local level.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Methodist Evangelicals Together

**This policy was agreed at the meeting of the Executive Committee
held on 21 May 2022**

Methodist Evangelicals Together (MET), 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.

MET 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 and at risk are paramount.

MET recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by disabilities, by 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 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 charity in providing a safe, supportive and caring environment for children, young people, vulnerable adults, survivors of abuse, communities and all those affected by abuse.

MET 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, or 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 towards 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.

MET 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 course of the charity's activities or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

MET commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for all staff and Executive members that will ensure they are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

MET appoints a Safeguarding Officer, and supports the role, which is to:

- i. Support and advise all staff and Executive members in fulfilling their roles
- ii. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii. Liaise with other safeguarding bodies as appropriate
- iv. Promote safeguarding best practice within the charity with the support of the Executive Committee
- v. Ensure proper records are kept of all incidents / concerns
- vi. Ensure that all safeguarding training which is required is undertaken by those in post and appropriate records kept and made available
- vii. Attend appropriate training to support the role
- viii. Report annually to the AGM on safeguarding matters
- ix. Ensure that the charity recruits safely for all posts
- x. Ensure that a copy of the charity's Safeguarding Policy is available on the website (www.methodistevangelicals.org.uk)

a. Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure that procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we may have contact.

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 charity 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. Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential.

These things are to safeguard those working with children, young people and those adults who may be vulnerable.

c. Appointment and Training of Workers

Any staff and Executive members will be required to have a satisfactory DBS disclosure and to undergo, or to have undergone, basic safeguarding training. Each employee will have an identified management group who will meet at regular intervals with the employee. A written record should be kept of these meetings.

d. Data handling and storage.

We will record and store information accurately, keeping it securely in line with our legal duties, information sharing policies and national and local guidance and agreements. This will include records such as accident and incident reporting, confidential recording of safeguarding concerns, DBS checks etc.

e. Management of ex-offenders or those who pose an actual or potential risk to others; particularly to vulnerable people

As an organisation, MET believes in the power of God to forgive and transform individuals. We also believe that every individual is valuable to God and should be protected; particularly those who are vulnerable.

Where MET becomes aware that an individual is an ex-offender or that they may pose a risk to vulnerable people, the Trustees, or persons authorised to act on their behalf, will enter into an open and frank discourse with that individual to understand the context and the risks.

With the consent of the individual (if required), MET will seek to work in partnership with probation services or other agencies supporting the individual where this is appropriate.

The Trustees, or persons authorised to act on their behalf, will assess the risk posed by the individual and a formal risk assessment will be formulated. A formal agreement with the individual will be drawn up and will be signed by both the individual and a representative of MET. The agreement will include:

- MET's commitments to the individual who poses the risk
- The steps MET will take to support the individual while simultaneously undertaking its duty to protect others
- The restrictions and conditions that will be applied to the individual's involvement in the life of the organisation
- The consequences of failure to comply with the agreement
- When and how the risk assessment and formal contract will be reviewed

All decisions and agreements will be formally recorded and securely stored.

The individual who poses a risk will be fully involved in the planning process and information will only be shared with others within the organisation by the leaders either:

- With the agreement of the individual who poses a risk
- Where information needs to be shared to protect vulnerable people and then, only the minimum

information that is essential will be shared and the individual will be informed in advance what information will be shared

If the individual chooses to leave MET or one of its events to avoid the management of the risk and starts to attend elsewhere, the Trustees will take specialist advice as to whether this information should be passed on

f. Complaints Procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with informally. However, a complaint may be made to the charity's Safeguarding Officer. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to the Safeguarding Officer, who will arrange to contact the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is against the Safeguarding Officer, the complaint should be made to the Chair or Vice Chair. It is recognised that statutory services may need to be informed.

g. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee. Any member of the charity may also suggest amendments on an annual basis.

h. 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 the secure estate, does not change his / her status or entitlements to services or provision
- ii. A vulnerable adult is any adult aged 18 or over who:
 - a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs),
 - (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
 - (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
- iii. Safeguarding means protecting children and vulnerable adults from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their physical or mental health or general welfare, 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 can occur within a family, a community and an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult, or by strangers. It may be perpetrated by an adult or a child. It may be an infliction of harm or failure to prevent harm.

Approved 21 May 2022