

**REPORT FROM THE LEEDS DISTRICT SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**  
**TO**  
**THE LEEDS METHODIST MISSION COUNCIL MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 2016**

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## INTRODUCTION

On 4 August 2016 I met with Deacon Jenny Jones and Revd Peter Whittaker for the purpose of discussing the implementation of safeguarding policy and procedures at Oxford Place Centre.

At that meeting it was agreed that I would draft a report to the Leeds Methodist Mission Council detailing some of the key requirements of the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbooks within the context of the work undertaken at Oxford Place Centre. As such, this report is intended to be a supportive tool in order to establish the current situation at local level with regard to safeguarding policy and to identify any ways in which the District Safeguarding Officer or District Safeguarding Group could provide any further support.

It is helpful to note at this stage that at local level the responsibility for the implementation of Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies ultimately lies with the relevant trustee body; that is, the Church Council (Leeds Methodist Mission Council) and Circuit Meeting together as delegated to the person in pastoral charge (not the person with pastoral charge alone). With the support of the District Safeguarding Officer where appropriate, the Safeguarding Handbooks also state that it is the relevant church body (together with the minister in pastoral charge) who is responsible for ensuring:

- a) Allegations concerning church workers and office holders are responded to immediately and according to good practice procedures (as outlined in the Safeguarding Handbooks and policies on safer recruitment) including referral to the statutory authorities.
- b) Reports of abuse (including allegations) are referred to the statutory authorities according to good practice procedures (as outlined in the Safeguarding Handbooks).
- c) Standing Orders are implemented in obtaining vetting information.
- d) Standing Orders are implemented on appointments to office (who may not hold an office, role or responsibility) 010 and training upon appointment.
- e) Standing Orders are implemented in relation to sex offenders in the church (Section 69 of CPD and Part 4 of Book VI).
- f) Safeguarding good practice is followed and complementary pastoral care in all instances of child or adult abuse and trauma, including pastoral provision for the needs of survivors of abuse (see Tracing Rainbows through the Rain, Methodist Conference, 2006) and careful ministry to those who pose a risk to children.

In respect of these responsibilities it is also the responsibility of the trustee body, with the minister in pastoral charge carrying out the responsibility with support and guidance from appropriate advisers:

- a) to refer cases to the Disclosure and Baring Service where allegations lead to disciplinary action or someone resigns pending this; and
- b) to make a report to both the Charity Commission (in England and Wales) and the relevant Insurance company in respect of serious safeguarding matters. This should always occur in those cases involving possible reputational or financial risks.

In light of the responsibilities listed above, appended to this document is a safeguarding checklist for local churches which has been taken from the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbooks (**Appendix 1**). In addition to this checklist, the remainder of this report covers the following key themes:

- Identification of activities aimed at or involving children
- Identification of activities aimed at or attended by adults who may be vulnerable
- Appointment of a Safeguarding Representative
- Adoption of a Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding training
- Safer recruitment procedures, including criminal record checks and safeguarding forms
- Key holders

**ACTIVITIES AIMED AT OR INVOLVING CHILDREN THAT ARE RUN BY OXFORD PLACE CENTRE, TAKE PLACE AT OXFORD PLACE CENTRE OR ARE ASSOCIATED WITH OXFORD PLACE CENTRE**

A helpful starting point is to identify any work that is aimed at or involves children and which is either run by Oxford Place Centre or which takes place upon the premises or is associated with the centre.

***Definition of a child***

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

***Remit of activities***

In addition to activities that are specifically run in the name of the church, it is also important to identify any work involving children that is not run by Oxford Place Centre but which is associated with the same i.e. because it takes place upon the premises or it is associated in some other way with Oxford Place. One primary reason for this is that policies of insurance require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring. Many churches possess buildings which they hire out to community groups and others, some of which may undertake work with children. In such instances the observance of 'reasonable care' by both parties is a standard insurance condition. The hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this.

In light of the above, any hiring body should abide by their own child protection or safeguarding policy if they have one and which is a comparable equivalent to the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church. Otherwise, they must abide by the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church.

***Activities run by Oxford Place which are aimed at or may involve children***

The safeguarding policies of the Methodist Church apply to all work undertaken by Oxford Place Centre, which includes:

- Oxford Place Children's Centre (*N.B. Oxford Place Children's Centre is OFSTED registered and so OFSTED safeguarding procedures must be followed*)
- Sunday School Tea Rooms
- Sunday worship

***Activities which are not run by Oxford Place Centre but which take place at Oxford Place or which are associated with the same***

Activities which are not specifically run by Oxford Place Centre but which are associated with the same include:

- Home Start
- Leeds Youth Choir
- Leeds Christian Fellowship

For both one-off and regular hiring's it is recommended that a written hiring agreement be used. A full model lettings/licence agreement can be found on the TMCP website.

If any hiring body is required to register with OFSTED then we should ask to see the registration certificate and record that it has been seen.

Church councils are required to ensure that those who use their premises under licence or who hire the premises for regular or occasional use are given a copy of the local church safeguarding policy and declare their willingness to comply with the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church or comparable equivalent guidelines and procedures (such as Scouting and Guiding national safeguarding policy).

Hirers of the building should also be asked to sign 'Safeguarding Form E' (**Appendix 2**).

**ACTIVITIES THAT ARE AIMED AT OR ATTENDED BY ADULTS WHO MAY BE VULNERABLE WHICH ARE RUN BY OXFORD PLACE, TAKE PLACE AT OXFORD PLACE OR ARE ASSOCIATED WITH OXFORD PLACE**

***Definition of a vulnerable adult***

Adults who may be vulnerable are defined within the Care and Support Statutory Guidance, published under the Care Act 2014 (Department of Health) as:

*“Any adult aged 18 or over, who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or as it risk of, abuse or neglect; and as result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect”*

***Remit of activities***

As with work with children, policies of insurance require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring and when church premises are hired out the observance of ‘reasonable care’ by both parties is a standard insurance condition. As stated above, the hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this. Therefore, any hiring body should abide by their own safeguarding adults policy if they have one and which is a comparable equivalent to the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church. Otherwise, they must abide by the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church.

***Activities run by Oxford Place which are aimed at or may involve vulnerable adults***

The safeguarding policies of the Methodist Church apply to all work undertaken by Oxford Place, which includes:

- ‘Person to Person’ listening service
- Sunday School Tea Rooms
- Sunday worship

***Activities which are not run by Oxford Place Centre but which take place at Oxford Place or which are associated with the same***

Activities which are not specifically run by Oxford Place but which are associated with the same include:

- Home Start
- Lighthouse
- Leeds Bereavement Forum
- Phoenix
- Basis
- Women’s Counselling and Therapy Service
- Relate
- No Going Back
- Talented Training
- Leeds Christian Fellowship
- Circles of Accountability

For both one-off and regular hiring’s it is recommended that a written hiring agreement be used. A full model lettings/licence agreement can be found on the TMCP website.

Church councils are required to ensure that those who use their premises under licence or who hire the premises for regular or occasional use are given a copy of the local church safeguarding policy and declare their willingness to comply with the safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church or comparable equivalent guidelines and procedures (such as Scouting and Guiding national safeguarding policy).

Hirers of the building should also be asked to sign 'Safeguarding Form E' (**Appendix 2**).

## **APPOINTMENT OF A CHURCH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE**

### ***Responsibility under the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbooks***

It is the responsibility of the Church Council (Leeds Methodist Mission Council) to appoint a Safeguarding Representative.

The Safeguarding Handbooks state that this person should be a member of the Church Council/Circuit Meeting, or have the right to attend at least annually, to report on implementation of the safeguarding policy. They should also have the right to attend the circuit staff meeting to discuss urgent confidential concerns and report to the Circuit Superintendent.

### ***Church Safeguarding Representative at Oxford Place***

Deacon Jenny Jones was appointed as the Oxford Place Safeguarding Representative by the Leeds Methodist Mission Council on [ ].

## **ADOPTION OF SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Charity Commission and Methodist Insurance both require all local bodies to have a safeguarding policy in place. Therefore in addition to our Connexional Safeguarding Handbooks each District, Circuit and local church requires a safeguarding policy relating to work with both children and adults.

Model policies are provided separately in the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook (**Appendix 3**). These models represent the minimum that is required and they can be supplemented for local situations as appropriate.

The safeguarding policy should include a date for review, which should take place annually as a minimum.

### ***Responsibility under the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook***

Ultimate responsibility for adopting and implementing a safeguarding policy rests with the Church Council (Leeds Methodist Mission Council).

The Connexional Safeguarding Policy suggests that the Church Council may wish to form a working group, including workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults, who prepare and review each year the Safeguarding Policy and draft an implementation plan for the church.

### ***Safeguarding policy for Oxford Place Centre***

The current safeguarding policy for Oxford Place was adopted by the Leeds Methodist Mission Council on [     ]

## **SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

### ***Creating Safer Space Training***

Creating Safer Space Training comprises three modules: the Leadership Module, the Foundation Module and the Foundation Module Refresher. The Foundation Module and Foundation Module Refresher course are delivered at Circuit level and the Leadership Module is delivered at District level.

This training needs to be completed every five years (although as of September 2017 this will be reduced to every four years).

Appended to this document is a list of those who are required to attend this training and those who are not required to attend but for whom the training is recommended (**Appendix 4**). This list relates to office holders and those undertaking work in the name of the church.

### ***Responsibility under the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook***

The Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook sets out the following responsibilities in relation to training:

- The responsibility to 'ensure that all officers attend suitable training' rests with the minister in pastoral charge
- The responsibility to 'ensure that training is taken up' rests with the minister in pastoral charge and the Church Stewards
- The responsibility to 'record who has attended training and when' rests with the Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or in conjunction with Church Administrator or Church Council Secretary

### ***Training of workers at Oxford Place Centre***

In light of the above, it would be advisable to maintain the following records:

- A record of all workers / office holders who are required to attend training
- A record of where and when workers / office holders attended the training

**SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES**  
**INCLUDING CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS AND SAFEGUARDING FORMS**

The current policies of the Methodist Church in this area comprise the following:

- Joint Policy Statement on Safer Recruitment (March 2015)
- Practice Guidance for DBS checks (as part of Safer Recruitment) (August 2015)
- Safeguarding Forms

***Responsibility under the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook***

The Methodist Church Handbook states that the Church Council (Leeds Methodist Mission Council) has ultimate responsibility for ensuring safe recruitment of workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

In addition to the above our policies also state that:

- The responsibility to 'ensure that 'recruiting safely' procedures are followed (including registration forms and vetting procedures) for all those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and that records are kept' rests with the minister in pastoral charge
- The responsibility to 'retain confidentially, copies of any forms, letters and procedures completed during recruitment registration procedures' rests with the minister in pastoral charge and/or in conjunction with Church Council Secretary
- The responsibility to 'remind workers with children, young people or vulnerable adults to re-apply for criminal record disclosures every five years or upon change of role or responsibility (whichever is sooner)' rests with the Church Safeguarding Representative in conjunction with the minister in pastoral charge and/or Church Council Secretary.
- The responsibility to 'follow up criminal record checks and ensure that applicants do not begin work until they have been approved' rests with the church safeguarding officer

***Criminal record checks at Oxford Place Centre***

Guidance surrounding criminal record checks, including eligibility, is predominantly contained within the Practice Guidance for DBS checks (as part of Safer Recruitment) (August 2015). Nevertheless, eligibility for criminal record checks can be a complex area and please do not hesitate to seek any further advice from the District Safeguarding Officer in relation to this.

A record containing the names of workers who require a criminal record check and details of those checks are maintained at Oxford Place Centre and this should be stored securely.

***Safeguarding forms at Oxford Place***

Below is a summary of some of the safeguarding forms that are required for certain roles.

**Paid roles working with children or vulnerable adults**

A 'Confidential Declaration' should be completed by all those wishing to work in roles where they will be in substantial contact with children and/or vulnerable adults and as such will be eligible for a criminal record check. This includes ministers.

There are two forms, one for new applicants (**Appendix 5**) and one for criminal record check renewals (**Appendix 6**).

The information on these forms will be treated in confidence, and be seen only by those involved in the recruitment process and, when appropriate, a Safeguarder / DBS administrator. The form needs to be kept securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. (NB: *the confidential declaration form has replaced Form X and Form B*)

### **Voluntary workers working with children or vulnerable adults**

The following two forms must be completed for these roles:

- A Registration Form (Safeguarding Form A Part 1 – **Appendix 7**)
  - As stated above, Church Councils (Leeds Methodist Mission Council) are responsible for safely recruiting workers with children, young people or vulnerable adults. This form must be retained in a secure, confidential manner by the church council secretary or the minister with pastoral charge, or minister delegated pastoral responsibility.
- A Volunteer Agreement including Role Outline (Safeguarding Form A Part 2 – **Appendix 8**)
  - Church Councils must agree the duties and conditions with each volunteer. This form needs to be completed for each group the worker seeks to volunteer to work with. This agreement should be reviewed at least annually. Copies should be held by the group leader, the church council and the volunteer

### **All office holders not working with children or vulnerable adults**

Safeguarding Form C (**Appendix 9**) must be completed for all people nominated or holding positions in the Methodist Church (except local preachers and worship leaders, ministers, and those working with children or vulnerable adults for whom other forms apply).

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES**

### **KEY HOLDERS**

A declaration for key holders is included within the Methodist Church Safeguarding Forms, which form part of our safer recruitment procedures.

#### ***Responsibility under the Methodist Church Safeguarding Handbook***

The responsibilities in relation to safer recruitment are detailed on page 12 above.

#### ***Key holders and Oxford Place Centre***

Pages 5 – 8 of this report evidence that a wide range of users access the premises at Oxford Place Centre. In order to carry out the safeguarding policies of the Methodist Church it is essential for key holders to be identified and for Safeguarding Form D (**Appendix 10**) to be signed prior to the issue of any keys / key code.

The Methodist Church is not obliged to give anyone access to church premises unless access to the premises is required as part of their role or for regular hire of premises.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Safeguarding Responsibilities Check List for Local Churches**  
**(taken from the Safeguarding Handbooks)**

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Safeguarding Form E**

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Model safeguarding policies**

**APPENDIX 4**  
**Creating Safer Space attendance provision**

**APPENDIX 5**  
**Confidential Declaration for new applicants**

**APPENDIX 6**  
**Confidential Declaration for criminal record check renewals**

**APPENDIX 7**  
**Safeguarding Form A Part 1**

**APPENDIX 8**  
**Safeguarding Form A Part 2**

**APPENDIX 9**  
**Safeguarding Form C**

**APPENDIX 10**  
**Safeguarding Form D**