



**Safeguarding Policy
Children, Young People
and
Vulnerable Adults**

January 2015

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

Every person has a value and dignity and is created 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 and therefore to protect them from harm. Well Street United Church is committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and those who work and volunteer to help with activities associated with the Church. We are committed to establishing safe communities which provide a caring environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse.

In order to fulfil these commitments the Leadership Team at Well Street United Church recognises their collective and individual responsibility to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Having in place a Child Protection Policy and a Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy which are consistent with legislation and guidance and are reviewed annually;
- Ensuring all those involved with Well Street United Church activities are aware of these policies and their duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Making available training and supervision as required to enable employees and volunteers to be alert to concerns about the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and how to respond to these;
- Ensuring those employed and those who volunteer at Well Street United Church are carefully selected and subject to safer recruitment procedures;
- Enabling all complaints and concerns to be taken seriously and responded to appropriately;
- Responding without delay to every concern which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, and cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation;
- Seeking to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- Seeking to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- Seeking 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

Well Street United Church 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.

This policy is intended to be a dynamic policy and 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.

Well Street United Church commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Methodist Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches and adopts the processes and procedures contained within the Handbook. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

Well Street United Church 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.

Well Street United Church 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.

Well Street United Church 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 church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

Well Street United Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people 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.

Well Street United Church affirms the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable children and adults who are on our premises.

Well Street United Church appoints Sue Ioannou as Church Safeguarding Adults Representative and as Church Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports her in her role which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister and the Elders in fulfilling their roles
- ii) provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- iii) liaise with Circuit and District Safeguarding Coordinators
- iv) promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers.

Good Practice Principles

We believe good practice means that:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of the Church 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 church premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the Elders in written form. This will include fire safety procedures. The Elders will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
- iv) Any church-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.
- v) Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The Elders will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

Appointment and training of workers and volunteers

Workers and volunteers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Each worker and volunteer will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training, within the first year of appointment. The other training needs of each worker and volunteers will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.). Those who are employed by the Church and work with children young people and vulnerable adults will have an annual review conducted by a named member of the Leadership Team and the Minister. Work with children, young people

and vulnerable adults will be reviewed quarterly by the Leadership team and any issues/concerns with an individual volunteer will be considered and responded to by a review process.

Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, Pastoral Visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

A leaflet will be produced and reviewed bi-annually to be given to each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults outlining good practice and systems. The leaflet will be reviewed annually with this policy.

Ecumenical events

Where ecumenical events happen on church premises, safeguarding is the responsibility of the leadership team.

Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to the Minister and the Elders.

Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement will be given a copy of this policy and the leaflet. The lettings secretary will consider the various users of the building in making lettings¹

Complaints procedure

It is anticipated that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the minister and Elders. A complaint should in the first instance be addressed to the minister but if the complaint relates to the minister the Chair of Trustees should be contacted. The person dealing with the complaint (usually the minister or a member of the leadership team at the minister's request) will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to invoking the complaints system of the Baptist Union which will involve initially speaking with the denominational Complaints Officer.

¹

Review

This policy was agreed at an Elders meeting on February 5th 2015. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Elders.

The date of the next review is February 2016

Dated

Signed Minister Well Street United Church