



**Bridport and Dorchester Circuit & Pastorate**

(Registered Charity No. 1150182)

[www.bridportanddorchester.org.uk](http://www.bridportanddorchester.org.uk)

**Policy for Safeguarding Children, Young People,  
and Adults at Risk of Abuse : Bridport and  
Dorchester Circuit and URC Pastorate**

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on **16 November 2016**. It will be reviewed on an **annual basis**.

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 **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit 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.

The **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people, and adults who may be at risk of abuse. We recognise that the needs of children and of adults when they are vulnerable is paramount.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults who are at risk of or experiencing abuse. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, adults at risk, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

The **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit 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.*

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The **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and adults at risk of abuse and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or organisational 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 **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or adult at risk 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. It commits itself to providing informed pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.

The **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit 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 **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit 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 at risk.

#### Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and adults at risk in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

The **Bridport and Dorchester** Circuit appoints **Heather Bland** as Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and **Janice Young** as Safeguarding Children Coordinator and supports them in their role.

#### a) Roles and responsibilities

##### *Superintendent*

1. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.
4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, adults who may be at risk, for staff of the circuit and for members of the local churches in the circuit.
5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and a Safeguarding Children Coordinator and that the details of that person are passed to the District office.
6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
7. Support the Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and the Safeguarding Children Coordinator in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

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### *Circuit Stewards*

Ensure agreed procedures are in place for Circuit and ecumenical events that involve children or adults at risk of abuse.

### *Circuit Safeguarding Adults Coordinator and Circuit Safeguarding Children Coordinator*

1. Support and advise the Circuit Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards in fulfilling their roles.
  2. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues.
  3. Liaise with the District Safeguarding Group(s).
  4. With the support of the Superintendent ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.
- b) Procedures for circuit events involving children or adults who may be at risk of abuse  
It is essential that circuit events that involve children or adults who may be at risk do not slip through the net because they are not owned by one church.
- c) Responsibility for those planning and leading the event  
All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of the procedure.  
The event should have been planned effectively and attention given to the following issues:
- Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises.
  - The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, including safeguarding and first aid personnel. Particular health or ability needs should have been taken into account.
  - Numbers of children or vulnerable adults involved.
  - Transportation following good practice guidelines.
- d) Key concepts and definitions
- i) Adults who may be at risk : any adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of circumstances that put them at risk, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.
  - ii) Safeguarding and protecting children or adults at risk of abuse from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.
  - iii) 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.
  - iv) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or adult at risk or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated 16 November 2016

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Signed ..... Chair of Circuit Meeting  
Revd S J Jenner

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