

# STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

### Policy and procedures

MARCH 2017

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## SAFEGUARDING – PREFACE AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2016/17

This is a policy of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership and applies to all aspects of the Partnership's work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

We use the term '*children and young people*' to mean any members of our church community under the age of 18, any visitors to our building under the age of 18 and any under 18s who attend events organised by individuals / organisations hiring or leasing our buildings.

We use the term '*vulnerable adults*' to mean any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of disability (mental or physical), age, illness or other situation is permanently (or for the time being) unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation. Appendix 3 provides further clarification of this definition.

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed annually by the Council of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership each April.

The following appointments will be confirmed annually:

A member of the Ministerial Team will be appointed annually to take the lead responsibility for this area of work. Rev. Andy Jowitt will take the lead in 2016/17. Throughout this document, this person will be referred to as the 'Lead Minister'.
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Each congregation will appoint a Safeguarding Officer to assist with and monitor the implementation of this Policy.
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The Council of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership will appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator to liaise with the Safeguarding Officers and to ensure this Policy is implemented and training takes place. Judy Thorp will fulfil this position in 2016/17.
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The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership is an associate member of **The Churches Agency for Safeguarding** (CAS). This organisation is run in cooperation with The Methodist Church. The Stantonbury Ecumenical Council will use the services of the CAS for advice and for processing criminal records checks through the new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This policy has been developed from the model safeguarding policy published by CAS.

Each denomination in our partnership has its own set of procedures for safeguarding. As an ecumenical congregation, it is important that the members of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership have clear procedures. It has therefore been agreed that the safeguarding procedures for **The Methodist Church** will be used for the time being. When advice is needed, the Circuit Safeguarding Officer of the Methodist Church will be contacted initially - see below. (This does not preclude contacting officers from other denominations if felt appropriate.)

If any member of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership community wishes to seek advice about, discuss or report a safeguarding issue, they should contact, in confidence one of the following designated people:

- Rev. Andy Jowitt or any member of the ministerial team
- Judy Thorp, Safeguarding Coordinator
- The Safeguarding Officer of their own congregation  
Christ Church, Stantonbury – Sandra Kennedy  
Cross & Stable, Downs Barn – Gill Grant  
St. Andrews, Great Linford – Janet Galley  
St. James, New Bradwell – Gill Wood  
St. Lawrence, Bradwell – refer to Rev. Andy Jowitt until new Officer appointed  
St. Mary Magdalene, Willen – refer to Rev. Paul Smith until new Officer appointed.

**Important contact details:**

Rev. Andy Jowitt	01908 320850
Judy Thorp	01908 232853
MK Council (main switchboard)	01908 691691
NSPCC helpline	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Ian Wass, Methodist/URC Joint Circuit Safeguarding Officer	<a href="mailto:ian_wass@hotmail.com">ian_wass@hotmail.com</a>
Jill Crippen, Northampton District (Methodist Church) Safeguarding Officer	<a href="mailto:northamptondso@btinternet.com">northamptondso@btinternet.com</a>
John Nixon, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	01865 208290 <a href="mailto:John.nixon@oxford.anglican.org">John.nixon@oxford.anglican.org</a>

## **Policy Introduction - Principles:**

The Trustees of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership agree to work within the following safeguarding principles:

*(Source: Joint Statement of Safeguarding principles for the Church of England and the Methodist Church, 2010)*

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 within the Church who will be working with children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes. We will encourage all those working within the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership to dress and behave in a manner that reflects the values of this policy.

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 support anyone who has suffered abuse, seeking appropriate help for them and 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 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 – seeking additional help and support if appropriate. In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

### **Photography Policy**

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership accepts that parents often wish to take photographs of their children taking part in activities on church premises. Every attempt will be made to ensure that parents and families understand that these photographs are for personal use only and should not be displayed on social media sites. Any photographs of children other than their own should only be taken with the permission of the relevant parents.

## General Policy Statement

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership recognises its moral and spiritual duties to ensure and promote the safeguarding and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Trustees of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership are committed to ensuring that the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership and its premises

- Provides a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Identifies children, young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm

In pursuit of these aims, the Trustees will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the promotion of a safe environment for these children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Providing procedures for reporting concerns
- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
- The safe recruitment and training of staff

The Trustees will appoint a member of the ministerial team to have special responsibility for safeguarding issues each year. This appointment is referred to as the 'Lead Minister' in the following text.

The Trustees will annually appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator, usually a lay member of the congregation with suitable experience, to assist with and monitor the implementation of this policy. The Safeguarding Coordinator will report annually to the Ecumenical Council.

Each congregation will appoint a Safeguarding Officer to assist with and monitor the implementation of this policy.

## Training

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership aims to provide all Ministers, Safeguarding Officers and the Safeguarding Coordinator with training to familiarise them with safeguarding issues and responsibilities and the Church's safeguarding procedures and policies. Refresher training should be offered at least every 3 years. The Trustees delegate the responsibility for this training to the Lead Minister and the Safeguarding Coordinator and recommend that use is made of some of the relevant training packages offered by our parent denominations. In addition, training will be offered to anyone in the Partnership that works with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The Trustees will receive an annual report from the Lead Minister and Safeguarding Coordinator. This will review how the Church's safeguarding policies and procedures have operated during the previous year. The scope and nature of any training undertaken during the year will be included in the report.

## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

For children, these are set out in the Department of Education Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'.

For Adults these are set out in the Department of Health Guidance 'No More Secrets 2014'.

All children, by virtue of their age are defined as vulnerable. Definitions of vulnerability in adults are set out in the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Guidance.

Please see Appendix 3 for a detailed explanation of all these definitions.

## **Specific duties of Officers with Responsibility for Safeguarding.**

The Lead Minister will head a safeguarding team which includes the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Officers, with a key duty of raising awareness within the organisation of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the promotion of a safe environment for these groups. The Lead Minister can co-opt other members to this team if specific expertise or help is needed at any time.

This team is responsible for ensuring that safe recruitment practices are followed for staff and volunteers who may work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safe recruitment practices are outlined later in this policy.

The Lead Minister, Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Officers should seek and have access to suitable training and should keep up to date with developments in safeguarding issues. They will also have responsibility for making new staff and volunteers aware of the existing safeguarding policy.

The Lead Minister will be the main contact point for safeguarding issues and will have contact details for relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers.

## **Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns**

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership recommends the following procedure if a child or young person tells a member of staff or volunteer about possible abuse:

- *Listen carefully and stay calm.*
- *Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the child is telling you.*
- *Do not put words into the child's mouth.*
- *Reassure the child that by telling you, they have done the right thing.*
- *Inform the child that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Let them know to whom you will report the matter. Never promise to keep something secret.*

- *Note the main points carefully.*
- *Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said, did and your questions etc.using the Incident Reporting Form – attached at Appendix 6.*

**Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Safeguarding Officer of their church - listed at the start of this document.**

The same general points apply if a vulnerable adult discloses information of concern. However, the nature of the vulnerability will influence how the response will be made. Appendix 3 gives further definitions of vulnerability and lists the values that must be respected in the Church's work with vulnerable adults.

## **Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Members of Staff and Volunteers.**

The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used for ease of description.

It is the case that some staff of Christian organisations have been found responsible for abuse against a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Because of their frequent contact with these groups, staff may have allegations of abuse made against them. The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership recognises that an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons but all allegations must be taken seriously and preliminary investigations must be done thoroughly and without delay. It is important not to make any assumptions about the veracity of an allegation before it has been investigated.

In dealing with such allegations the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult must be the paramount consideration (Children Act 1989). Any child or vulnerable adult making an allegation must be appropriately supported by someone other than the person conducting the investigation, and their concerns respected. However it is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations must maintain an open mind and conduct the investigation sensitively, and in a careful, measured way.

All allegations **MUST** be reported to the Lead Minister.

This minister will carry out initial investigations and follow the safeguarding procedures of The Methodist Church. All safeguarding issues will be reported to the regional Safeguarding Officer of the Methodist Church who will support and advise through the procedure.

The minister may involve another officer of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership to assist with confidential investigations. The regional safeguarding officers of our other denominations will be kept informed. If as a result of these preliminary investigations an allegation of abuse is substantiated it **MUST** be referred to the appropriate statutory agency.

Staff members or volunteers will be suspended from duties pending the outcome of any investigation. Appropriate support should be offered to the alleged abuser during this time, by someone other than the person conducting the investigation. If an allegation is made about a member of the ministerial team, the safeguarding procedures for their own denomination will be followed, as these will include specific pastoral support.

**Strict confidentiality must be ensured.** The church officers who will be notified of any allegation will be restricted to the **minimum** number required to ensure that procedures can be followed correctly.

**Whistleblowing.** Parishes count as employers not only in respect of paid clergy or lay staff but also in respect of volunteers. Attached as Appendix 12 is a Whistleblowing Policy that allows those with a genuine concern to bypass formal structures to share their concerns with an appropriate person without fear of retribution.

## **Recruitment and Selection – Checks using Disclosure and Barring Service**

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership agrees that, alongside the usual recruitment systems for staff and volunteers followed by the Partnership, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check should be carried out for all volunteers / staff members who will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and who meet the criteria for a DBS check as shown in Appendix 5

The Safeguarding Officers will administer DBS checks for Sunday School Teachers, Toddler Group supervisors and other church activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults within their respective churches.

All DBS checks will be conducted through CAS (The Churches' Agency for Safeguarding).

All members of the ministerial team, the Safeguarding Coordinator and the Lay Chair of the Trustees will be registered as DBS check 'verifiers' with CAS. Other Verifiers may be approved by the Committee.

The DBS process has strict data protection and confidentiality rules. All officers of the Church will follow these rules closely. (see Appendix 1) One copy of the permitted data will be stored securely in the Safeguarding safe. No other copies will be kept.

The Lead Minister, Safeguarding Coordinator or Safeguarding Officers are responsible for ensuring that the following wording is included on all application forms for employees and volunteers whose duties might involve work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. This wording makes clear to applicants that an enhanced DBS check must be carried out before employment / duties can start.

*'This post meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any applicants for this post who are offered employment or who become volunteers within the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership will be subject to a criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions. A criminal record will not automatically bar a person from successfully taking up this post.'*

Occasionally, CAS may contact the Lead Minister, Safeguarding Coordinator or Safeguarding Officer to reveal a conviction not declared by an applicant. If the conviction is not serious and not related to work with children or vulnerable adults, the appointment can still go ahead once officers have consulted with the Lead Minister. The applicant should be notified that the conviction has been revealed.

If it proves difficult for the Lead Minister and other officers to decide if an application should be approved once a conviction has been revealed, the Lead Minister can refer the decision to the chair of the Trustees. She / he will choose 3 members of the Trustees (one of whom can be the

chair) to form a decision making group. Ideally, the 3 members should be suitably qualified or experienced in safeguarding and / or personnel issues. These members must not be members of Church staff or hold any other official safeguarding responsibilities within the church. The group's function would be, for a specific case, to:

- Meet initially with the Lead Minister
- Be presented, in confidence, with the facts and disclosure resulting from a DBS check by the Lead Minister
- To decide if an applicant can be appointed as a member of staff or volunteer. The decision would be made by a simple majority vote. The decision of this group is final and there is no appeal procedure.
- To briefly record notes of their meeting, one copy of which is to be securely kept in the Safeguarding safe. All other notes and records should be destroyed.

On very rare occasions, the local police commander may send a separate letter disclosing confidential information confirming that an applicant is not suitable to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The applicant will **not** know that such a letter has been sent and **must not** be told. It is a criminal offence to disclose such information to anyone, except the Lead Minister. The Lead Minister will usually seek immediate and confidential advice from the regional safeguarding adviser of the Methodist Church.

If known sex offenders wish to worship within the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership, the Minister in receipt of this information will follow the appropriate policies and procedures laid down by his/her own denomination, and seek guidance from his/her own denominational authorities.

### **Who should have a DBS check?**

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Council agrees that it will use the guidance given in:

The Methodist Church in Britain Practice Guidance on carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as part of safer recruitment for England and Wales - August 2015 - a joint statement with the Church of England.

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership will use the 'Eligibility' diagram from Appendix 5 to determine those that are to be DBS checked. In essence it will be:

- All Ministers - through their own denomination's Safeguarding lead
- All Members of the congregation who engage in the eligible activities

A record of who has current DBS checks will be securely kept along with the date of the check.

New DBS checks should be completed every 5 years, though a new national on-line system that will enable the Church to check updated DBS information should be operational shortly.

DBS checks carried out by other organisations for people working as teachers, social workers, etc. can be accepted providing that the original DBS registration form is seen and recorded by the Safeguarding Coordinator or Safeguarding Officer and is not older than 3 years.

## **Some guidelines for Sunday School and other church groups for children and young people**

The Stantonbury Ecumenical Council recommends the following:

### **Minimum staffing levels for children's groups:**

<b>Ages 0 to 2</b>	1 person for every 3 children
<b>Ages 2 and 3</b>	1 person for every 4 children
<b>Ages 3 to 8</b>	1 person for every 8 children
<b>Over 8 years</b>	1 person for the first 8 children then 1 extra person for every 12 children

**Where individual children have particular physical or learning needs, the level of supervision will usually need to be increased.**

Where Sunday School classes are in adjacent rooms / areas, one adult per room is acceptable (provided ratios above are not exceeded) providing that help can be summoned easily.

**Groups should have at least 2 adults at all times and it is recommended that there should be one male and one female.**

Leaders of activities / Sunday School need to ensure that any volunteers under 18 years old are well supported and can always easily seek support and advice.

**Appendix 2** shows recommended guidelines for individual workers with children and young people. These guidelines are recommended to be used for training purposes.

## **Health & Safety Policy**

For each church establishment, everyone (but in particular those leading or taking part in children and young people's activities) should be aware of the Church's health and safety policy and procedures and familiarise themselves with fire / evacuation procedures and the location of first aid equipment, etc. Appropriate risk assessments need to be carried out particularly for any physical and off site activities and individual events.

## **Lettings and Tenancies in the buildings of Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership**

Some of the buildings in the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership are used by external organisations. As part of our safeguarding policy, The Trustees of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership require that any organisation hiring or leasing our premises for activities involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults ensures that individuals are protected at all times and takes reasonable steps to prevent abuse, emotional harm, injury, illness, loss or damage occurring. The hirers should have full liability insurance for this.

It is a requirement that the Safeguarding Officer should see the Safeguarding Policy for each group or organisation using their building. If an organisation does not have their own policy they must sign an undertaking to abide by the Policy of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership – a copy of which must be provided to them.

The written hiring agreement for lettings requires hirers to indicate that they can comply with these Church requirements.

**The original policy was agreed by the Trustees of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership on 27th November 2014 and this revised policy will be presented to the Annual General in April 2017.**

## **Appendix 1**

# **Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership - Policy Statement on handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS disclosures, disclosure information & Investigation Reports**

### **General principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, The Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information. This written policy must be made available to anyone who asks.

### **Storage and access**

All documents must be kept secure. The Safeguarding laptop and confidential documents can be stored in the Safeguarding safe at Christ Church, Stantonbury but each church must make arrangements appropriate to their particular premises ensuring that confidentiality is maintained.

### **Handling**

In accordance with the DBSs Code of Practice, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. (Please see Safeguarding Policy for further details) We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and we are clear that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

### **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

### **Record keeping in the event of an Investigation**

A comprehensive summary of any allegation or investigation must be prepared, including how the allegations were followed up and resolved, any action taken and decisions reached. Such information should be kept securely in the person's file indefinitely (Methodist Church guidelines – 75 years).

These records should only be seen on a 'need to know' basis.

Paper files should be kept in a lockable fire proof cabinet or safe (for SEP this is the safe now installed in the office at Christ Church).

Electronic files should be password protected and stored securely by locking computer or portable drives/memory sticks in fire proof cabinet or safe.

Emails are not secure and you should assume that any email can be read by anyone. Great care should therefore be taken over the content of an email and any attachments, which should be encrypted.

Any letter containing confidential information should be sent by 'special delivery' and the information contained in an inner envelope marked 'confidential'.

If the allegation or investigation requires the church to work with local Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) or local safeguarding boards then the church may be required to follow locally agreed protocols.

*See CofE/Methodist 'Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance' 2015*

## Appendix 2 – Code of Safer Working practice

### 1. Guidelines for Individual Workers

You should:

- Treat all children and young people with respect & dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Record any incidents of concern and give the information to your Group Leader. Sign and date the record.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding representative.

You should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young people.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

### **Touch**

Church sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical

contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Church Safeguarding Representative.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

## Appendix 3 – Definitions of Vulnerability and Abuse

### What makes an adult vulnerable?

Vulnerability is a part of being human and no one is invulnerable.

We refer to the Church as the 'broken body of Christ'. However, in the context of this policy, vulnerability has a particular meaning. All people may be vulnerable at some time or times of their lives. Vulnerability can be permanent or temporary and can be of a greater or lesser degree. It can be increased by various factors including any of the following:

- sensory or physical disability or impairment, learning disability, physical illness
- mental illness, dementia, substance and alcohol misuse. impact of an event in life such as bereavement, the actions of others or a change in living situation.

Vulnerability may bring with it some difficulties in making decisions or communicating those decisions. This may range from simple decisions, such as what to choose to eat, to more complicated decisions, such as whether to participate in certain activities or where to live. The capacity to make decisions should always be presumed to exist and care should be taken to understand what choices are being made, even where this is expressed non-verbally or in a different language. If the vulnerability prevents the ability to make some choices, it should be assumed that other choices are not so limited unless it is clear that this is so.

The term 'vulnerable adult' has a number of different definitions. In order to bring into focus those adults for whom the Church should have a particular care, this is the definition which will be used in this policy:

Any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation. (The definition of significant is a matter for the workers concerned. It should take into account issues such as the vulnerability of the individual, the gravity and extent of the harm, the length of time of the harm and the intention of the alleged perpetrator as well as the effect upon the individual.)

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (established by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) defines vulnerable adults as follows:

A person aged 18 or over who receives services of a type listed in paragraph i below and in consequence of a condition listed in paragraph ii below  
or has a disability of a type listed in paragraph iii below:

i

- a) accommodation and nursing or personal care in a care home
- b) personal care or support to live independently in his or her own home
- c) any services provided by an independent hospital, independent clinic, independent medical agency or National Health Service body
- d) social care services
- e) any services provided in an establishment for a person with learning disabilities

ii

- a) a learning or physical disability
- b) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- c) a reduction in physical or mental capacity

iii

- a) a dependency upon others in the performance of or a requirement for assistance in the performance of basic physical functions

- b) severe impairment in the ability to communicate with others
- c) impairment in a person's ability to protect him/herself from assault, abuse or neglect.

Christian communities should be places where all people (children and adults alike) feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. The Church is particularly called by God to support those at the margins, those less powerful and those without a voice in our society. The Church can work towards creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Issues which need to be considered include both the physical, emotional and spiritual environment and the attitudes and actions of workers.

## What Constitutes Abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The following are considered the main forms of abuse:

- **physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;
- **sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- **financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- **neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and
- **discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

*(From 'No More Secrets' Department of Health Guidance 2014)*

To these should be added from the Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Handbook:

- **survivors of abuse**, which may have been in childhood or adulthood, and who may need specific pastoral care
  - **domestic abuse**, which is usually a systematic, repeated and often escalating pattern of behaviour by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors; note that there is often an overlap between domestic abuse and child abuse.
- Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

## **Definitions of Abuse - Children**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

### **Physical abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

*(From 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Department of Education 2015)*

## **Spiritual Abuse**

Spiritual abuse is not covered by the statutory definitions but is of concern both within and outside faith communities including the church. Aspects of spiritual abuse can be recognised under the four categories of abuse such as emotional abuse or physical abuse (e.g. forced healing rituals). Within faith communities, harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. If such inappropriate behaviour becomes harmful it should be referred for investigation in cooperation with appropriate statutory agencies. Careful teaching, supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of children should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of harm include the denial of the right of faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

## **Values underlying our policy**

A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right in common with all people to:

- be treated with respect and dignity and with recognition of abilities and gifts
- have their privacy respected
- be able to lead as independent a life as possible
- be able to choose how to lead their life and make their own decisions
- have the protection of the law
- have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background
- be able to use their chosen language or method of communication
- be heard.

Adult vulnerability must be recognised as a human condition that affects people's ability to participate. Churches must seek to live out our calling by valuing all people and the contributions each individual can make.

This appendix is extracted from '*Safeguarding Adults – Policy for the Methodist Church 2010*' and amended as indicated from '*No More Secrets*' – Department of Health Guidance 2014 and '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*' Department of Education Guidance 2015.

## Appendix 4 – Safer Recruiting

We must ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.

We must take reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults who may be vulnerable from taking up positions of respect, responsibility or authority in our churches. A process of safe recruiting is essential for this.

We have agreed to follow the 'safer recruitment' guidance as shown in the Church of England / The Methodist Church joint publication – August 2015:

*'Practice Guidance on carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as part of safer recruitment for England and Wales'*

Appendix 5 of this document provides further details of this.

### Who needs to be recruited safely?

We have 3 main groups of paid posts / volunteers:

**A. People who work regularly with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults who carry out 'regulated activities' or have 'substantial contact'** (see appendix 5 for details).

The activities these people engage in come into the work of groups 1 and 2 as indicated in appendix 5. These people will need criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks) before they can undertake their activities.

**B. People who have some, but not substantial contact with children and young people / vulnerable adults.** This group is not eligible for DBS criminal record checks, but the church needs to use safer recruiting procedures. (Group 3 as indicated in Appendix 5). This group would include Verger, Church Wardens, Council Members and other who are in 'positions of trust' but do not necessarily carry out 'regulated activities' or have 'substantial contact'. All those appointed to these positions should be given a copy of the SEP Safeguarding Policy and requested to sign a declaration acknowledging that they have read the policy and agree to abide by it and accept responsibility with the Safeguarding Officer for ensuring it is carried out. (See form at Appendix 13)

**C. A wider group of congregation and community members who volunteer for a wide range of activities** not especially related to children, young people and vulnerable adults. (Groups 4, 5 and 6 on diagram on page 23) Safer recruitment procedures are not necessary for this group, with the proviso that it is the responsibility of all church members to notify any safeguarding concerns to the safeguarding officer or member of the clergy team.

Sometimes volunteers move upwards from group to group, possibly filling a temporary vacancy that arises. We must take care that should someone move into a group that needs safer recruitment procedures to be undertaken, we follow those procedures carefully, and don't just let someone slide into a position of trust. (There is some evidence to show that this is how some abusers deliberately target positions of trust.)

*'Note: there could be a significant risk when a member of one of these groups becomes known and trusted within the church, and then allowed to move into GROUPS 1 and 2 without checks, because of the sense of trust the person has engendered. This can be understood as part of the process of grooming. This is one of the main reasons for the emphasis on safer recruitment processes in all situations.'* (page 9 of Joint Anglican / Methodist practice Guidance)

## **Our safer recruitment procedure:**

- Identify which roles will be carrying out regulated activity and those with substantial children and young people/vulnerable adult (CYP / VA) contact. Anyone recruited to these roles will need a DBS check.
- Prepare a job description (paid staff) or role description (for volunteers) outlining the duties to be undertaken.
- If appropriate, ask applicants to complete an application form. All applicants for paid posts should be asked to complete an application form. Application forms are not usually necessary for volunteer posts applied for by church members.
- The lead minister / safeguarding officer should be made aware of the application and decide if he/she should be present at any interview.
- Arrange an interview. This can be formal or informal depending on the role applied for. Safeguarding procedures should be explained during the interview. A copy of the safeguarding policy should be given, or an indication of where to find it on our website. During the interview it should be ascertained that the applicant has the appropriate Christian ethos for the work involved.
- Carry out a DBS check (if necessary) and explain that the role cannot be started until this is successful.
- If a DBS check is not being carried out, applicants should be asked to sign the SEP Volunteer Agreement - attached at Appendix 9. (This is a form where they sign to say they are not aware of any reason why they are not able to undertake the work – or they declare any matters that need to be taken into account before any employment or voluntary appointment can be confirmed.)
- The applicant should be asked for 2 references which are to be followed up.
- Appropriate training needs should be discussed. The Ecumenical Partnership will encourage all new appointments to attend a half day safeguarding training course.

*Please also see 'Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Policy for the inclusion of Volunteers with Children's work' for volunteers who do not attend worship.*

Please see appendix 5 for more details of DBS procedures and who can be checked.

## Appendix 5

### Disclosure and Barring Service criminal record checks

#### Who should be checked?

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 introduced several changes to the way criminal record checks can be carried out. New elements of this Act came into force on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013,

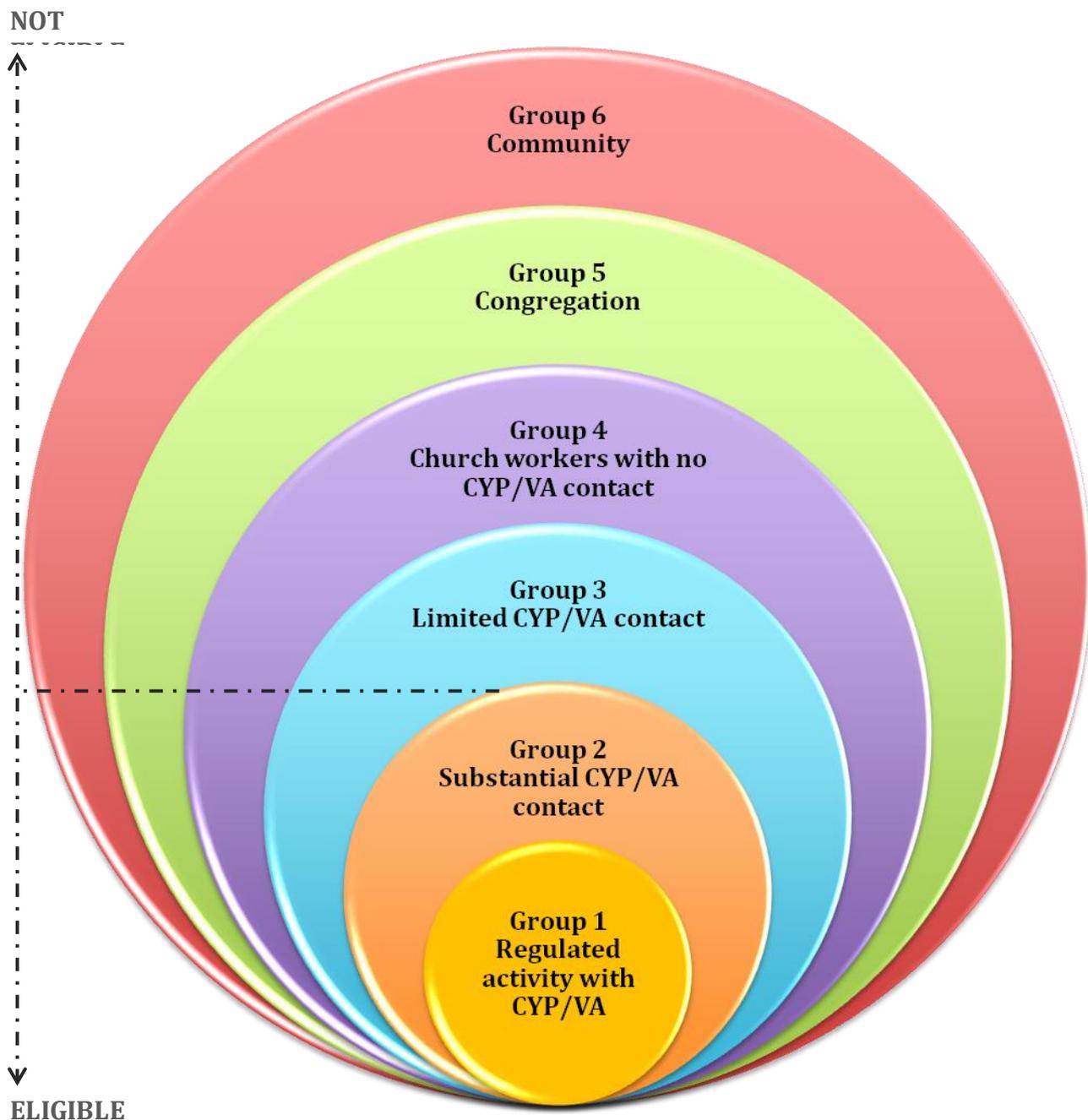
The following paragraphs are summarised from:

***'The Methodist Church in Britain Practice Guidance on carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as part of safer recruitment for England and Wales – August 2015.'* a joint statement with The Church of England.**

The following information gives guidance about which paid and volunteer posts are eligible for Disclosure and Barring Service checks. It shows that fewer posts are now eligible for checks than previously.

The following diagram shows that only those people who are in 'groups one and two' are now eligible for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The following pages give further details about which posts will be in each group. There are also details of the revised definition of 'vulnerable adults', which is much narrower than previously. (See also Appendix 3)

**ELIGIBILITY**  
**Criminal Record Check Eligibility Circles**  
**in Relation to Children, Young People (CYP) and Vulnerable Adults (VA)**



## A. Criminal Record (DBS) Check Eligibility (Circles)

<p><b>Group 1 (Yellow)</b> Those who undertake 'Regulated Activity' with children or vulnerable adults (See below for definition of 'Regulated Activity')</p> <p><b>Eligible for: Enhanced Plus</b> (with the barred list check)</p>
<p><b>Group 2 (Orange)</b> Those who carry out activities which involve substantial contact with children or vulnerable adults, but are not undertaking 'Regulated Activity'. This may be because they are being supervised. (See below for definition of 'substantial contact' and 'supervised activity')</p> <p><b>Eligible for: Enhanced check</b> (without the barred list check)</p>
<p><b>Group 3 (Blue)</b> Those who have limited contact with children and vulnerable adults</p> <p><b>Required to complete SEP Volunteer Agreement - see Appendix 9</b></p>
<p><b>Group 4 (Purple)</b> Those where it would be useful to know about any convictions but their work does not relate to children, young people or vulnerable adults.</p> <p><b>Required to complete SEP Volunteer Agreement - see Appendix 9</b></p>
<p><b>Groups 5 and 6 (Red and Green)</b> Those people within the congregation or known through community engagement</p> <p><b>Eligible for: No DBS checks</b> (but concerns may be addressed through the police or social care. Either through normal 'Working Together' arrangements or through the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (Sarah's Law) or the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) ).</p>

*Note: there could be significant risk when a member of one of these groups becomes known and trusted within the church and then is allowed to move into Group 1 or 2 without checks. This can be part of the process known as 'grooming', and is one of the most common ways in which abusers gain access to children or vulnerable adults. This is one of the main reasons for the emphasis on safer recruitment processes in all situations.*

## B. Definitions

### Regulated Activities – Adults

This is determined by the TYPE of activity undertaken, and includes those either supervising, or undertaking the activities. These include:

- Help with washing/dressing, eating/drinking, toileting
- Teaching someone to do one or more of these tasks
- Help with a person's cash, bills or shopping because of age, illness or disability
- Helping someone in the conduct of their affairs (eg Power of Attorney for someone who is not a relative or friend)
- Driving someone because of their age, illness or disability to/from places in order to receive health, personal or social care (not as family or friend, but as part of church role)

## **Regulated Activities – Children**

To meet this definition the 'Period Condition' must be met AND the person must not be supervised to the level of the definition below.

In addition those who supervise or are responsible for people undertaking work which meets these criteria are deemed to be undertaking 'regulated activity'.

The 'Period Condition' is defined as where the activity meets one or more of the following:

- Frequency – at least once a week
- Intensity – at least 4 days in a 30 day period
- Overnight – between the hours of 2am and 6am

## **Supervised Activity**

Whether or not the worker or volunteer is supervised is important. The CofE and Methodist Church define 'supervised activity' as:

*Activity where the supervisor – who has him/herself been safely recruited – is always able to see the supervised worker's actions during his/her work*

Where it is uncertain whether this level of monitoring can be maintained continuously – for example covering for holidays, or sickness of the supervisor – then the role is NOT a supervised position.

An unsupervised position falls into Group 1 regulated activity. A supervised position falls into Group 2 substantial contact.

## **Substantial Contact – Adults**

This is a complex area, but essentially includes:

- Any work which was previously defined as 'Regulated Activity' in relation to vulnerable adults
- Any position which involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of vulnerable adults

## **Substantial Contact – Children**

The threshold frequently cited, in church terms, would be more contact than the door steward or coffee maker after the service. It essentially involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of, children.

## **C. Examples of Church roles and Eligibility for DBS Checks**

*Note: this is not an exhaustive list, but is provided as a guide*

### **Group 1: Those who require an enhanced DBS check plus barred list check**

This includes:

#### **Ministers**

- All ordained ministers with authority to exercise their ministry

#### **Work with Children**

- Youth workers
- Children's workers
- Managers of youth and children's workers in Group 1 (regulated activity) roles
- Music leader where the choir or music group consists mainly of children or young people
- Steward where the role includes supervision of children or young people
- Drivers of children or young people where the driving is organized by the church

## **Work with Vulnerable Adults**

This includes:

- Pastoral visitors where the role includes direct feeding, physical care, or assistance with financial matters;
- Driving (organised by the church) to medical or social care appointments

## **Managers (Regulated Activity)**

- Those who manage workers who undertake Regulated Activity with children or adults who are vulnerable, for example:
- Sunday School Superintendent or equivalent
- the manager of a luncheon provision for adults with serious physical disabilities where help with feeding is required

## **Group 2 - substantial contact : those who are likely to require an enhanced DBS check without a barred list**

This includes:

### **Those who work alongside parents**

Those working with children in the presence of their parents, carers, or supervisors, but where on occasion the worker cares for the child without the parents present.

For example:

- family worker
- leader of parent and toddler groups
- Messy Church helper

### **Those covered by the previous definition of Regulated Activity**

- Any work which was defined as Regulated Activity relating to children within the meaning of Schedule 4 Part 1 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 before the coming into force of section 64 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 on 10th September 2012.
- Any regulated position within the meaning of Part 2 of the Criminal Justice & Court Services Act 2000 (CJCSA). (This does not include those working with 16/17 year olds on work experience.)
- Any position which otherwise involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.

### **Members of the church council or circuit meeting**

- Where the church or circuit works with children and/ or vulnerable adults, then all members of these governing bodies, as Charity Trustees, are deemed to be in Group 2 and as such are eligible for a criminal record check. A minimum of three checks should always be undertaken: the safeguarding lead person and two stewards. For the other members, the meeting can decide on what checks are appropriate. It would not normally be deemed necessary to require checks from all the trustees.

### **Substantial work with children**

- All those working with children or young people where either the requirements for Regulated Activity are not met (the period conditions -frequent, intense, overnight) or where there is sufficient supervision to move the role out of GROUP 1 Regulated Activity.

For example:

- *a volunteer youth worker whose turn on the rota is only every other week (not frequent)*
- *a crèche worker who is never alone with children and whose work is always directly supervised.*

### **Substantial work with vulnerable adults**

Those who work with vulnerable adults where the role is substantial (GROUP 2) but does not fit the criteria for Regulated Activity. This includes:

- Worship leaders
- Local preachers
- Drivers for church activities
- Pastoral visitors

*Note The Church of England and Methodist Church define **supervised activity** as:  
Activity where the supervisor – who has him/herself been safely recruited – is always able to see  
the supervised worker's actions during his/her work.*

## Appendix 6 – INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

<b><u>Location of Incident:</u></b>			
<b><u>Date of Incident:</u></b>			
<b><u>Incident reported and / or observed by:</u></b>			
<b><u>Give a detailed account of what was observed – use a continuation sheet if necessary:</u></b>			
<b><u>Incident reported to Minister/Safeguarding Officer?</u></b>	Yes	No	<b>Date:</b>
<b><u>Action taken – give a detailed account of any action that is being taken as a result of this report:</u></b>			
<b><u>Signed:</u></b>			
<b><u>Date:</u></b>			

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS**

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership is committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer and this policy aims to ensure that ex-offenders receive fair treatment throughout their experience of recruitment and employment within our organisation.

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership recognises our social responsibility and position within the community. We appreciate the role that continuity of employment can play in the rehabilitation of ex-offenders when matched to appropriate posts. A criminal record is not an automatic bar to employment with this organisation. The specific details of each ex-offender's case will be considered on an individual basis. In each instance, we will determine whether a candidate has the skills and experience for the post, taking account of the impact of the criminal record upon the needs of the post.

We will ensure that application forms for positions where Disclosures will be requested contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of a successful application, so that the applicants are aware of the situation.

To assist us in this assessment, all applicants will be asked to provide details of unspent criminal records at the initial application stage. In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, details of spent convictions will be requested from applicants for posts which are considered exempt from the Act due to the responsibilities of the role, predominantly posts which include working with children and/or vulnerable adults. The following question will be entered on all application forms where we are eligible to ask exempted questions – "Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or received a caution, reprimand or warning?"

We will at all times exercise extra vigilance and diligence when recruiting to these posts and will undertake relevant criminal conviction checks as part of our recruitment and employment action when appropriate. Where details of spent convictions are required, they will be obtained in conjunction with the applicant and member of staff via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership will adhere to the DBS Code of Practice at all times and, as required by the DBS, a copy of the Policy on the Recruitment and Employment of Ex-Offenders will be made available to all applicants and staff who undergo a criminal record check.

All information received as part of this process will be treated as highly confidential and in line with Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership's policy regarding the security, storage and retention of applicant and staff criminal records information, as required by the DBS.

Once in employment, staff should inform their line manager, in confidence, of any changes to their circumstances affecting their criminal records status, in order that the impact upon their suitability to undertake their role may be reviewed.

At interview, Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership aims to ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offence or other matter that might be relevant to the position sought and could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership will make very subject of a Criminal Record check aware of the existence of the DBS code of practice and make a copy available on request.

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

We will make the applicant aware of our policy and ensure that relevant statements are made during the application process.

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP (SEP) Policy for the Inclusion of Volunteers with Children's Work**

***This policy refers to volunteers aged 18 and over who do not attend church worship but who wish to be regularly involved in children's work run by the church.***

- All volunteers will complete the SEP Volunteers Agreement
- The names of three referees will be provided; two from the membership list of SEP and one from outside the church
- The volunteers will be interviewed by the minister of the church to ensure that the Christian ethos of the children's work will be supported by the volunteer and that the skills brought by the volunteer are fully explored and understood.
- The recommendation of the minister will then be taken to the Church Council for a final decision to be made.
- The volunteers who are in Groups 1 & 2 will not begin working with children until they have enhanced DBS clearance through the arrangements followed by the SEP.
- The volunteers will be given a copy of the SEP Safeguarding policy and be asked to confirm that they have read and understood this policy, and are willing to abide by it.
- The church has the right to limit the involvement of any adult working with children.
- Church members will always form the majority of leaders in a children's activity

*December 2016*

**APPENDIX 9**

**STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

**VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

I declare that:

\* I have never been convicted or cautioned in respect of any offence against a child or vulnerable adult

\* I have never been the subject of disciplinary action by an employer for offences against a child or vulnerable adult, or resigned ahead of such action

\* I have never had a child removed from my care, or made subject of a Child Protection Plan

\* I consent to checks being made if appropriate into my background through the Police Criminal Records Office

\* I will abide by the SEP Safeguarding Policy and the Health and Safety Policy, which I have read and understood

The following may be approached for character references if required:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Two of these referees must be church members

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 10**

### **STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP (SEP)**

#### **Written Agreement To be signed by all known sex offenders**

I understand that SEP has a duty to protect the children and young people (under 18 years of age) who are associated with its activities and that it has a duty to ensure that I do not have contact with these children. I therefore agree to the following:

- To accept the oversight of the Support Group which will be formed by the minister of the church
  - To meet with the Support Group at regular intervals - at least once every two months
  - That the Support Group will meet with my Probation Officer or any other person responsible for my crime/offender management every three months to review this agreement
  - That I will attend only those meetings agreed by the Support Group. These are:
- 
- I accept that there are certain people who will need to be given information about my convictions. This will be done on a strictly 'need to know' basis and in total confidentiality.
  - I understand that I will be made aware of those given this information and the reason why they need it.
  - I agree to inform the pastoral leadership of any other church I choose to attend of my convictions and understand that this information will be shared by the minister of the church.
  - I agree never to be alone with children and young people
  - I agree not to sit in the vicinity of children and young people when attending church services
  - I agree not to enter any area where children's activities are taking place
  - I agree not to accept any invitations of hospitality where there may be children or young people on the premises
  - I agree not to attend any house group, Bible study, fellowship or social meeting where there are any children or young people in the household or attending the meeting

I understand that if any of these conditions are broken the SEP will prohibit me from attending the church and will have a duty to inform my Probation Officer or local Police as appropriate, and to inform the Oxford Diocese Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor, and the Methodist Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

Signed:

Witnessed by:

Date:

## **APPENDIX 11**

### **STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

#### **Guidelines for the Support Group with Oversight of Convicted Sex Offenders**

***Note: if the offender's victim attends the church then the offender must be asked to join another church.***

#### **Support Group**

- The group should consist of lay members of the congregation and at least one member of the ministerial team. The group should consist of at least three people.
- Where a church has more than one service group members should be taken from each of the different services.
- There should be an initial meeting of the group without the offender being present to clarify their role and consider the potential effect the role may have on each of them, and how they will be supported.
- The group should meet with the offender to consider and sign the agreement. Both parties should be given a copy of the signed agreement and a copy should also be sent to the Diocesan Child Protection Officer and the Appointing Body's nominee for the Parish.
- The meeting should also apportion specific roles to the group members and clarify how the agreement will be fully implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- The group should meet at regular intervals without the offender for mutual support, and if necessary for advice from the Appointing Body's nominee for the Parish.
- The minister with overall pastoral responsibility for the church should be kept fully informed, and the group should agree a process for this.
- All records and communications should be dealt with confidentially.

*December 2016*

## **APPENDIX 12**

### **WHISTLEBLOWING WITHIN THE STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

The question of allegations of abuse against members of staff or volunteers is dealt with in the policy. Complaints about how a church discharges its safeguarding responsibilities should be addressed to the Church Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Coordinator or to the Minister.

Complaints about the Minister or the Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Coordinator in relation to their handling of Safeguarding issues should be addressed to the Board of Trustees of the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership.

Concerns which an individual considers cannot be raised through these channels can be directed to the appropriate denomination - see below. Although the complainant can request that their identity is withheld from those in the parish, it needs to be understood that the church cannot act on anonymous allegations or take formal action in the absence of reasonably substantiated concerns.

Those who raise issues under this provision must have a reasonable belief that it is well founded. However, appropriate action will be taken if a malicious allegation is made.

If an investigation is required, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that this is appropriate and practical in the circumstances.

The person raising complaints or concerns will be informed of the outcome subject to the normal rules on confidentiality of personal information.

Denominational Safeguarding Leads - contact details:-		
Safeguarding Lead, Diocese of Oxford, Diocesan Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford. OX2 0NB	Safeguarding Lead, Northampton Methodist District Office, Bouverie court, 6 the Lakes, Bedford Road, Northampton. NN4 7YD	Safeguarding Lead, Central Baptist Association, 60 Strathmore Avenue, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 1ST

This policy is based on legislation which applies to the mainland of England and Wales, in particular the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended) and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. It forms part of the safeguarding framework for both the Church of England and the Methodist Church. It is the first occasion where the close working relationship between the two Churches is reflected by a single joint policy. [*Note: to avoid cumbersome language, the word 'minister' is used to apply to those who are ordained within either church.*] For further information, see:

<http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding>

## **APPENDIX 13**

### **STANTONBURY ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP**

#### **WRITTEN AGREEMENT FOR CHURCH OFFICIALS**

This should be signed by all Members of the Church Council, and those holding any office in the church – Church Warden, Verger, Steward, Choir Leader, Junior Church Leader etc.

- I confirm that I have read and understood the Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Safeguarding Policy and Health & Safety Procedure and agree to abide by them.
- I also agree to attend any training that is deemed necessary for my position in relation to Safeguarding and Health and Safety.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_