

# A SIMPLIFIED GUIDE



Safeguarding is about the actions the Church takes to create safe spaces and to promote a safer culture. This means the Church will:

- promote the welfare of children, young people and adults
- work to prevent abuse from occurring
- seek to protect and respond well to those who have been abused.

We will take care to identify where a person may pose a risk to others, and offer support to them while taking steps to reduce such risks.

The Methodist Church affirms that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and everyone associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults has a role to play in this. They are supported by consistent policies promoting good practice across the whole Church, available at: **[methodist.org.uk/safeguarding](https://methodist.org.uk/safeguarding)**

The Church and its individual members, officers and employees will undertake all appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment and practise fully and positively Christ's ministry towards children, young people and adults who are vulnerable, responding sensitively and compassionately to help keep them safe from harm.

## **What is a safeguarding concern?**

Standing Order 236(3) states:

A safeguarding concern exists where:

- (i) the words, actions or behaviour of any person involved in the life of the Church may cause or may have caused children, young people or vulnerable adults to be abused, harmed or neglected;
- (ii) ... a person involved in the life of the Church has been convicted of or has received a simple or conditional caution in respect of an offence ... or
- (iii) a member of the Methodist Church may be failing or may have failed to exercise his or her responsibilities in respect of the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults in the Church context.

## **What should someone do if they have a safeguarding concern?**

When someone becomes aware of a safeguarding concern in their local church, circuit or district, they must:

1. Act on the concern in accordance with the Methodist Church's safeguarding policies and practice guidance.
2. Refer the concern to the Church Safeguarding Officer. The District Safeguarding Officer should be informed immediately and they can offer support and guidance.
3. Where necessary, the District Safeguarding Officer will inform the statutory agencies (social care or the police).
4. The referral should be made with the consent of the person who is the subject of the concern, unless this would place them or others at risk of further harm.
5. It is important that these matters are dealt with completely confidentially.

For further information, see Standing Orders 236(3) and 010(2).

For up-to-date safeguarding information, see: **[methodist.org.uk/safeguarding](https://methodist.org.uk/safeguarding)**

This is part of a series of leaflets summarising the safeguarding provisions in Methodist Church Standing Orders and *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church*. They are not intended to replace the Standing Orders referenced. If you are unclear about their interpretation, please seek advice from the Connexional Safeguarding Team or the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice.

The other leaflets in the Safeguarding Standing Orders series are:

- The Safeguarding Committee
- Duty to Obtain Disclosures
- The Church and Public Protection
- Safeguarding and Suspensions
- Safeguarding and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act



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