

**REPORT TO THE METHODIST COUNCIL  
MEETING TO BE HELD ON 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010**

**Basic Information**

<b>Title</b>	Recruiting Safely - for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults
<b>Contact Name and Details</b>	Pearl Luxon Safeguarding Adviser
<b>Status of Paper</b>	Draft – for Conference
<b>Action Required</b>	Information and feedback – it will be Conference policy and good practice guidance
<b>Draft Resolution</b>	The Methodist Council approves the report for presentation to the Conference
<b>Alternative Options to Consider, if Any</b>	None – this has legal, statutory good practice, insurance and duty of care implications.

**Summary of Content**

<b>Subject and Aims</b>	This document covers summary of Methodist policy on Safer Recruitment – updated good practice and mandatory requirements with regard to Vetting and Barring (VBS) legislation in England and Wales and at present a brief account of what is required in Scotland.
<b>Main Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and selection</li> <li>• Vetting and checking</li> <li>• Procedures for the above</li> <li>• Safer recruitment practice</li> <li>• Referrals to barring authorities (listing)</li> <li>• Responsibilities of church bodies</li> <li>• Appendices and Form</li> </ul>
<b>Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Recruitment is something that has been in our Safeguarding Policy since 1993. Work also being done on the CofE House of Bishop’s policy and guidance simultaneously. These need updating in line with both developments on CRB and Vetting and Barring.</li> <li>• <i>Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</i> followed the Bichard Inquiry into the murders at Soham</li> <li>• Children’s Workforce Development Council – <i>Recruiting Safely</i></li> <li>• Independent Safeguarding Authority and VBS implementation stakeholder briefings with DCSF, Home Office and DH</li> <li>• The Criminal Records Bureau – who will administer the scheme in conjunction with our Registered Body - Churches’ Agency for Safeguarding (CAS)</li> <li>• All other mainstream Churches are developing this kind of policy too.</li> </ul> <p><i>List of documents and web sites below</i></p>
<b>Consultations</b>	At this stage it has been sent to a scrutiny group (approx 6) across a range of Districts and also members of Legal Group (the staff reference group for Safeguarding) including Gareth Powell and Development and Personnel staff.

### **Summary of Impact**

**(Note, if appropriate, as possible, likely or confirmed. If detailed explanation is necessary, include this in the full paper, clearly identified.)**

<b>Standing Orders</b>	Law and Polity are aware of this and Pearl Luxon is working with Jim Booth on the changes.
<b>Faith and Order</b>	<i>Not relevant here</i> – Policy statement and theology will come with the main Safeguarding handbooks – children and vulnerable adults.
<b>Financial</b>	The vetting and barring changes have financial implications but there is no choice on this. The guidance on good practice has
<b>Personnel</b>	This is all about personnel issues from the volunteer who gives an hour each week in a local church to employees and ministers. Connexional Development and Personnel cluster have been consulted about this.
<b>Legal</b>	The vetting and barring legislation makes mandatory requirements upon the church for the first time. The sanctions are also criminal law. Referral to the vetting and barring authorities in each legislature are also mandatory.
<b>Wider Connexional</b>	All levels will be affected all Districts. Channel Islands and the Isle of Man will be least affected in relation only to the vetting and barring legislation, which as yet is not being adopted.
<b>External (e.g. ecumenical)</b>	We have liaised with government implementation teams, ISA and CRB, other Churches, CAS and many other bodies and stakeholders.
<b>Risk</b>	Risks are in not implementing this and the 'hidden' costs of implementing it with more volunteer time and record keeping issues.

### **Websites and documents:**

- Safeguarding on the web – [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) - under *Church Life and Recruitment*
- Independent Safeguarding Authority - <http://www.isa-gov.org.uk/>
- Every Child Matters (ECM) – Safer Recruitment  
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/stayingsafe/recruitment/>
- ECM – Vetting and Barring -

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/safeguarding/independentsafeguardingauthority/>

- CWDC Recruiting Safely  
<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment/resources>
- Safer Working Practices - <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/search/IG00311/>
- 'Safeguarding' 2003 MPH
- 'Protecting All God's Children' House of Bishop's policy and guidance CHP 2004
- PVG Act 2007 [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2007/asp\\_20070014\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2007/asp_20070014_en_1)
- PVG Scheme Guidance/Statutory Instruments consultations:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation/Consultation09>

**'RECRUITING SAFELY'**  
**- POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR GOOD PRACTICE**  
**OF THE METHODIST CHURCH OF GB**

***A Statement of Safeguarding Principles***

*These are the principles for safeguarding children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. We hope they will soon be jointly agreed between the Methodist Church and the Church of England and also set the ethos for all our policy and guidance documents. If endorsed they will also introduce and guide the revision of 'Safeguarding children and young people' handbook and the writing of the new 'Safeguarding vulnerable adults' handbook. Each of those subsequent documents will contain a full theology underpinning the policy and guidance.*

**Preamble**

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 as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as filled with the Holy Spirit and therefore to protect them from harm.

**Principles**

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and adults
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults
- 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 with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/ membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

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 seek to offer informed pastoral care with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry.

We will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the proper authorities of 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 statute, guidance and recognised good practice.

## Safer Recruitment

**Safer recruitment of those people who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is an aim or principle implicit within the above, and is explicit within the second paragraph**

*'We will carefully select, train and supervise all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/ membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.'*

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### **11. Assessment of Risk (*see also section 5 h) and i)*)**

### **12. Other essential work**

### **13. Resolutions of Council/ Conference**

### **14. Appendices [*including draft FORMS*]**

*The sections of **Safeguarding 2003** which are amended here include:*

- Appointments p12 – 14*
- Disclosures p15 – 19*
- Safe From Harm p31f*
- The list of offences p 42 and 43*
- Recruitment of offenders guidance – Methodist Council Personnel documents for each kind of role posted on the Methodist web site.*
- And all other relevant information on the Methodist web site.*
- All sections on the disclosure application process*

<sup>1</sup> Or 'blemished' disclosures, i.e. disclosure certificates with offence information or other matters which may affect someone's suitability for a particular role.

## **1. Introduction**

Since our first Methodist Safeguarding handbook was published - based upon the Home Office *Safe from Harm* code of good practice issued in 1993 for the voluntary sector -, there have been strong elements of safer recruitment in our policy and guidance. Safer recruitment principles and procedures have now been expanded upon and enshrined in statutory guidance following the Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland from 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* (SVG) began an implementation programme. This legislation followed the Bichard enquiry which reported on the Soham murders in 2004. Lord Bichard recommended among other things that there be a register of all those who worked with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The scheme is now referred to as the 'Vetting and Barring Scheme'.

Following Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 implementation in stages in 2010 it will become mandatory for all new employees, appointees and volunteers for roles in certain activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults (as defined by the Act) to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority, in England and Wales. There will also be mandatory requirements for employers including voluntary bodies and churches for the first time.

Some mandatory requirements began in Scotland, through the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003. The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (PVG) is also a response to the Soham enquiry and brings about new requirements with regard to vulnerable adults and is similar to the scheme in England and Wales. These two Acts are dealt with separately in the detail of this document.

The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and Working Together 2006, along with the more recent vetting and barring legislation mark significant developments in 'safer recruitment' They bring significant consequences for the Church, as for every other organisation involved in work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. There will be new legal duties for many organisations in the UK. The implications for the Connexion with other jurisdictions (including the Crown dependencies) and especially with regard to Scotland where another version of the scheme is immanent need very careful consideration.

The continuing development of best practice in all aspects of safeguarding within the Methodist Church of Great Britain is essential. The development of Recruiting Safely as a separate document has become essential to cover both areas of safeguarding concern, namely our Safeguarding children policy and as a necessary first step to a safeguarding vulnerable adults policy and guidance. It was the subject of a resolution to Conference in 2009. The *Safeguarding 2003* (good practice for work with children and young people) handbook is being updated for Conference 2010.

## **2. Recruiting Safely – Methodist Policy**

2.1 The Methodist church subscribes to the highest standards of recruitment in all its work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding principles for the voluntary sector were first enshrined in Home Office guidance 'Safe from

Harm' which included 13 points for work with children. In addition other best practice documents aimed at the voluntary sector apply namely, 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People', DCSF 2007 and Children's Workforce Development Council document 'Recruiting Safely' 2009. Scotland has also experienced parallel developments.

- 2.2 It has been recognised in the statutory sector and by the departments implementing Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (England and Wales) and Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act 2007 (by the Scottish Executive), that safer recruitment is a greater task than simply barring lists or criminal record checks concerning unsuitability. Employers and voluntary organisations need to *'develop and apply robust recruitment procedures, including checking identity, qualifications and references and enquiring into career history'*.  
Vetting and Barring guidance (England and Wales), October 2009 p3

Since the 2006 Act brought together some of the safer recruitment requirements for *both* children *and* vulnerable adults we have in this Recruiting Safely document a combined policy and guidance for all work with vulnerable groups in the Methodist Church.

- 2.3 The suitability and safety of someone to work with vulnerable groups should not be taken for granted based simply on criminal disclosure checks or registration with a vetting and barring scheme, even though they may have been be 'cleared'. The Methodist Church therefore sets out here a comprehensive policy for safer recruitment. The Methodist Church reserves the right not to appoint or to remove from work within the principles of due process those who are unsuitable or who are found to be not suitable for such important work.
- 2.4 Selection procedures alone are not the only aspects of Safer Recruitment. In order for an organisation to be safer staff and volunteers need to understand their roles and responsibilities. They need to be trained and equipped, supported and enabled to fulfil the responsibilities expected of them. Safer Recruitment policies include the careful introduction and implementation of complaints and grievance procedures for all those who work in an organisation.
- 2.5 Therefore essential principles in Safer Recruitment concern the care taken not only in recruitment, but in the training and support of staff at all levels. These will directly impact upon the safety of those for whom they care, including all vulnerable people.
- 2.6 The principles of safer recruitment best practice summarised here are taken and adapted from 'Recruiting Safely', CWDC, 2009 and Safe from Harm<sup>2</sup> These principles include work with vulnerable adults. They will be expanded further in the guidance section: -
- i) Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children, young people (under 18) and vulnerable adults including recruitment procedures.
  - ii) Apply existing procedures for protecting children and all vulnerable people to all paid staff and volunteers.

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<sup>2</sup> While this has not been amended update or withdrawn and is therefore current it is no longer available from Home Office sources.

- iii) Find out whether the applicant has any convictions for criminal offences against children, young people (under 18) or vulnerable adults.
- iv) Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
- v) Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles. (*Leaders and helpers should have a brief written description of their task and responsibility*)
- vi) Use supervision as a means of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults.  
(*Leaders and helpers should meet regularly to plan and review activities. Leaders should find opportunities for observing those for whom they are responsible as they work with children and young people.*)
- vii) Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.  
(*See the Safeguarding guidelines issued by the Methodist Church and updated on the web site*)
- viii) Regardless of the size or nature of your organisation, a consistently applied and robust process is always needed to ensure the safest levels of staff recruitment.
- ix) Volunteers make up a huge part of the children's workforce and are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults. If an organisation is actively seeking volunteers and is considering candidates about whom it knows little, it should adopt the same recruitment measures as it would for paid staff.
- x) Where an organisation approaches a person who is well known to them to take on a particular role, a shorter procedure can be adopted<sup>3</sup>.

### **3. Procedures - Recruitment and Selection<sup>4</sup>**

#### **3.1 Volunteers**

Volunteers (unpaid) make up a huge part of the children's workforce and are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults. Churches actively seeking volunteers and considering candidates about whom it knows little, should adopt the same recruitment measures as it would for paid staff.

Where an organisation approaches a person/ is approached by someone who is well known to them to take on a particular voluntary role, a shorter procedure may be adopted. This includes *as a minimum* gaining references, checking to make sure others in the community have no concerns and can make a positive recommendation, conducting an informal interview to be clear about the person's suitability and conducting appropriate vetting.

#### **3.2 Recruitment and selection procedures**

The following procedures apply to all roles, whether paid or voluntary, office holders (appointees) including candidates for ministry or all employed roles and all churches, church organisations and parts of the Methodist Connexion, where there is work for or with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

<sup>3</sup> Provided minimum standards are still met, see the guidance section on this.

<sup>4</sup> These procedures have been adapted from Recruiting Safely – Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) 2009.

- i) Plan the process and decide who will be involved at each stage (planning, advertising, short-listing, interview panel) making sure everyone knows their role in the process.
- ii) Write a job description for paid posts or role outline for volunteers (*see Form 1 part 2 page...*) listing what the post holder is expected to do, what or whom they are responsible for and who is responsible for supervising and managing them
- iii) Write a person specification listing essential criteria and desirable criteria
- iv) Include the Methodist Statement of Safeguarding Principles in information about the job information pack to emphasise how important Safeguarding is to the Church and local policy and procedures.
- v) Ensure all applicants for paid roles complete an application form and volunteers a registration form including a Confidential Declaration (*Sample declaration in Appendix 5 Forms page...*)
- vi) Create a shortlist based upon applicants and candidates ability to meet the criteria
- vii) Where possible obtain written references from all short-listed applicants before interviewing them. In all cases references should be obtained before entering into a contract of employment with any applicant or undertaking to train any candidate. (*A sample reference form in Appendix 5 on page...*) References should be based upon the candidate's ability to undertake the role and their motivation for doing so.
- viii) Ensure that any discrepancies or gaps within the application/ registration form.
- ix) Collaborate within the appointing panel on the questions to be asked or any exercises or presentations to be given.
- x) Interview applicants and candidates against agreed selection criteria using a measurable approach/ consistent scoring system.
- xi) Confirm the identity of every applicant and relevant certificates of qualification or certificates of attendance at courses undertaken. This may be combined with checking their 'right to work' in the UK status.
- xii) Ensure that all candidates understand that appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of all appropriate checks including disclosure checks and registration or membership of a vetting scheme.
- xiii) Complete appropriate vetting procedures before you allow them to work.
- xiv) Plan the probationary period and subsequent reviews including assessing and planning for relevant essential training.
- xv) Ensure that safer working practices and safeguarding procedures are both part of the induction, probationary and annual reviews.

### **3.3 The Confidential Declaration**

Those applying for any appointments lay or ordained, paid or voluntary should complete a confidential declaration and submit it in a sealed envelope with their application (*see Forms in Appendix 5, page..*). The declarations will be read by the chair of any appointment panel or the minister (in the case of local volunteer appointments) and if it is satisfactory, the appointment can be made subject to satisfactory Vetting procedures as required. A false or incomplete confidential declaration could be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

Any matters declared on the Confidential Declaration should be sent to the Connexional Safeguarding Adviser so that this may inform any decision over the vetting/ disclosure information.

It is the duty of the minister or the appointment panel to check whether the matters declared are relevant to the application by consulting with the District Safeguarding coordinator, the Connexional Adviser, or statutory agencies as appropriate and in certain circumstances a formal individual risk assessment will be considered.

***The ISA registration/ PVG membership should precede any appointment, since it may be illegal to appoint a person.***

***N.B. It will be illegal in England and Wales for all new roles from July 2010.***

### **3.4 Overseas applicants and candidates**

Volunteers from overseas or overseas applicants and candidates should also be subject to the appropriate checks as applied to all.

### **3.5 Occasional/ one off helpers**

Where a volunteer's role will be a one-off, such as accompanying staff and children on a day outing or helping at an event (e.g. a holiday club), these measures would be unnecessary provided that the person is known to the organisation and is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children.

### **3.6 Contractors, agency staff or other sources of recruitment**

If volunteers are to be recruited by another organisation, e.g. for a joint or ecumenical event, a District or Connexional event, suitable assurances should be obtained from the 'home' or organisation who first recruited them that the person has been recruited and vetted in line with this guidance *and* that they were recruited and vetted for similar work<sup>5</sup>.

The same enquiries should be made of any contractor you use to provide services that give rise to their staff having contact with children, including vetting procedures and relevant information found arising from these procedures.

### **3.7 Participation**

Involving children, young people or vulnerable adults (as relevant to the role) in the recruitment and selection process in some way, or observing short-listed candidates' interaction with them is common and recognised as good practice. There are different ways you could do this. For example, you may wish to ask candidates to participate in specific activities or meet some of the children and young people the post-holder is likely to have contact with and, where possible, seek their views. You may also wish children and young people to show short-listed candidates around the establishment with an appropriate member of staff.

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<sup>5</sup> Children and young people's work or vulnerable adults work. If recruited for one vulnerable group, they may not be suitable for the other.

#### 4. Procedures - Vetting and checking in England and Wales

This section is based on new vetting and barring legislation (VBS), disclosure legislation etc

##### 4.1 An introduction to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

The ISA is a non-departmental public body which is responsible for all the barring decisions of the new VBS. From November 2010, if you are an organisation working with children you must check the ISA registration status of all new potential recruits prior to appointment (see paragraph 3.21). This will determine whether or not you can employ them (or take them on as volunteers) and may affect what activities they can undertake for your organisation.

The ISA divides work with children into two categories, known as 'controlled' and 'regulated' activities. It is only for those in regulated activities that registration will be required from November 2010; controlled activity posts will be eligible for registration from 2014, but this category does not apply to the Voluntary or Faith Sectors.

The VBS scheme aims to avoid harm or risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults within specific contexts (called 'regulated activities') and achieves this by preventing those deemed unsuitable to work from gaining access via their work.

All those working with children and young people or vulnerable adults will be required to be registered with the scheme in order to be able to take up such roles, or within 5 years from implementation continuing in their role. This is a legal obligation. From the relevant implementation dates within the 5-year 'roll out' it will be a criminal offence to employ anyone in a regulated activity who is not registered.

##### 4.2 The Requirements for Regulated Activities

Although churches and other faith communities are voluntary organisations they will all have a *new* legal duty to ensure that those working with children or vulnerable adults are not known to be unsuitable for this work.

Regulated activities are defined as:

- i) Any activity of a **specified nature** that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults *frequently, intensively or overnight*.
  - *specified nature*: teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment and transportation.
  - *frequently*: regularly, once a week or more often
  - *intensively*: 4 days or more in a 30 day period
  - *overnight*: any time between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.

***[N.B. The Government has not yet finalised its guidance on the detailed operation of the scheme.]***

- ii) Any activity allowing contact with children or vulnerable adults that is in a *specified place* frequently or intensively.
  - *specified place*: schools, children's homes, hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes.
- iii) Any activity that involves people in certain *defined positions* of responsibility.

- *defined position*: such positions include school governor and trustee of certain charities.

iv) Activity which involves on a *regular* basis the *day to day management or supervision* of people carrying out activity of a specified nature or in a specified place.

### **4.3 The Barred lists**

The three barring lists (POCA, POVA and List 99) have been replaced by two new barred lists administered by the ISA rather than several government departments. These lists apply to the full range of regulated and controlled activities, further enhancing protection of children and vulnerable adults. The eligibility criteria for enhanced CRB checks have been extended to include anyone working in a regulated position. A check of the relevant list is included in any enhanced disclosure for work with children or vulnerable adults.

### **4.4 Criminal penalties**

There are criminal penalties for barred individuals who seek or undertake work with vulnerable groups and for employers who knowingly take them on.

### **4.5 Starting in July 2010:**

- Newly appointed staff and volunteers and those who currently work with children and are changing jobs will be able to become ISA registered. So as not to disrupt normal recruitment over the traditionally busy summer period the requirement will not become compulsory until November 2010. Those who currently work with vulnerable groups but are staying in their current role will not have to become registered until later in the five year transitional period.
- Individuals will be able to apply for ISA registration and a CRB check (including an ISA check) on one new application form.
- When a person becomes ISA registered they will be continuously monitored and their status reassessed against any new information which may come to light.

### **4.6 From November 2010**

- Newly appointed staff and volunteers and those who currently work with children and are changing jobs, must register with the ISA before they can start work.
- Employers and voluntary organisations working with children and vulnerable adults cannot recruit workers who are not ISA registered.
- There will be criminal penalties for people who undertake work in a regulated activity without being registered and for employers that allow people to undertake regulated or controlled activity without checking their registration status.

### **4.7 From April 2011**

- Existing employees and volunteers with no CRB check must apply for ISA registration.
- All existing employees and volunteers with CRB checks will also need to have registered with the VBS by July 2015, starting with staff whose CRB checks are the oldest, according to a 'roll out' programme to be announced.

#### **4.8 How ISA registration complements CRB checks (England and Wales only)**

Criminal Records Bureau certificates will still be required in order for a decision as to suitability for a particular role in the church to be ascertained. The ISA registration certificate will simply show whether someone is suitable based upon the fact they are not barred from the relevant workforce and is one stage in the recruitment process. The ISA will bar unsuitable people based upon a range of relevant, tested information and evidence. They will also risk assess this. Registration, that is, where someone is not barred will be available in a short period of around 7 days from CRB receiving the application. The CRB Disclosure will necessarily take longer, around the same period as currently.

Suitability for a particular role is also based upon a wide range of other recruitment checks and CRB checks which potentially show a wider criminal history will still need to be part of this assessment. There is a wide range of criminal offences which do not lead to barring but which may be relevant to an individual's proposed role, e.g. offences of drink driving, drug abuse or violence to adults.

#### **4.9 Requirements for CRB checks**

From October 2009 all organisations working with children should obtain an enhanced CRB disclosure for anyone appointed to a post within the definition of 'regulated activity' (see 4 b)) including people from overseas. (For some organisations this will already be a legal requirement or needed to comply with regulatory requirements). This also applies to existing employees/ volunteers who move from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is. Standard level CRB disclosures will continue to be available from this date but will not give detail as to whether an individual is listed on either the children's or adults' barred lists. From June 2010 the Enhanced CRB disclosure and ISA registration processes will be accessed through a single application process.

It will still be advisable to obtain CRB checks for some positions where the applicant is already ISA registered, because some convictions (e.g. for driving offences, where the role involves driving children or vulnerable adults, or other alcohol or drugs and some more minor violent offences) might make a person unsuitable for a position even if they did not lead to an ISA bar. ISA registration is for life. This is particularly important if the person is not known to the Church, has not had a Disclosure before via the Registered Body for the Church (Churches' Agency for Safeguarding), or if there is a change in role or responsibility (children/ vulnerable adults or voluntary/ paid).

#### **4.10 Criminal Records Bureau for overseas applicants and candidates**

CRB disclosures and ISA registration (when implemented) must be completed on overseas staff. In addition, wherever possible criminal records information (or certificates of good conduct) should be sought from countries where individuals have worked or lived.

#### **4.11 Method for obtaining a CRB certificate and ISA Registration**

Applying for ISA registration will be done by submitting a combined application form through Churches' Agency for Safeguarding (CAS), to the CRB. CAS is the Registered Body for the Methodist Church. There are no administration charges for churches, circuits and districts or any organisation applying from within the Methodist Connexion.

New packs for applications will be available from June 2010 from Methodist Publishing provided the CRB supply these to CAS in sufficient time. There will be a small charge for these packs to cover printing of accompanying CAS forms, CRB/CAS application guidance and also postage.

Both CAS and CRB will need to ensure that the applicant's identity is verified in the same way as for a CRB check. Verifiers are responsible for carrying out identity checks to the best of their ability.

#### **4.12 Fees for ISA registration and CRB checks**

There is a one-off ISA registration fee of £64 for paid employees. There is no fee for volunteers. Ministers' fees will be paid centrally, together with those of ministers who are about to enter training and other Connexionally appointed staff. Ministers in training are deemed to be benefitting from training (and are therefore not considered to be volunteers while they are benefitting from subsidised vocational training).

Those who apply for ISA registration as volunteers and subsequently as paid staff may subsequently be invoiced for the fee later. It is our intention that unless the registration as a volunteer is urgent, that someone who also requires this for their paid employment or appointments should register in this role **before** they do so for volunteer status.

### **5. Vetting and barring procedures (*likely*) for both schemes – in England, Wales and Scotland.**

#### **5.1 Occasional staff and 'one off' helpers**

It is not necessary to obtain a CRB disclosure for visitors who will only have contact with children on an ad hoc or irregular basis for short periods of time provided they do not fall within the definition of regulated activity because of the frequency or intensity of their activity (see 4 b)). However, it is good practice to ensure that your visitors sign in and out and are escorted whilst on the premises by a member of staff or appropriately vetted volunteer.

Examples of people who do not need to apply for a criminal record disclosure include:

- Visitors who have business with the management, trustees or other staff or who have brief contact with children with a member of staff present.
- Visitors or contractors who come on site only to carry out emergency repairs or service equipment and who would not be expected to be left unsupervised on premises.
- Volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and children on one off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays, or who only help at specific one-off events e.g. sports days, fêtes, open days.
- People who are on site before or after the operating hours of a *regulated activity* and when children are not present, e.g. local groups who hire premises for community or leisure activities, contract cleaners who only come in after children have gone home, or before they arrive.

## 5.2 Students on Placement

When offering student placements for professional or vocational training where there is a practice placement element, you should ensure that an enhanced disclosure is applied for when a place on the programme has been accepted, so that disclosures are received prior to the trainee commencing the work-based elements of their training. However, organisations working with children have discretion to allow an individual to begin the work-based elements pending receipt of the disclosure, subject to the same considerations on overseas students and workers. Where this is necessary, you will need to make sure that the trainee is appropriately supervised in the placement location.

## 5.3 Overseas applicants and candidates

- i) For overseas candidates who have not previously lived in the UK and UK candidates who have lived abroad for significant periods, you should make an additional check by obtaining a certificate of good conduct from the relevant embassy or police force, where that is available, as well as obtaining an enhanced disclosure. The CRB website gives information about the availability and coverage of these certificates. The level of information they contain varies from country to country. Some are complete extracts from the criminal record; others are partial.
- ii) Where an applicant is from or has lived in a country where criminal record checks cannot be made for child protection purposes, or is a refugee with leave to remain in the UK and has no means of obtaining relevant information, you must take extra care in taking up references and carrying out other background checks. For example, additional references should be sought and references followed up by phone as well as letter.
- iii) They should apply for scheme membership/ registration of vetting schemes before arriving to take up pre-arranged work or apply once they arrive. They should not start work until registration or membership of the relevant vetting scheme is confirmed.

## 5.4 Trustees, directors and others in governance roles

If your organisation comes within the definition of regulated activity and has people appointed as trustees, directors or others in governance and management positions you should ask them to obtain an enhanced disclosure. In addition, anyone already in such a post whose behaviour is giving cause for concern should be asked to obtain an enhanced disclosure. All others should be asked to sign a declaration confirming their suitability to fulfil the role.

## 5.5 Responsibilities of applicants – re. ISA Registration/ PVG Membership

It is the employee's (volunteer or paid) responsibility to obtain registration/ membership when this is required. However, the voluntary sector, including the churches, recognise the importance of encouraging and enabling volunteers and appointees as far as possible with this process. PVG membership/ ISA registration is potentially for life; however there will be a mechanism for de-registering for someone who wishes this.

**It will be illegal for someone to work without registration if they are new in post or once the period for the roll out has been completed.** Under this scheme it is a criminal offence for someone who is barred from working with children, young people or vulnerable adults to apply for such work as a volunteer or employee.

## **5.6 Selection of people for ordained Ministry**

It is the practice of the Methodist Church to require criminal records checks prior to being placed in a probationer role, for both deacons and presbyters. In England and Wales the enhanced disclosure checks will continue to be needed on a five yearly basis thereafter. On the first occasion the candidate will also be required to register with the ISA/ PVG if they are not already registered/ are members.

There are some (but very few) clergy positions which *may* not be eligible for ISA registration or Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure. Prison and hospital ministry work is included in the Vetting and Barring scheme (see paragraph 5 below), as is any position where management, training or supervision of those who work with children, vulnerable adults occurs as part of their duties. The Methodist Church policy, however, remains that **all** presbyters and deacons require a full CRB check and therefore the same should apply with regard to ISA registration.

Refusal or failure to do so will be regarded as a disciplinary matter. References should always be taken up, including one from previous employment.

## **5.7 Responsibilities of employers – re. ISA Registration/ PVG Membership**

'Employer' refers to those who recruit employees or volunteers. Under the VBS and PVG legislation it will both be illegal to employ someone who has been barred and not to carry out checks whether they have been barred by requiring registration/membership of each person who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The system for updating employers will mean that the employer will need to ensure that the applicant's application via the Registered Body (RB) clearly states who is employing them and contact details. Subsequently, it will be possible to check ISA registration or PVG membership status on line and to register an interest for updating. The updating will only cover a person's barred status, and if the individual seeks a new position involving regulated activity a new enhanced disclosure will be required.

## **5.8 Unclear<sup>6</sup> disclosures/ scheme membership certificates and Barring or Auto-barring**

Certain convictions will, as from the date VBS schemes began to take barring decisions (20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 for the ISA), result in an automatic bar on the individual working with children and/or vulnerable adults. In some cases the individual will be entitled to make representations before the final decision to bar is made.

Where there are less serious convictions and/or other relevant information, ISA and Disclosure Scotland (DS) will operate a 'structured judgement process' (similar to a risk assessment) whereby they will assess the risk posed by the individual and then make a decision whether or not to bar. In such cases there is a right of representation. Offences committed up to this date, may result in barring under the ISA/ DS's discretionary powers, but will not be auto-barred. For

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<sup>6</sup> Or 'blemished' disclosures, i.e. disclosure certificates with offence information or other matters which may affect someone's suitability for a particular role.

people who are not barred, who will be the great majority, it will remain the employer's duty to assess the relevance of any convictions, cautions or other information supplied.

### **5.9 Handling disclosure and barring information** (see also Section 11 – Risk assessment)

The Methodist Church handles all unclear disclosures through a central process, whereby the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding is obliged to share the information with the Connexional Safeguarding Adviser. Recommendations are made by the Safeguarding Adviser working with suitable senior staff in the Connexional team on minor matters and in the case of more serious matters and 'soft information' the Connexional Safeguarding Advisor uses the Safeguarding Advisory Panel (SAP).

The work of the SAP is described in CPD Standing Orders 232 and 010 (5) (the latter being on Appeals against SO010). The protocols for handling disclosures are described in brief form in the Recruitment of Offenders policies of the Methodist Church approved by Methodist Council in 2004 which are reviewed in the light of new legislation and best practice. The preparation of professional and *where possible* independent risk assessments greatly assists the work of the SAP on the more serious or difficult disclosure matters such as 'soft information' following investigations where no prosecution has been brought. Further details on the protocol for handling disclosures, including the commissioning of risk assessments are also in Appendix 4.

Information that is part of a CRB disclosure must be treated as confidential. It is an offence for CRB disclosure information to be passed to anyone who does not need it in the course of their duties. The disclosure information must be kept in a secure place and must be destroyed, by secure means, as soon as it is no longer needed (for regulated services this is often the date of the next inspection). This is usually six months after receipt.

Where a CRB disclosure includes serious criminal offences, offences that impact upon and are relevant to their role or non-conviction information or information that the person did not disclose with their application ('soft information'), The Methodist Church will often need to consider whether to withdraw the conditional offer of appointment. Where the individual has already started work pending receipt of the disclosure the church must also consider suspending the person until the matter is resolved.

Where the Connexional Safeguarding Officer recommends or advises suspension or other restrictions that recommendation of advice should normally be followed.

In most cases where a volunteer has an unclear disclosure the local minister and/or Superintendent is the only person locally who will know of these matters and they will assist in the risk assessment. In other cases, where an employee or occasionally a minister has an unclear disclosure a small but wider group of people need to know, including the Chair of District, the District Safeguarding coordinator and others who supervise or manage the person. In some serious cases where it is necessary to assess risk the District group or an professional person from a neighbouring District (where someone suitably qualified is available) will be needed to make a written report on the risk someone poses.

Guidance has been developed and is available on the commissioning and standards of risk assessment.

### **5.10 Local records**

The Churches' Agency for Safeguarding will send to local church ministers or superintendents letters indicating that a Disclosure is clear. Letters from CAS following a simple assessment by the Connexional Safeguarding Advisor on unclear disclosures, where the person is not unsuitable on the basis of these matters, will also be sent by CAS. These letters should be kept securely and a register of all those who have been cleared and dates, including names of those ISA registered or on PVG membership developed. These records should be kept by the minister with pastoral charge, the Church Council Secretary or a suitable administrator or other suitable person, as designated by the appointing body, usually the Church Council. They will need to be kept indefinitely.

Each church should also have a record of the following people:

- All staff who are appointed to work on behalf of the church and church council including all volunteers, whether they are members of the church or not.
- All volunteers or paid staff who are appointed by another church but may help out or work on a joint project.
- Where possible any staff who are employed by a contractor regularly working on site, such as when there is building work or a special project taking more than a few days.
- The record should also include all others who have been chosen to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, trustees who also work as volunteers within the establishment and people brought in to provide additional care or support for children and young people on a sessional basis but who are not staff members, e.g. activities coordinators, coaches, preachers from other churches or drama workers.

## **6. Procedures – Vetting and checking in Scotland**

### **6.1 A Summary**

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act (Scotland) (PVG) has a different timetable to the VBS scheme in England and Wales. The aim of the scheme is the same as in England and Wales. The ethos, terminology and methods are somewhat different. It is due to start late 2010 for new applicants and rolled out over 3 years from 2011 for existing workers (timeline, implementation dates to be confirmed) in a phased programme.

The Scheme aims to ensure that those who carry out certain activities with children and protected adults through paid or unpaid regulated work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour. The guidance is ancillary to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act (Scotland) 2007 (PVG). The Scheme replaces previous Scottish disclosure arrangements under the Police Act 1997 and children's list under the Protection of Children Act 2003 and is administered by Disclosure Scotland. The Central Registered Body Scotland (CRBS) continues to handle all applications for membership of the scheme with the Methodist Church accessing this through Churches Agency for Safeguarding as has been the case for criminal record checks sought from Disclosure Scotland.

The PVG Scheme aims to cover the same ground as SVG/VBS in the rest of the UK, however there are a number of differences (a) In Scotland, it is not compulsory for a non-barred person to be registered with the PVG Scheme in order to undertake regulated work with children or protected adults, while in the rest of the UK, registration with the ISA is compulsory for such activity. (b) PVG Scheme Records will completely replace Enhanced Disclosure criminal record checks as the source of vetting information for anyone seeking to engage in regulated work in Scotland, which means enhanced disclosure checks will no longer be available for that purpose. However basic disclosures and residual Enhanced Disclosure checks can still be requested for other work not covered by the PVG (i.e. non regulated work). (c) PVG does not distinguish between regulated and controlled activity as with SVG.

## 6.2 Main highlights of the PVG Scheme

- a) New PVG barred Lists  
Provides a Children's list and Protected Adults list for those barred from working with either or both groups.
- b) Who is protected?  
Both **children** (under 18) and **protected adults**. The scheme defines protected adults as those receiving certain services listed in the PVG Act 2007 – support service, adult placement service, care home service or housing support. Adults will be protected only for the duration of the service received, thus a disabled or older person not in receipt of any of those services will not be automatically covered by the Act. Children aged 16-18 will also be considered as 'protected adults' if receiving any of those services.
- c) PVG Scheme membership and Scheme Disclosure Record  
Individuals must register with either a Children's Scheme or a Protected Adults' Scheme (or both) if undertaking or intending to undertake regulated work with *children and/or protected adults*. It is not compulsory for an individual who wishes to do regulated work to become a scheme member but it is an offence for a barred individual to undertake regulated work.
  - i. The following 3 types of disclosure records can be requested from Disclosure Scotland by individuals registered with the scheme
    - Scheme Record with full vetting information disclosed
    - Scheme Record Update(with or without new vetting information disclosed) and
    - Scheme Membership Statement(evidence of registration but with no vetting info disclosed)
  - ii. There will be continuous updating of scheme records by Disclosure Scotland – this will show any new information that will determine continued registration or removal/barring
  - iii. Scheme members do not need to complete a detailed application form every time disclosure checks are required. This means a **Scheme Membership Record** is portable provided a **Scheme Record Update** is obtained to determine currency of listing. Alternatively, a new employer may choose to rely on an existing scheme membership record if satisfied with its currency.

### **6.3 Fees in Scotland**

Fees for scheme member registration and scheme record disclosure, scheme record update and scheme membership statement are free for voluntary sector workers (volunteers) including churches provided they can show that membership of church is open to the public.

- Those in paid positions will be required to pay the £59 fee for membership or to obtain any of the above records.
- If registering for first time a £59 one-off fee can be paid for both registration and a scheme record disclosure if requested within 14 days of application for registration.
- Certificates for employers also incur a fee unless obtained within 14 days of scheme membership application

## **7. Safer Practices – Probation, reviews and monitoring**

7.1 It is important that churches thoroughly apply the measures described in this guidance whenever they recruit someone to work with children, but that must not be the end of the matter. Childcare settings are safe environments for the great majority of children and the vast majority of people who work with children have their safety and welfare at heart.

We must not be complacent however. We know that some people seek access to children in order to abuse and that abused children very often do not disclose the abuse at the time. We also know that some of the allegations of abuse made against staff are substantiated and we continue to see a number of cases year on year in which staff and volunteers across the children and young people's workforce are convicted of criminal offences involving the abuse of children.

Making sure that safeguarding features highly in all your processes, policies, procedures and practice sends a clear message to applicants and existing staff and volunteers and helps to deter unsuitable individuals and inappropriate behaviour.

The Safeguarding policy and guidance of the Methodist Church in order to create safer environments for children and vulnerable adults are in an accompanying document (which is due for April Council and Methodist Conference July 2010).

### **7.2 Codes of conduct or behaviour**

These are needed in order to help workers and those to whom they are responsible to follow appropriate behaviour and to decide when inappropriate behaviour is taking place. Such codes are not a blueprint for when to make a complaint, but enable low level inappropriate behaviour to be constructively challenged before it becomes a problem or is abusive. A suggested code is in Appendix 5.

### **7.3 Induction and probation**

Regardless of role or previous experience of working with children, churches should plan an induction (and probation) programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed to your organisation. The purpose of induction and probation is to:

- Provide training and information about the organisation's policies and procedures.
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged.
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff within the establishment.
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities.
- Enable the person to whom they are responsible to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset (or from the interview) and address them immediately.

#### **7.4 Regular reviews**

Providing a system of regular reviews of the appointment and role outline (volunteers) or job description (paid staff) gives an opportunity to deal with pressures, unrealistic expectations, issues of conduct and training needs. It also gives a clear message that the person is valued in their work and the role they undertake. It should include an opportunity for the person to reflect upon their role and to receive constructive feedback. Such reviews should take place annually and upon any significant change in circumstances of the role or the organisation.

#### **7.5 Supervision**

Supervision is vital to the safeguarding of vulnerable groups. Supervision should occur on a regular basis no matter what kind of role or appointment. It is an opportunity for the person to reflect on their practice and any difficulties they are having. It can take place within a group setting where concerns can be shared openly. Without supervision situations which may be difficult could become impossible, intractable or dangerous for the appointee or for those they are working with. Supervision should include theological reflection where this is relevant to the role/ vocation. Other forms of reflective practice, mentoring and Spiritual guidance are useful but they are not a substitute for supervision of a person in their role. In addition, they are not a substitute for the annual review, by the person to whom they are responsible to.

#### **7.6 Allegations, Complaints and Discipline procedures – a summary of obligations**

It is crucial that everyone working in any organisation providing services or activities for children is aware of these issues and the need to adopt ways of working and appropriate practice to help reduce allegations.

It is equally important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues and that those concerns, along with concerns expressed by children, parents or others are listened to and taken seriously.

- i) The framework for managing cases set out in this section of the guidance<sup>7</sup> applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child or vulnerable adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. It also caters for cases of allegations which might indicate that

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<sup>7</sup> based on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', HM Government, 2006

the alleged perpetrator is unsuitable to continue to work with children or vulnerable adults (or both) in his or her present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children, young people or vulnerable adults has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, young person (under 18) or vulnerable adult.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child, young person (under 18) or vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards a child/ children, young person/ people (under 18) or vulnerable adults in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with that group.

- ii) There may be up to three strands in the consideration of an allegation:
- o A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
  - o Enquiries and assessment by children's social care or adult social care about whether the child or vulnerable adult is in need of protection or services.
  - o Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Help may be obtained via District Safeguarding Coordinators, District Lay Employment Advisers and in each local authority a Local Authority Designated Officer working within the Local Children's Safeguarding Board or the equivalent designated officer for adult social care.

**N.B. Police and social care investigations must take place before any church investigation to prevent contamination of evidence.**

[More detail will follow in the Safeguarding policy and practice handbooks for children, young people and also for vulnerable adults which will follow in 2010.]

## **7.7 Cross referencing on Complaints and Discipline**

The Methodist 'Safeguarding Children and Young People' handbook is also currently being revised (in 2010). This will set out further detailed best practice and also cross reference with the Complaints procedure for both Lay Employees and Office Holders in the Constitution, Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church.

## **8. Referrals to the Independent Safeguarding Authority in England and Wales**

### **8.1 Responsibility for referrals**

The presbyter with pastoral charge, the employer or those who recruit and appoint volunteers (e.g. the Church Council) will be responsible for making referrals where someone is disciplined or leaves the role before a disciplinary hearing where there has been harm or risk of harm to a child, a young person or vulnerable adult. This is a mandatory requirement; however, it will not occur frequently. Access to the appropriate specialist advice is essential in these circumstances. The District Safeguarding coordinator will work with any church or circuit who needs to consider this. The Connexional Adviser will also be able to assist. A short protocol is to be found in Appendix 5 below. Specific guidance on this is available on the ISA web site.

**8.2** The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will also be able to assist with such decisions where allegations concern harm to children or young people under 18. If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his/her services, the LADO should discuss with the employer whether a referral to the ISA is required or advisable, along with the form and content of that referral. Also, if the person is subject to registration or regulation by a professional body or regulator – e.g. by GSCC, GMC or Ofsted – the LADO should advise on whether a referral to that body is appropriate.

## **9. Referrals in Scotland – SUMMARY**

### **9.1 Duty to refer**

- Provides a referral process – Courts and organisations (churches are included) have a **duty** to refer barring information to Disclosure Scotland and are legally bound to do so. Regulatory bodies have a **discretionary power** to refer but not a legal duty.
- Referral forms will be made available online from Disclosure Scotland
- Failure to refer is considered an offence punishable by fine or imprisonment

### **9.2 Listing decisions and implications**

- a) Once Disclosure Scotland receives potential barring information about an individual it will **consider that person for listing** whilst a full assessment of the information has been undertaken. Certain convictions taking place after PVG comes into effect in 2010 will lead to automatic listing including those involving sexual or physical abuse. Individuals listed on the PoCSA list will be automatically added to the PVG Act's Children's list
- b) However, there is a three way decision making process for non-automatic listing which involves (i) **Initial consideration** (assessed and scored against criteria by staff to weed out malicious or irrelevant referrals) (ii) **Formal consideration** (info investigated by caseworker and cases will usually be concluded at this stage ) and (iii) **Panel consideration**- small number of complex cases requiring specialist consideration. Listings are made on the balance of probabilities -same standard of proof required in a civil court
- c) Note that a person under consideration for listing is not barred from doing the kind of regulated work being considered until a decision is reached.

### **9.3 Review and Appeals**

- a) An applicant being **considered for listing** can ask for a review of the barring information by presenting evidence to the contrary.
- b) Appeals against a listing decision must be made to Disclosure Scotland within 3 months of the decision being made
- c) Appeals can also be made for removal from either or both lists after 5 years for those under 18 and 10 years for those over 18, however previous conviction info will still appear on future disclosure records and can still be used in recruitment decisions

### **9.3 Other UK jurisdictions**

- a) Scheme is designed to work closely with VBS system in rest of UK – once an individual is on a list in any one UK jurisdiction they will be barred from regulated work in the other.
- b) An individual registered to one PVG scheme who intends to work in another e.g. from child to protected adults will be required to apply for registration with other scheme, ditto if moving across the border.

## **10. Responsibilities across the Connexion**

10.1 From October 2009 it became a criminal offence to knowingly appoint someone to work with children who has been barred from doing so by the ISA's vetting and barring scheme (VBS). Regardless of the legal position, we strongly recommend that all organisations undertake all the checks described in this document on people they propose to appoint to work with children, young people under 18 and vulnerable adults.

A detailed outline of specific roles and responsibilities of each church body and each role at all levels of the Connexion will be combined with all safeguarding procedures and contained in the Safeguarding handbooks to be ready for Conference July 2010. We have below a summary of the preparations and responsibilities with regard to the new legislation.

### **10.2 How churches and circuits need to respond?**

- revising the church and circuit policy and good practice statements to include ISA registration as a requirement for new people in role and others at later dates according to the roll out programme.
- ensuring those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults as appropriate apply for ISA registration at the right time, according to the 'roll out'
- ensure that the persons appointed to verify application forms or to ensure compliance with the scheme understand their responsibilities.
- require key people to attend training (including ISA registration/ disclosure application verifiers)

### **10.3 How Districts need to respond?**

- i) revising district guidance,
- ii) updating recruitment of offenders policies in accordance with the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- iii) providing specialist advice and support for referrals,
- iv) ensure that the persons appointed to verify application forms or to ensure compliance with the scheme understand their responsibilities.
- v) ensure that key staff are trained (including ISA registration/ disclosure application verifiers) and that training in churches and circuits is supported adequately.

### **10.4 In Scotland**

- i. The same implementation of safer recruitment practices as described above is required of all Methodist Churches, Circuits and Districts in Scotland.

- ii. Further detailed guidance will be provided by the Connexional Safeguarding Adviser once the final details of the PVG scheme and the start date is provided
- iii. Churches' Agency for Safeguarding will remain as the clearing house for all applications so that there is one database of applications for all paid staff, office holders and volunteers held on our behalf.
- iv. The Connexional Safeguarding Adviser will continue to provide an assessment process for unclear disclosures, including formal individual risk assessments and consideration where needed of more serious matters where there are complex or borderline issues concerning vetting.

### **10.5 Crown Dependencies**

These territories that are part of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the Channel Islands, Gibraltar and the Isle of Man.

The same guidance, procedures and best practice are required of all Methodist Churches in the Connexion in so far as safer recruitment practices can apply. In addition, the Methodist Church in these territories should apply any state vetting schemes to both paid staff and volunteers in so far as these may be adopted by the legislatures of these islands which introduces parity with UK law or similar schemes.

### **10.6 What can be expected from the Connexion?**

- i. Safer recruitment is to be built into the Connexional lay employment procedures for District lay employment advisers and the Development and Personnel department's work, particularly in assessment for candidating and for work with children, young people, families, vulnerable adults or for the church community and outreach work, including fresh expressions
- ii. New application packs for volunteers with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be available from June 2010 from Methodist Publishing
- iii. New guidance and support for verifiers will come from CAS
- iv. Training for verifiers will be encouraged and supported in collaboration with Churches' Agency for Safeguarding and our ecumenical partners.
- v. Regular communication and updates from the Safeguarding office
- vi. Regional 'road show' briefings are planned
- vii. Oversight of the 'roll out' process for vetting and barring status (CRB and ISA combined process) together with the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding
- viii. Regular consultations with CRB, ISA and relevant government departments.
- ix. Safer recruitment principles and training will be built into the Creating Safer Space<sup>8</sup> modules and any additional modules.
- x. Welsh translation of the guidance will be provided as soon as possible

## **11. Assessment of Risk and the vetting and barring schemes** *(see also 5.5 and 5.6)*

11.1 The Connexional Safeguarding Adviser will continue to provide an assessment process for all unclear disclosures or vetting information based upon professional standards and an approach that is multi-disciplinary. This will be needed except in cases where someone is clearly barred from relevant work.

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<sup>8</sup> Methodist Conference 2007

This will include formal individual risk assessments and consideration where needed of more serious matters where there are complex or borderline selection issues by the Safeguarding Advisory Panel. Formal risk assessments are initiated by the Connexional Safeguarding adviser, working with the District Safeguarding Panel to identify someone suitable. The professional should be capable of independent judgement and have a suitable professional background in child and/ adult protection or Public Protection and risk assessments (See Appendix 4 for a role specification).

11.2 A formal assessment of risk is still essential when:

- a) Serious conviction or other police information are known, but where the ISA/ Disclosure Scotland have not decided to bar someone. This could be concerning retrospective cases (the vetting schemes do not automatically bar people for older very serious matters) or there could be cases where we consider there is a remaining risk because of the special needs of the church and or the role (e.g. drug or alcohol offences, violence, domestic abuse, harassment).
- b) Where police and/or the local authority have investigated a serious matter concerning harm or the risk of harm, there has not been a prosecution or a conviction *and* they consider there is a residual risk to children, young people and/ or vulnerable or protected adults.

### 11.3 Resources for risk assessments

Often there is a suitable person already working with the District Safeguarding Groups who can offer these services. In order for the risk assessment to be seen as independent and to enable the District group to carry out any ongoing work it is often preferable for the person to be sought via a reciprocal arrangement with a neighbouring district.

Where there is no one suitable available from these sources or the person is to be appointed Connexionally (i.e. ministers), or to a Connexional role, the risk assessor will be sought from another Church with suitable resources, such as the diocese or from a list of specialists held Connexionally. Funds to employ a consultant may be needed in certain cases.

## 12 Other essential related work

- A.** Best practice in Safer Recruitment suggests that there needs to be a 'whistle blowing policy'. This needs to be considered as part of this policy *or* as a piece of follow up work.
- B.** Support and training - Pearl Luxon, Safeguarding Advisor along with ecumenical colleagues are considering ways in which the Districts and Circuits can be supported in the implementation. A regular newsletter will be going to the Districts with more information about preparations at least alternate months.

## 13. Resolutions for the Conference

### **TO BE DRAFTED**

- *will concern adoption of the policy and guidance; and any essential additional work*

#### **14. Appendices**

- 1. *The Implementation Programme for VBS (ISA and CRB)***
- 2. *VBS and PVG application Verifiers***
- 3. *Codes of conduct***
- 4. *Minimum Role specifications for those undertaking individual risk assessments – to be added***
- 5. *FORMS***
- 6. *Making referrals to ISA/ PVG barring lists – a protocol***
- 7. *Summary of Safer recruitment process – a flow chart - to be added***
- 8. *PVG scheme – detailed guidance to be added***

*Pearl Luxon, Safeguarding Adviser – The Methodist Church of Great Britain*

## Section 14. Appendices

### APPENDIX 1

#### Implementation programme for ISA Registration and CRB Renewals

##### **Criminal record checks – renewals for both lay and ordained, voluntary and paid staff**

The Methodist Church policy is for CRB or Disclosure Scotland checks to be renewed every 5 years. All those who had Disclosure checks done before March 2004 should now be applying for renewals, both lay and ordained. It is for the Church councils, Circuit meetings, the District Councils/ DPC's and those with Pastoral charge to ensure that this is done.

**All those in England and Wales who had Disclosure checks before August 2004, including ministers should be applying for renewals before July 2009, see explanation below.**

##### **ISA/ vetting and barring scheme (for England and Wales only)**

###### **A timetable for start on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 \*\***

The government departments concerned with the implementation of Vetting and Barring scheme and the Independent Safeguarding Authority are still holding to the start date of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Despite the fact that they are saying only new applicants should apply for the first year, they seem to accept that renewals of CRB checks then requiring ISA registration may also apply in that first year. There will be a window for the CRB and CAS switching the computer systems, new forms and also training staff. You will be notified with confirmation of this hiatus by June, but it is likely to be the whole of September at least, possibly also the latter half of August. Hence we are recommending that all renewals for the period including August 2009 are made **by 24<sup>th</sup> July** at the latest. Anyone applying after this date for renewals will need to await the new scheme.

The programme **must** be kept to otherwise there will be a clogging of the system like we had in 2002 and 2003. New applications may continue to be made until 28<sup>th</sup> August. It is very important that the 'roll out of the new scheme is 'gradual'.

##### **Forms (for England and Wales only)**

The current CRB forms will not be accepted by CAS after 28<sup>th</sup> August. The current CRB forms will not be issued after 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009. The new combined ISA/CRB forms will be issued from mid-July onwards.

##### **Costs (for England and Wales only)**

The combined CRB check and ISA registration is £64 for **all paid staff**. Presbyteral Ministers, Deacons, connexional staff and candidates for ministerial training will continue to have the fees paid from the Connexional budgets. Volunteers' applications are still free.

##### **CAS (for England and Wales only)**

The Churches' Agency for Safeguarding will continue as the registered body for both the CRB check, the ISA check and also for Disclosures and Membership of the vetting and barring scheme in Scotland. We do not have any firm dates for the Scotland scheme as yet.

##### **Roles (for England and Wales only)**

Fuller information on the church roles included in this scheme and other information including full **FAQs** will be on our web sites by end of April. Also see [www.crb.gsi.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gsi.gov.uk) and [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)

**\*\* The programme is dependent on the current 'go live' date staying at 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Once the new system is in place the old forms will not be accepted and this may incur an additional charge.**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Disclosure and VBS/ PVG application verifiers**

The Methodist Council in April 2009 approved that *in addition* to all ministers, the new verifiers may be either Safeguarding Contacts or Coordinators or Administrators at church, circuit or district levels who are both registered on the Connexional database and approved by their circuit for that purpose. No other role may be allocated this task.

Churches and Circuits are asked to appoint, approve and register new verifiers where they consider that have the need to add to the pool of local verifiers. The Methodist Church and Churches Agency for Safeguarding (CAS) will be able to recognise and check the names of these additional verifiers in addition to Presbyters and Deacons for the purposes of verifying Disclosure applications (including registration or membership of the vetting and barring schemes) and completing CAS forms, provided they meet the following conditions.

#### **1. Circuits and churches are asked to ensure that:**

- Any new verifiers are recruited and trained in verifying CRB forms or Disclosure Scotland forms.
- This task is listed in the job description or there is an agreed addition to the job description for Administrators and the administrator is in agreement to being entered on the national database for the purpose of being a verifier as this may involve application for a disclosure and registration themselves, where this was not the case before.
- Safeguarding coordinators who undertake this role understand that their names will be on the connexional database for the purposes of verifying forms and also occasionally for receiving communications about safeguarding.
- In all cases the minister's name should also be entered on the CAS form (in the box named Alternative contacts) as the person with pastoral charge, or specific delegated pastoral responsibility should receive any Disclosure information or Barring information.

**2.** Circuit/ church safeguarding coordinators should be registered on the Methodist Database [either with the annual circuit database returns or specially by sending the contact information and date of birth for each verifier to ..... This may be done whether or not your District has decided to increase the numbers of authorised people in the verifier scheme or not and no matter what part of the Methodist Church your circuit is in. [ i.e. This includes the Crown dependencies.]

**3.** If forms are sent in and the verifier is not registered on the Connexional database, this may count as an error with CAS, as it will involve additional staff time to sort it out. This can be checked by referring to the Church, Circuit or District profiles at [data.Methodist.org.uk](http://data.Methodist.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **A Code of Conduct for all those working with children and young people in the Methodist Church in a paid or volunteer capacity**

*This is taken from current Safeguarding Guidance in the Scotland Districts (devised for legislative developments there in 2005)*

This code of conduct sets out acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour for all those working with children and young people in the Methodist Church. You should also ensure that you familiarise yourself with, and follow, the District Safeguarding Policy and District Safeguarding Procedures which seek to protect both children and volunteers.

In order to play your part in helping develop an ethos where all people matter and are treated equally and sensitively, with respect and dignity, YOU SHOULD:

- Ensure that the welfare and safety of the child or young person is paramount.
- Respect a child's right to be involved in making choices and decisions and listen to their views.
- Seek to have another adult is present or within sight or hearing of any activity.
- Try to make sure that there is time and space in your programme for a child to talk to leaders if they wish.
- Speak out if you witness behaviour that contravenes this Code of Conduct.
- Restrain a child or young person only when they are at risk of injury to themselves or to others.

#### **YOU SHOULD NOT:**

- (Apart from issues relating to safeguarding) discuss someone else's personal business outside the context of your role.
- Be drawn into any derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people.
- Allow children or adults to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.

#### **YOU MUST NEVER:**

- Engage in sexually provocative games and never make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person.
- Allow others or yourself to touch a child or young person in a sexual manner.

- Form inappropriate emotional or physical relationships with children or young people.
- Engage in rough or physical play unless it is a sporting activity and conforms to the rules of that game.
- Bully or harass anyone.
- Invite or allow children or young people to stay at your home.
- Use physical force.
- Be under the influence or use drugs or alcohol while you are "on duty" as a leader.

Please never underestimate the contribution you can make to the development of safe communities for children and young

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N.B.

This Code of Conduct is not designed to impose unreasonable rules of conduct; rather it seeks to give those who work with children and young people a framework for supporting the development of appropriate relationships.

Adult volunteers and paid staff who do not maintain the standards of behaviour in this Code of Conduct will, where appropriate, be supported to maintain those standards. However, serious breaches of the Code could result in disciplinary action and to a referral to the child protection agencies where the incident has involved an allegation of abuse against a child. It may also lead to a referral to Scottish Ministers for possible inclusion listing on the Disqualified from Working with Children List.

*[N.B. A Code of Conduct for working with vulnerable adults will be prepared with the 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults' policy and practice handbook later in 2010.]*

**APPENDIX 4**

**Minimum Role Specifications - for those undertaking formal risk assessments on individuals as part of the selection or vetting procedures.**

## APPENDIX 5 FORMS

### **The Methodist Church Safeguarding Confidential Declaration**

*This or an equivalent form must be completed by everyone wishing to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults (in voluntary or paid roles)*

**Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974** \* Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, this post is exempt from the provision of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA), by virtue of the ROA 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 as amended by subsequent ROA (Exceptions) (Amendments) Orders, and you are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions or cautions which for other purposes are 'spent' under the provision of the Act. If you have previous convictions or cautions, you are barred from some forms of work, you have been disqualified by a regulatory body, you have reported to a Secretary of State, you have been involved in local authority care proceedings where there were findings of fact against you, or you have been found unsuitable for adoption or fostering details of these will be made available through the Disclosure process provided by the Criminal Records Bureau in England and Wales, the Independent Safeguarding Authority and Disclosure Scotland.

Depending upon the nature of the caution or conviction this will not automatically prevent your service or employment except as follows: *[The following SO is to be updated at July 2010 Conference]*

#### **Methodist Standing Order 010 states:**

(2) Subject to the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (or any statutory modification or re-enactment for the time being in force and any regulations and orders made or having effect thereunder)

(i) no person who has been convicted of or has received a formal caution from the police concerning an offence mentioned in the first Schedule to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 shall undertake work with children and young persons in the life of the Church. A list of the offences covered is found on the Methodist web site and from the Independent Safeguarding Authority (for England and Wales) or Disclosure Scotland.

#### **Declaration**

*Where this is a new appointment or role with this church appointing body*

- I undertake to submit or will submit an application for a criminal record Disclosure and ISA registration *before* commencing work.

*For appointments where the person has a current role with vulnerable group either within the Methodist Church or outside*

- I am already registered with ISA and my ISA registration details are given/ attached with this Church form Part 1 and 2, I have also had a CRB disclosure within the past 5 years for the Methodist Church. **or**
- I am a member of the Scotland PVG scheme and my membership details are given/ attached with this Church form Part 1 and 2 **[delete as appropriate]**

*In certain circumstances a fresh criminal record check may still be required even though you are ISA registered or are a member of the Scotland PVG scheme. These circumstances are outlined in Methodist safer recruitment policy and procedures*

- I understand that the church has a right not to employ/ appoint me and it has a responsibility to ensure that I am registered with the appropriate vetting and barring scheme and trained to work with the appropriate vulnerable group
- I am not aware of any reason why I am not able to undertake the work being asked of me.

**Name:**

**Former name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

***THIS FORM MUST BE RETAINED IN A SECURE CONFIDENTIAL MANNER BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY OR THE MINISTER WITH PASTORAL CHARGE, OR MINISTER WITH SPECIFIC DELEGATED PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT SHOULD ANY MATTER BE DISCOVERED ON SOMEONE'S RECORD THAT THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO THOSE ASSESSING SUITABILITY TO WORK.***

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

**The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form A - Part 1  
Registration form for voluntary workers with children, young people or  
vulnerable adults**

The Church Council is responsible for the acceptance and, where applicable, the accreditation of all workers with children and young people. Every worker should fill in a copy of this form which should be retained by the Secretary to the Church Council or the person in pastoral charge.

**Methodist Standing Order 660 states:**

1 Persons offering, or being invited, to serve as workers with children and young people shall be accepted as candidates by the Church Council.

1A The persons eligible for acceptance under clause (1) above are those who are members in the Local Church or elsewhere in the Connexion or in another Methodist church or are within category (ii) or (iii) of Standing Order 606(1).

2. Normally they shall be at least 16 years of age for work with children and at least 18 years of age for work with young people.

2A. They shall be required to complete an application form and to accept and sign a form containing their job description and committing them to protect children and young people from harm in accordance with the policy of the Church.

4 They shall enter upon a probationary period, which will normally be twelve months.

5 They shall agree to undertake preparation for service applicable to the work they wish to do.

**Full name**  
**Former names**

**Home address**

**Postcode**

**Telephone Day**  
**Evening**

**Date of birth**

**Church**  
**Circuit**

**How long have you lived at the above address?**

If less than twelve months please give the following information:

**Previous address**

**How long there?**

**Church attended**

**Name of Minister**

Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children, young people or vulnerable adults (as relevant to this role)

**References**

**Please give the name, address, telephone number and position or relationship of two people who know you well, including one who has managed or supervised your work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.**

**Please give details of any relevant qualification or appropriate training**

Have you successfully completed one of the following training programmes?

**Kaleidoscope**

Yes/No

**Spectrum**

Yes/No

**Creating Safer Space - Basic Safeguarding module or equivalent**

Yes/ No

**Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training?** Yes/No

*(Note: If you decline to undertake training the Church Council will be entitled to withdraw your authority to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.)*

***THIS FORM MUST BE RETAINED IN A SECURE CONFIDENTIAL MANNER BY THE CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARY OR THE MINISTER WITH PASTORAL CHARGE, OR MINISTER WITH SPECIFIC DELEGATED PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY.***

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

## **The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form A - Part 2 Volunteer Agreement – *including Role Outline***

**This form should be completed for all voluntary workers with children, young people or vulnerable adults in accordance with Methodist safer recruitment policy and procedures.** If the role changes substantially a new form should be completed. Copies should be retained by the worker, the Secretary to the Church Council (or other responsible body) and the person to whom the worker is responsible (i.e. the supervisor).

**To be completed on behalf of the Church Council  
(or other appointing body)**

**Church**

**Name of worker**

**Name of group/ club**

*(e.g. Junior Church/ luncheon club for disabled people)*

**Where/when they meet**

**Age range of children/ range of vulnerabilities**

**Person to whom responsible/ supervising**

*(e.g. Youth Group Leader/ church community worker/ minister)*

**Work to be undertaken** (*five to ten points describing the duties and responsibilities in this role*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Group to whom responsible/ the appointing body** (e.g. Church Council)

**What training is needed?**

**When training is to take place?** (*usually within a year of appointment*)

**Date/ Month when this role description is to be reviewed**

(*i.e. toward the middle and end of a probationary period of 6 months and then annually*)

**Training and review planning**

**What training is now required?**

Kaleidoscope, Spectrum, Creating Safer Space .....

Vulnerable Adults awareness and safeguarding

**Further training** (please give details)

Contact your Training Officer, District Training Secretary, Safeguarding coordinator for details of training opportunities. Your minister or Circuit Steward will be able to provide their contact details.

**Signed**

(*on behalf of the Church Council or other appointing body*)

**To be completed by the worker with children/young people/ adults**

I have understood the nature of the work I am to do with children/young people. I have read the guidelines produced by the Church for safeguarding children and young people. I understand that it is my duty to protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom I come into contact. I know what action to take if abuse is discovered or disclosed.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

## **The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form B**

*(For all those wishing to serve as a Local Preacher, Worship Leader or whom the Methodist Conference has otherwise directed to complete this declaration)*

### **Confidential**

### **Declaration in relation to sexual offences against children and young people**

The Methodist Conference has directed that in accordance with Standing Order 010 (2) (i) and (ii), all those who wish to serve as Local Preachers worship leaders (or who have been asked to undertake certain specified responsibilities) should complete a declaration concerning certain offences against children, young people under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults.

Because of the nature of the Local Preaching and Worship Leading roles in leading, teaching or training\* children and young people or vulnerable adults\* within the church community, the provisions of Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) do not apply by virtue of the ROA (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by subsequent ROA (Exceptions) (Amendments) Orders. Office holders are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions or cautions or any barred status which for other purposes are considered 'spent'. There is a further requirement under new legislation (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006) for all Local Preachers or Worship Leaders who are *likely* to undertake such work\* (as described here 'frequently' or 'intensively') to be ISA registered *and* have a criminal record check at the outset of their training (or being placed 'on note').

The relevant matters fall into the following categories:

- vi) Sexual offences against a child/ children, young person or vulnerable adults
  - Taking or possession of indecent photographs of children, young people or vulnerable adults
  - Possession or distribution of pornographic material involving children
  - A person barred by the Independent Safeguarding Authority or equivalent legislation

A full list of the offences covered is in available on the Methodist web site under Safeguarding or available from the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

**Anyone wishing to serve as a local preacher (or who has been asked to undertake one of the specified responsibilities) who is unable to make this declaration and who would like a pastoral conversation should contact their superintendent minister**

### **Declaration**

Office

Date commenced training/ placed 'On Note' (in this role)

Date due to finish or renew (*for worship leaders*)

Circuit

Full name

Home address

Postcode

Date of birth

I have never been convicted of a sexual offence against a child or young person, nor have I ever received a police caution concerning such an offence.

Signed

Date

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

### **ISA/ PVG and Disclosure application forms**

CRB and ISA registration application forms are available from Methodist Publishing – *contact*

Each one has an individual bar code and serial number so they cannot be photocopied. Applications are not available on line.

The forms for the PVG scheme in Scotland will also be made available via Methodist Publishing.

For Methodist church applications churches and other bodies within the Methodist Connexion may apply with no administration fee, via Churches' Agency for Safeguarding, which is funded centrally.

They should always be submitted together with Churches' Agency for Safeguarding *registered body* forms (latest versions) available to download from their web site [www.churchsafe.org.uk](http://www.churchsafe.org.uk) **or** in packs issued together with the CRB/ISA application form - from Methodist Publishing.

CRB fees will be required for all locally paid/employed posts but for ministers deacons, candidates and Connexional staff are paid centrally. All cheques for Disclosure and ISA/PVG fees must be made out to Churches' Agency for Safeguarding.

#### ***All forms must be sent to:***

Churches' Agency for Safeguarding  
Methodist Church House,  
25 Marylebone Road  
London  
NW1 5JR

#### **Verifiers**

Verifiers of identity for Disclosure and ISA/PVG forms are presbyters/ deacons in Minutes of Conference including from some other churches and those in safeguarding or administrative roles who have agreed to be added to the Methodist database for this purpose.

Guidance for suitably authorised verifiers is available from the CAS web site or directly from CAS on 02074675216 or 5206.

*See also Section ../ Appendix...*

#### **Vetting and Barring Schedule**

Implementation dates and schedules for phasing in of the new ISA and PVG schemes are in Appendix ...

## **The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form C**

### **Confidential**

**Specimen form for a person being appointed to an office, duty or responsibility (see page 26) –**

**to fulfill Standing Order 010 (2) (ii)**

***All people nominated or holding positions in the Methodist church must sign a declaration [- except Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, Ministers and those working with children or vulnerable adults for whom other forms apply].***

Holding an office, post or responsibility, especially a public or Trustee role (church council member or committee member is a privilege and a responsibility – it is not a right. The Methodist Church reserves the right not to appoint (or to remove from office) someone where they are found to be ineligible, unsuitable or where they have not declared information that should otherwise have been disclosed. Where certain criteria are fulfilled there can be an appeal to the Secretary of Conference via those appointing against a bar from a particular appointment.

### **Name of church**

Office, duty or responsibility

Your name has been put forward for the position stated above.

*Having regard to the Safeguarding policy of the Methodist Church you are asked to sign the declaration below.*

I am aware of the Church's policy to safeguard the welfare of children and young people or vulnerable adults and the terms of Standing Order 010. I know of no reason why I cannot fulfil the office, duty or responsibility named above.

Signed

Date

*[The following SO is to be updated at July 2010 Conference]*

**Standing Order 010.** Qualification for appointment

(2(ii)) no person who has been convicted of or has received a formal caution from the police concerning sexual offences against children shall be appointed to any office, post or responsibility or engaged under any contract to which this sub-clause applies.

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

**The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form D**  
**Confidential**  
**Specimen form for a key holder**

Name of church

Name of nominated key holder

Your name has been put forward as a key holder to our premises on behalf of  
..... (*name of group*)

Before the keys can be issued you are asked to sign the declaration below and acknowledge the conditions of issue. This is to help carry out the policy of the Methodist Church to safeguard the children and young people in its care. The Methodist Church is not obliged to give anyone access to church premises unless access to the premises is required as part of their role or for regular hire of premises.

I have never been convicted or cautioned concerning a sexual offence against children or young people or vulnerable adults.

Signed

Date

These keys/ pass/ entry code are issued to you under the following conditions.

- 1 You shall not have any copies made from these keys/ pass.
- 2 These keys/ pass should not be lent to anyone else.
- 3 On completion of your term of office these keys/ pass shall be returned to the Church Council Secretary and not handed over to another person.
- 4 Where entry code numbers are given instead of a key/ pass this information will not be given to anyone else.

I accept the above conditions of issue.

Signed

Date

A copy of this agreement should be retained by the person and by the local church

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

**The Methodist Church *Safeguarding* Form E  
*Safeguarding - Users of Methodist Premises Declaration***

As the people of the Methodist church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purposes for everyone. 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 children, young people and all adults who may be vulnerable

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people *and* to respond quickly when this occurs.

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

Name of church

Date/s of use Time/s of use

Nature of use (*please give brief details of activities*)

Age range of participants

Address

Telephone number

Number of adult leaders/helpers ..... (- *working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults or supervising and managing those who do*).

[One person from this group will also be required to be the nominated key holder (for regular hire only) and sign a key holder declaration – form D. In exceptional cases two key holders may be allowed. The Methodist Church is not obliged to give anyone access to church premises unless access to the premises is required as part of their role or for regular hire of premises.]

I declare that I am familiar with the local church safeguarding policy and I am willing to comply with the *Safeguarding* policy and procedures of the Methodist Church or their equivalent

Signed

Date

On behalf of ..... (name of group/ hiring organisation)

*This form may be photocopied and is also available to download from the web site [www.methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk)*

## APPENDIX 5

### Referrals to the ISA or PVG scheme – a Methodist Church Protocol

#### A Protocol for the Referral of Information to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) or the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme in Scotland.

#### 1. What constitutes a case requiring referral?

##### A brief outline:

- a) Incidents of harm or serious risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults - **to Police and Social Care (child or adult safeguarding boards)**. That is, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (for children) as a matter of urgency.
- b) Incidents of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct where there is an abuse of trust or an abuse of power in relation to children or vulnerable adults (using ISA definition of VA). Also reporting to the LADO (saying that we will use our established complaints and disciplinary procedures). They will probably require information on the outcome, but will also be able to assist in the procedures on occasions.
- c) Persistent refusal or negligence concerning safer recruitment or safeguarding procedures.
  - a) Any of the above should lead to disciplinary action within the church (with (a)) proceeding ahead of internal church processes.
  - b) Where someone has resigned because of/ pending any of the above. Where possible complaints and discipline procedures must be concluded and a report written.

*NB. Suspension should be considered as an important and urgent measure as appropriate (not part of disciplinary process, and does not imply judgement but is precautionary) in all cases.*

#### 2. Who is the Responsible Person at each level of church life to instigate/ make referrals?

- i) Local Church – Each Church Council should determine who is the most appropriate person to make these referrals. In the event that no decision is made or the person is unavailable it shall be the Superintendent Minister.
- ii) Circuit - the Superintendent
- iii) District - the Chair of District or their nominated Deputy
- iv) The Connexion - The Secretary of Conference, Assistant Secretary of Conference (in the case of Ministers and Deacons), *or* the Head of Development and Personnel (in the case of lay employees).

#### 3. Consultation - who *must* be informed and consulted

- a) The District Safeguarding Adviser (for the relevant vulnerable group, children or adults) should be informed in all cases *and must* be consulted - in local Circuit/ District lay volunteer and local lay employee matters
- b) The Connexional Safeguarding Adviser (child and adult protection) *must* be consulted in all other matters - i.e. other lay employees, ministers and deacons
- c) The Chair of District *must* be informed in all cases
- d) The LADO – they should be informed and consulted at an early stage in *any* relevant case. These are people appointed in every local authority by the Local Safeguarding Children Board to assist organisations that work with children and young people to deal with allegations against members of staff.

Such posts are also being created within Safeguarding Adult Boards.

**N.B.** All the above can offer advice and support on the referral process.

**APPENDIX 6**

**Summary of the recruitment process - a flowchart**