***Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults***

***York and Hull District Policy***

1. The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God’s creation of male and female in God’s own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God’s re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.
2. The York and Hull Methodist District is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and the needs of children, or of people when they are vulnerable, are paramount.
3. The York and Hull Methodist District fully agrees with the Connexional statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space,* 2007:

*As the people of the Methodist Church, we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God’s purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.*

1. The York and Hull Methodist District recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities, or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and we seek to affirm the gifts and graces of all God’s people.
2. The York and Hull Methodist District recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to, and work for, healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God’s grace. It accepts wholeheartedly the conclusions and recommendations of the Past Cases Review and commits itself to this work.
3. The York and Hull Methodist District commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.
4. The York and Hull Methodist District commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy, the Past Cases Review, government legislation and guidance and safe practice in circuits and churches
5. The York and Hull Methodist District commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults when they may be vulnerable. It affirms the role of the District Safeguarding Group.
6. This safeguarding policy is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

**Roles and Responsibilities**

***District Chair***

* Support superintendent ministers in their implementation of safeguarding policies
* Ensure that superintendent ministers are aware of their responsibilities in this area and will enable training opportunities to be made available
* Use the expertise and advice of the District Safeguarding Group and, as appropriate, Connexional personnel.
* Ensure that all circuits and churches create and implement their own policies

***Action*** The District Chair will support the District Safeguarding Group in this area as requested.

* Ensure that each superintendent completes an audit/monitoring form after the first circuit meeting of each Connexional year confirming that policies are in place in the circuit and each church and that these have been annually reviewed. The superintendent will send copies of policies to the District Safeguarding Group as requested
* Ensure that where there are district meetings and events, the district policy is implemented
* Support the District Safeguarding Group in taking forward incidents and allegations promptly and in accordance with good practice.

***Action*** The monitoring of this will be a subject of the District Safeguarding Group report to the District policy committee

***District Safeguarding Group***

* Ensure a prompt response to requests for help, advice, information and training
* Ensure support in implementing district and Connexional policy
* Promote the awareness of safeguarding adults
* Ensure that the Chair, superintendents and District Policy Committee are updated on any changes to safeguarding policy, practice and guidance. A report will be delivered to the first District Policy Committee of each Connexional year by a member of the District Safeguarding Group which will include a note on the monitoring of district events
* Initiate programmes of awareness and good practice
* Work collaboratively with other relevant groups (eg Connexional, regional and ecumenical partners and professional colleagues) in safeguarding issues
* With the support of the District Chair, ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary

**Key concepts and definitions**

**Vulnerable Adults:** any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation. It is recognised that the definition contained within Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, and which is used for purposes of Disclosure and barring disclosures differs from this definition.

**Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults** from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care

**Adult/child protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect

**Abuse and neglect** may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm

This policy was adopted on [date] ………………………………………………………………

Name of the District Chair………………………………………………………………….....….

Signed by the District Chair ……………………………………………………………………...

Date for review [annual] ……………………………………………………………………….....