

Safeguarding Children and vulnerable adults' policy for Reigate Methodist Church

Reigate Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all members of our church community.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Reigate Methodist Church 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.

Reigate Methodist Church 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.

Reigate Methodist Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training to all members undertaking any role within the Church and on our premises.

Reigate Methodist Church appoints Katie Jefferies as our Safeguarding Officer and Hilary Austin as Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will support Katie Jefferies in her role which is to:

- Support and advise the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles using best Safeguarding practise
- Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues
- Liaise with Circuit District Safeguarding Co-ordinators
- Promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of circuit ministers.

Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity and will have confidentiality.
- Church members and those working on behalf of the church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept noting date, time and place of visit.

- Any church organised transport of children or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate.

Appointment and training of workers

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training.

Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, Pastoral Visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment.

Guidance for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

Each worker will need to be DBS checked and have training appropriate to their role by the church member supervising them.

Complaints procedure

A safeguarding complaint may be made to the safeguarding Officer Katie Jefferies. If a complaint is made to another person this needs to be passed to Katie who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, consideration will be given to involving the complaints system of the Methodist Church.

Streaming church services

At Reigate Methodist Church we acknowledge that streaming our services online is important, however this should be balanced with continuing to provide a safe and secure environment for all. Some members of our community may not feel comfortable appearing on video, and for others it may compromise their safety. Safeguarding, GDPR and creating safe places are all key factors to consider before any recordings are made. A film free area is available at the back of the church, Stewards are aware of exact location.

The steward on duty will announce that the service is being streamed and suggest that if anyone is uncomfortable being filmed that they move to the back pews.

This policy will be reviewed annually. Date of next review – October 2025

Date _____

Signed _____

CHURCH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Signed _____

CHAIR OF CHURCH COUNCIL

October 2024