

# EAST HAM CONGREGATIONAL AND METHODIST CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## 1. Statement of intent

We have a “duty of care” for all adults, young people and children with whom we are involved.

We acknowledge that those under 18 years old have special needs as do adults with conditions limiting their mental or physical abilities, with care and support needs.

In addition, any person can be vulnerable in particular circumstances, such as when they are dependent on a welfare service or undergoing a crisis.

Safer Recruiting processes are used for all our leaders and workers whether in paid or voluntary positions. This is for all from the Church Minister to the kitchen assistant. DBS checks are carried out where the role is eligible. Current staff are DBS checked every five years.

In addition to adopting safe practise in every activity organised by, on or in the Church we aim to ensure that the building, meeting rooms etc. are safe and well maintained.

We ensure that fire and electrical equipment is regularly tested. If any meetings take place in a building other than the Church’s own we do the best we can to ascertain that these checks have been carried out.

All documents with personal data are kept securely and destroyed safely after 1 Year , unless we need the information for financial records. *(It's recommended that personal information of employees, including contact details, appraisals and reviews be kept for at least 5 years. You should keep hold of employees' financial for at least 3 years as HMRC may request to see them in this time and safeguarding papers indefinitely).*

Registers are kept and risk assessments made for all activities on the church premises and also for those held by the church at other venues or outside of any building.

As Christians, we would want to go further than this and say that we are responsible to God for the way we treat everyone. So we seek high standards because we want to, not just because we have to!

Taking good care is a never-ending process – so the Church will review its procedures and documents at least once every twelve months. This document was last revised on 09.03.2020 and agreed by the Church meeting on **15/03/2020**

## 1. Applying good practice

The church’s involvement falls into three categories:

- a) the informal fellowship of people of different ages and capabilities in the worshipping community;
- b) groups organised specifically for children, young people or adults.
- c) groups organised by other agencies on the church premises.

### **a) Informal fellowship**

Church Members have a shared responsibility for all those attending worship and other all-age activities. No one of any age but especially those under 18, elderly or in currently vulnerable circumstances should be left in a dangerous situation.

No person should be subjected to physical or verbal abuse, bullying or inappropriate contact of any kind. All members have a responsibility to step in and challenge such behaviour, and to report it straight away to a church officer.

- **The Church accepts a shared responsibility for all its children and young people, and undertakes to be diligent in their care and supervision.**
- **The Church accepts a shared responsibility for adults who share in its life, and is committed to developing awareness of their needs and dignity.**

### **b) Church groups**

At present these are: Wednesday Fellowship  
Family Time  
Curry and Cake café  
Junior Church

**Holders of these positions are required to notify the members/trustees each time they wish to appoint an assistant leader, so that the church can assure itself that the necessary recruitment steps are taken.**

### **c) other groups using church premises**

At present these are: **Karate**  
**Church 1**  
**Church 2**  
**Church 3**  
**Church 4**  
**Friday Dance**  
**Little Butterfly's Nursery**

The Church advises holders of the positions above that all work on its premises must meet the standards set down in this policy. They are advised to have sufficient insurance cover appropriate for the activity carried out on church premises. Leaders have to sign an agreement that they will follow safeguarding and other relevant processes.

## **2. Safer Recruitment and levels of checking**

In order to ensure safer recruiting, the church completes a job description and person specification, an application form (including a self-declaration), an interview and taking references (at least two – not from a relative)

All church leaders, workers and volunteers are asked to obtain a DBS check where appropriate.

These lists have been adapted to take into account the introduction of vetting and barring schemes detailed in the Protection of Freedom Act 2012 and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland.

**There may be other roles identified within the Church in addition to the ones listed. Checks are not available for people under 16 years.**

A Local Workers Form (LWF) is required to be completed by anyone wishing to work in a paid or voluntary role within the church.

The DBS/PVG certificate is the property of the applicant however they are required to show the Church's appointed Safeguarding Officer / Protection Verifier their certificate on its receipt. (Unless this is an online check, in which case the applicant only need show the certificate if the verifier is informed that something is on the certificate. Details that may affect the role to which they wish to be appointed are noted and acted upon. This may mean that they are unable to take up the role applied for. The date for renewal is noted for church records. Copies of the certificate are not taken or kept by the church.

New staff and volunteers are trained in our safeguarding practices and procedures.

There are different types of criminal record checks that an employer can request:

- **PVG - Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (Scotland)**  
For staff and volunteers requiring a disclosure in Scotland.  
Includes "New Member" or an "Existing Member" paper application process.
- **DBS Standard check (England and Wales)** shows any spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings
- **DBS Enhanced check (England and Wales)** shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role
- **DBS Enhanced check with barred lists (England and Wales)** shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether you're on the list of people barred from doing the role

#### **Enhanced Check with Barred Lists**

- Any Minister, Pastor or Church Ministry leader
- Any retired Minister or Pastor still engaged in Church work
- Leaders/Supervisors of people regularly working with Children
- People transporting children on behalf of the Church

#### **Enhanced Check**

- Leaders/Supervisors of people working with Adults
- People transporting adults on behalf of the Church
- Visitors authorised by the Church who undertake assistance with shopping, bills etc. The Leaders of groups or activities which involve children or young people under 18 on a regular basis.

#### **Standard Check**

- The Leaders of groups or activities which involve adults on the Church premises.

#### **Self-Disclosure**

- Applicants requiring self-disclosure only (completion of LWF (Local Workers form and references sought)
- Helpers in any group who are supervised at all times.
- Protection Verifiers.

### **DBS certificate issued by a third party**

- Regular visiting worship leaders from other churches undertaking no pastoral duties can be asked for evidence of a Disclosure certificate.

***Please note that the above list is for guidance only, as it is not an exhaustive description of potential roles within the life and ministry of the church.***

**The church appoints (Nigel Lindsay) as its Protection Verifier. In most circumstances checks are should be carried out using the DDC (Due Diligence Checking) which is the Registered Body acting on behalf of the Congregational Federation.**

### **3. Good Practice – Safeguarding**

In addition to the safer recruiting measures and general duty of care to all people outlined above, the church advises all leaders of work with **under 18's** of the following requirements:

#### **a) Supervision**

Leaders must be prepared and ready before admitting children to the building. Children remain under leaders' supervision throughout their time on the premises. Leaders and helpers who do not have the appropriate DBS/PVG certificates need to be supervised at all times and should not be left in sole charge of a child or group. If they are required to assist in toileting they need to have a DBS/PVG check.

#### **b) Working Safely**

Leaders and helpers must avoid situations where they are alone with a child. A leader should not work alone with a group behind closed doors. If possible, children should be led by at least one person of their own gender. The rooms used should be suitable for the numbers of children attending. Registers should be taken at every meeting. Risk assessments should be carried out periodically.

#### **c) Handling Information**

Leaders should be able to respond correctly if a child reports that they have been abused:

- do listen
- do not promise to 'keep a secret'
- do not put words into the child's mouth – hear and report only what they say/do
- do not jump to conclusions or start an investigation
- do not keep the information to yourself
- If a child may be in immediate danger, contact the police.

The Church appoints Thirtyone:Eight (Formally CCPAS) as its confidential advisers.

Any disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, or the potential for these, must be reported the police and an appropriate agency, the Church Secretary to be informed of the action taken. Leaders should inform the Minister or Safeguarding Officer in the first instance, who will inform the relevant agencies. A record of what was said / observed will be kept in a locked cabinet, along with any actions taken by the church (informing agencies, for example).

#### **d) Home Contacts and Permission**

An accurate register of children will be kept including addresses and telephone numbers. Parents' permission to attend will be obtained in writing at least once a year and whenever children are to be taken off the premises. This permission will include medical details and permission to use photos/contact the child if necessary. (Parents have the right to refuse this permission)

**e) Standard of work**

Leaders are required to maintain a high standard of work, and are encouraged to take up training opportunities to enhance their skills. The church will make all workers aware of any training opportunities and ensure workers are aware of all relevant changes to policy, procedures or legal requirements, including hoisting internal training events where relevant.

**4. Regulated activities**

**a) Basis in law**

The Protection of Freedom Act 2012, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 require those undertaking 'regulated activities' to obtain safeguarding registration.

**b) Definition of 'regulated activities'**

These are roles which involve responsibility for children and adults with care and support needs (such as teaching, training, care, supervision or transport arranged by the church) and which are undertaken regularly, frequently or intensively.

This includes:           **those working once a week or more**  
                                  **those working for four days or more in a month**  
                                  (e.g. a week-long holiday Bible club for children)  
                                  **those working overnight** (e.g. a youth group sleep-over)  
                                  **those managing or supervising any of the above.**

**c) Definition of 'vulnerable' (Children, and adults with care and support needs)**

People may be vulnerable because of their age (i.e. under 18); an incapacity (e.g. restricted sight); because of a circumstance (e.g. recent bereavement); or because of reliance on a service (e.g. transport arranged by the church).

Safeguarding registration is required for roles which take some responsibility for people whenever they have care and support needs. This occurs whenever the service is provided and does not need to meet the frequently or intensively rule as above for children. Transport to hospital etc. assistance with shopping, eating and toileting requires a DBS check even if only done occasionally or on a short term basis e.g. because of incapacity due to illness.

Services targeted mainly or solely at vulnerable people (e.g. an advice service for those who find it difficult to fill in forms) are likely to involve roles in this category.

**d) Referring Information**

The church is legally obliged to refer information about individuals who may pose a risk to children or other vulnerable people. The church must report to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person dismissed from a position within the church even if they have not been charged with a criminal offence.

Referrals are to be made to the appropriate safeguarding agency (DBS/PVG). When such action is being considered, the Congregational Federation Safeguarding Office should be contacted immediately.

**5. Additional guidelines**

**a) Staffing numbers**

Recommended ratios of adults and children are:

- 0-2 years:    1 adult for 3 children
- 2-3 years:    1 adult for 4 children

3-7 years: 1 adult for 8 children  
8+ years: 1 adult for 10 children.

But please note that there must be a MINIMUM of two adults, regardless of recommended ratios.

**b) Safe Activities**

Leaders should avoid inherently dangerous or inappropriate games – e.g. young children lifting each other off the ground. They should avoid activities involving physical contact between adults and children, and minimise likely physical contact between children where possible.

**c) Emergencies**

A first aid box is provided in kitchen and office. A telephone available for use in an emergency, in the Office. Any accidents must be recorded in the accident books which are kept near the first aid boxes. Other serious incidents should also be recorded in writing and the record kept securely.

Leaders must be familiar with the fire procedure and evacuation routes. It is suggested that a fire drill be performed with the group once each term.

**d) Safe Use of Images**

All photographs including children used on a church web-site or for any other public display (such as a church magazine) must reflect normal children's activities and show the children fully clothed.

Photographs in which individual children can readily be identified may only be displayed on the church's web-site provided parents / carers have given specific written permission.

Larger group photographs in which children cannot readily be identified may be used on the web-site provided parents / carers have given general written permission for their children to be included in church publicity.

This general permission must also be obtained by the church before children's images are used in magazines, posters, etc. or published by a third party, such as a local newspaper or a denominational magazine.

**e) Electronic communications**

Only church post holders holding a valid Disclosure and Barring Check may have their contact details included in the web-site or contact young people directly by electronic means.

Meeting times for children's groups are only given on our web-site where all children are met by parents or carers. There is no unrestricted entry to the building at these times.

All contact with under 18's or other vulnerable persons through e-mail, message boards, etc. is copied to a church officer or available for regular inspection by another relevant person – in other words the minister or safeguarding officer.

Phone calls and texts/messaging between leaders and young people are kept brief and functional. For example, 'what time is club tonight?' 'It's at 7, see you there'.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow the Social Media policy, and the church appoints Nigel but to be done to administer and monitor this if necessary.

**f) Possible physical hazards**

Hazards should be noted and appropriate guidelines given to prevent accidents etc. Leaders are responsible for seeing that safety rules are kept.

**g) Off the premises**

Written risk assessments are recommended for any trips off premises. Prior consent by the Church Meeting is required for any planned residential trips.

#### **h) Support for Leaders**

The Church seeks to support and encourage all leaders in their work, and expresses this support through the members meeting. Leaders may ask to meet with the Minister /trustees, at any time to discuss their work.

**CF Safeguarding Office Policy Number: 001**  
**Example Policy – Final Issued January 2019**

The information you supplied is held for that purpose only and will not be shared with any third party. The submission of this form and the information contained indicates your acceptance to retain this information which will be held.

You can find out more about how we use your data from our “Privacy Notice” which is available from our Congregational Federation Offices or the CF website.

You can withdraw or change your consent at any time by contacting the Congregational Federation Offices. Please note that all processing of your personal data will cease once you have withdrawn consent, other than where it is required by law, but this will not affect any personal data that has already been processed prior to this point. Data will be stored on a password protected computer or locked filing system and deleted in accordance with guidelines.

# **EXAMPLE PROCEDURE FOR SAFER RECRUITMENT**

## **Step One: Role/Job Descriptions**

Provide a role description for the volunteer or a job description for a paid employee.

## **Step Two: Self-Declaration**

Ask the new recruit to complete a self-declaration form. See the Congregational Federation Local Workers Form (LWF).

## **Step Three: References**

Take up at least two references. If possible the new recruit should provide one reference from their workplace, previous church or another organisation they have volunteered with. Another reference should be a character reference. The referee should be provided with the role/job description when asked to provide a reference.

Ask specific questions of the referees!

## **Step Four: Interview**

An interview should take place in all circumstances. This can range from very informal if for a volunteer to a panel of deacons/elders for a Church leader. This also gives opportunity for the new recruit to ask questions.

## **Step Five: Disclosure and Barring Checks**

Depending on the role/job the Church Secretary or Protection Verifier should advise what level of checking is required. This could range from Self-declaration only to Enhanced including a Barred List DBS (England and Wales) or Protection of Vulnerable Groups PVG (Scotland) check. If the new recruit commences the role/job before the result of the disclosure check has been received they should be supervised at all times and clearly told that acceptance depends on the disclosure result.

## **Step Six: Probation Period**

A probation period should be agreed upon especially in the case of employed positions. A final interview should be held at the end of the probation period.



# ROLE DESCRIPTION FORM

Thanks you for agreeing to be a:	<b>(Name of Role)</b>	
In:	<b>(Name of Church)</b>	
Brief description of the role which you will be undertaking:		
This role will be:	<b>Supervised</b>	<b>Unsupervised</b>
You will be responsible to:		

Please inform them immediately of any issues or problems that may arise.

**You will be required to complete a Self- Declaration (Form LWF) and may also be asked to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate with or without a Disclosure and Barring Check dependant on the role you are carrying out.**

Church Checklist to be completed by (On behalf of the Church):	
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<b>PLEASE TICK BOXES WHEN ACTIONS COMPLETED</b>	
LWF Completed	
References received	
Interview carried out	
Enhanced Certificate (if required)	
Disclosure and Barring List Checked	
Probationary Period Completed (if required)	

***All documents to be held securely and disposed of as required by the Data Protection Act.***

# LOCAL WORKER'S FORM (LWF)

This Congregational Church greatly values the service of those called to work with young people or vulnerable adults. As part of our Safeguarding policy, we need to place on record that appropriate information has been asked of anyone wishing to serve in this way.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 this includes the disclosure of any criminal convictions. The Church seeks to treat all applicants fairly. So declaring a conviction will not necessarily preclude someone from being appointed to this work. **Completed forms should be returned to the appointed church officer, who undertakes to keep them securely.**

<i><b>This section to be completed by an appointed person on behalf of the church before completion by the applicant.</b></i>	
<b>APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Name of Church:</b>	

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

<b>BACKGROUND INFORMATION</b>
What experience and skills do you have for work with young people / vulnerable adults?
Please give details of any relevant training or qualifications.

Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training?	<b>YES / NO</b>
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**REFERENCES (NEW WORKERS ONLY)**

Please give contact details of two people who can advise us of your suitability for this work.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

**DISCLOSURE**

Have you any criminal convictions, cautions or bind-overs*?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Is there any other information you should declare affecting your suitability for this work?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

***If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then please attach details to this form.***

*The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.*

**DECLARATION**

*I declare that the information in this application is true and complete. I agree to provide such further information as may be required for this post, such as proof of identity and an appropriate certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for England and Wales or the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme in Scotland. I understand that an interview and a probationary period may also be required.*

**Signed:**

**Date:**

*Thank you for your help.*

# APPENDIX 1 - SAFEGUARDING CHECKS

Record of Certificates Obtained (all certificates to be renewed every five years). Certificates or copies should not be held by the church. Certificates are the property of the applicant.

*Please note: This document should **not** be displayed with the policy or a copy given to outside users. It should be locked away with self- disclosure forms, references etc. **A copy should however be sent to the Congregational Federation's Safeguarding Officer with the policy when applying for safeguarding status.***

Name	Role	Certificate Number	Date of Issue	Seen & Checked by (Signature/date)
Nigel Lindsay	Minister			
Joan				
Gillian				
Marilyn				

## **APPENDIX 2 – ADOPTION OF SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

- **East Ham Congregational and Methodist Church** adopts the Congregational Federation guidelines as the standards for all its work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- This document was discussed and approved at the Church meeting held on 15/03/2020
- This policy is displayed on Church premises and is available for inspection.
- This policy has been given to all leaders of Church groups for guidance and implementation.
- This policy has been given to all leaders of groups using the church premises for guidance and implementation.
- This policy will be updated annually however any changes will be noted immediately and the **East Ham Congregational and Methodist Church** has appointed **Nigel Lindsay** to keep this policy up to date.

<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Position in the Church:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Position in the Church:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	

***To be signed by two church officers and to be included with the documents sent to the Congregational Federation's Safeguarding Officer.***

# APPENDIX 3 - ADOPTION OF SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## LEADERS DECLARATION (Church Groups)

*Please complete and return to the Church Secretary or other appointed person.*

- I have read the Church's Safeguarding Policy.
- I agree to abide by the sections that apply to my role within the Church.
- I shall make sure that those assisting me are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- I will notify the church of any change in personnel.
- I will ensure that the guidelines for safer recruitment are followed by providing role descriptions, obtaining references, initiating interview and probationary periods where necessary.
- I will notify the church of any incidents that put the Safeguarding of the attenders of the group or their leaders at risk.
- I agree that any equipment brought onto the premises is safety tested.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

<b>Name of Group:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Position in the Group:</b>	

# APPENDIX 4 - ADOPTION OF CARE & SAFETY POLICY FOR OTHER GROUPS

## LEADERS DECLARATION (Groups using Church premises)

*Please complete and return to the Church Secretary or other appointed person.*

- I have read the Church's safeguarding Policy.
- I agree to abide by the sections that apply to my group and relate to the use of the church premises.
- I shall make sure that those assisting me are aware of their care and safety responsibilities.
- I will notify the church of any change in leadership.
- I will notify the church of any incidents that put the safeguarding of the attenders of the group or their leaders at risk.
- I will ensure that appropriate insurance is held to cover the activities being held on the church premises.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Tel:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	

<b>Name of Group</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Position in the Group:</b>	