



Recruitment and Selection Policy & Guidance

for

The Crossing Church

(Methodist & United Reformed)

(charity no. 1140500)

To be read alongside:

Safer Recruitment Policy, Procedures and Guidance July 2023 Edition – produced by the Methodist Church

www.methodist.org.uk/media/30182/safeguarding_policy_and_procedures_for_the_methodist_church_in-britain_july_2023.pdf

Adopted by the Church Council on January 19th 2026

To be reviewed annually.



Introduction

For most people, the Methodist Church is a safe place free of any form of physical, emotional, spiritual, sexual or psychological danger. It is a place where children, young people and vulnerable adults are free from harm, discrimination and other harmful influences.

Sadly, for some members of the Church family, their experience has been of not being safe and this broken trust has left them physically and/or psychologically harmed. This Safer Recruitment Policy makes explicit our Church's commitment to establishing a worshipping and serving community that welcomes and is safe for all.

This policy sets out the necessary actions that the Church needs to implement in its recruitment and selection procedures in order to identify and deter people who are a potential risk to children or vulnerable adults.

Safer Recruitment is more than the undertaking of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. It is about promoting and exercising a safe culture including the supervision and oversight of those who work with children and vulnerable adults.

However, even the most robust selection and recruitment policy and procedures cannot eliminate every risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults. That is why safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We must make it as difficult as possible for abusers to obtain access to children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is for this reason that once an individual is appointed, whether paid or unpaid, effective oversight arrangements are in place to monitor and respond to any concerns that emerge. I commend these procedures to you.

Responsibilities for Safer Recruitment in the Methodist Church

The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church sets out how Church Councils hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding including safer recruitment of all volunteers and employees in their environments. All churches are required to have their own safeguarding policy, which includes a commitment to implementing safer recruitment practices. It is part of the role of safeguarding officers, acting on behalf of each of those bodies, to promote and support safe recruitment.

If The Crossing Church intends to employ someone in a specific role then then we agree to follow the guidance in the Connexional Recruitment Policy.

The Crossing Church commit to following the '12 Steps to Safer Recruitment', as outlined below when recruiting volunteers or lay employees, as a means of ensuring that recruitment decisions are made with care and particular reference to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

The Twelve Steps to Safer Recruitment

	Volunteer Roles
Step 1	Produce an up-to-date recruitment and selection policy that describes the process. <i>This document fulfils this requirement.</i>
Step 2	Ensure there is a Safeguarding policy, which is reviewed annually and includes a commitment to Safer Recruitment. The Crossing Church has already has a Safeguarding Policy in place, last reviewed in September 2024.

Step 3	Create a Role outline for a volunteer post or a role description and person specification for a paid post. Advice should be sort from the Church Safeguarding Officer in regards to whether a role will require a Criminal records Check. Your Safeguarding Officer also has the template that should be used to ensure best practise.
Step 4	Advertise the role in a manner appropriate to the vacancy
Step 5	Produce an information pack. Please consult with your Church Safeguarding Officer. This should include
Step 6	Consider each application fairly and carefully.
Step 7	Carry out appropriate checks is required.
Step 8	If you need to short list candidates then make sure they are treated fairly.
Step 9	Conduct face to face interviews or discussions based on an objective assessment of the candidate's ability to meet the person specification, job description or role outline
Step 10	Ensure that all specific questions designed to gain required information about each candidate's suitability are asked.
Step 11	Select a preferred candidate based upon their suitability for the role.
Step 12	Contact both the successful and the unsuccessful candidates.

Additional Guidance

Step 3 – Role Outline

On page 8 & 9 you will find a template for a Volunteer Role Outline. This becomes the document groups can use when advertising their role. It contains all the information a person needs to make an informed choice as to whether a role is right for them.

The Group Leaders should start adding in their information before passing onto the Church Safeguarding Officer, who will add more information. Lastly the form should be shared with the Church Council or Trustees who will add in the final information and formally approving the role.

The Role Outline can then be used repeatedly. Group leaders should review the form annually.

Section	To be completed by
Role Title	The Group Leader
Role Outline	
Report to / supported by	
Times of Work	
Safeguarding Training	Church Safeguarding Officer
DBS	
Duration of appointment	Church Council or Trustees
Expenses	
Accountability	

If you would like an electronic copy of the template please look on the Sheffield Methodist District website – Safeguarding – Safer Recruitment.

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias occurs when occurring people favour others who look like them and/or share their values. For example, a person may be drawn to someone with a similar educational background, from the same area, or who is the same colour or ethnicity as them.

When writing a job description / person specification/ role outline for an established role, which has become vacant, take a step back from the existing staff member or volunteer and depersonalise the process. It is all too easy to characterise the position in terms of a particular individual's age, education and qualifications.'

The focus should be on being 'as factual as possible about requirements, steering away from the subjective'. The job description / role outline should be based on: the tasks and activities that the role is required to undertake daily, weekly, monthly and annually. It sets the expectations for the candidate to select and deselect themselves solely based on those facts.

Step 4 – Advertising

Even volunteer roles should be advertised in a manner appropriate to the vacancy. This will ensure that suitable parties have a fair opportunity to come forward and will know who to speak to if they

are interested. This could be on the church noticeboard, via a bulletin, online or highlighted during verbal notices at a service.

Step 5 – Information Pack

As a minimum the Information Pack should contain:

- Church Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding Declaration
- Role Outline (created in step 3)

Your Church Safeguarding Officer will be able to advise if additional forms are required, such as:

- Application Forms
- Key Holder Declaration
- Lone Worker Policy

Step 6 – Shortlisting

Scrutinise each application carefully and fairly with reference to the criteria for the role before carrying out interviews or discussions with candidates.

The Importance of Selection and Screening

Every year thousands of people volunteer. Almost without exception these volunteers are keen to give up their time and efforts simply because it helps others. However, just because most volunteers act altruistically doesn't mean that volunteers don't need to be screened.

Lack of care in accepting volunteers can lead to dissatisfaction and disappointment for both the volunteer and your organisation. In a very small number of cases, lack of care in selection could lead to serious danger for service users.

Good selection procedures recognise that the vast majority of volunteers deserve our best efforts to find suitable opportunities for them while also protecting vulnerable people.

Successful First Contact with Volunteers

Once you've started advertising your opportunities, you'll start receiving responses from volunteers. How you respond to those enquiries is essential.

From the volunteer's point of view, they're offering you a gift – their time for nothing – so if you're slow to respond, unenthusiastic or unwelcoming you risk seeming ungrateful.

Top tips for responding to volunteer queries

- You need to respond quickly to any expression of interest from a volunteer. If there is a delay in response, apologise and explain why you didn't reply immediately.
- Initial contact needs to be friendly, welcoming and enthusiastic.

- The person responding to volunteers needs to be well informed, approachable, able to answer questions and prepared to tell volunteers what will happen next.
- Answer all volunteer questions fully and give volunteers all the information they need to make an informed decision. Your goal is to give the volunteers the opportunity to get involved or move on if the role is not right for them. It may be best to do this in person or over the telephone rather than sending written information so that volunteers will have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Explain any screening and selection procedures (e.g. references or DBS checks) what is involved, what information will be needed and why you need to screen volunteers.

Step 7 – Appropriate Checks

If a role requires Safeguarding training it would be wise to liaise with the Church Safeguarding Officer to check if the candidate has done training in the past 4 years. If they haven't, this is something volunteers should be made aware of BEFORE taking up the role.

Step 8 – Treating People Fairly

If several people are shortlisted for a post it's important that all are treated fairly and with respect. If you have a candidate who is visually impaired for example, you will need to consider how you will supply them with the same letters or other necessary information.

The Methodist Church is committed to providing equality of opportunity to all persons when developing, co-ordinating and supporting volunteering. Although there is no statutory obligation under equality legislation we recognise a clear moral obligation to promote fairness and equality in volunteering and value all individuals and their diverse & unique identity and backgrounds.

Step 9 & 10– Face to face interviews or discussions

There is a temptation to simply accept a volunteer because they have come forwards and a role desperately needs filling. It's important however, that an honest conversation takes place so that expectations are shared and any potential issues identified. Having a conversation before starting a role can prevent much frustration and bad feelings in the future.

For example, imagine your church is looking for new Service Stewards. Someone perfect comes forwards and they are quickly nominated and approved. As the Senior Steward you notice after several months that the new person never offers to cover funerals, and other stewards start to complain that they are doing more than their fair share. You speak to the new Steward about this and at this point they tell you they care for their grandchild 5 days a week and are never available apart from weekends.

If this issue had been identified and explored prior to them being appointed their availability would never have been an issue.

Step 12 – Next steps

Once the successful candidate has been chosen they need to complete any outstanding paperwork in their Information pack. For the majority of people this means obtaining a DBS check if the role requires one.

The following people are able to complete DBS check for this church and others in the circuit:

- Annette Barker
- Rev Angela Potheary
- Deacon Emily Hoe-Crook

Appointing someone safely is a crucial part of protecting children, young people and adults who are vulnerable within our churches. Even more important is creating a culture of safety and the embedding of that culture in all our practices. Safer working protects everyone in our churches. Once the APPLICANT has been safely appointed, the group leader should provide / facilitate:

- support
- induction
- training in the role and in safeguarding including the requirement to report any concern

Saying no

You don't have to involve every volunteer who expresses an interest in getting involved. You may not have space for a prospective volunteer or there may be a good reason why you think they would not be suitable for the role.

If you don't want to welcome an interested volunteer, it may be tempting just to avoid the issue and hope that the volunteer will lose interest. Tempting as it may be, this gives a bad image of your organisation and of volunteering in general.

The best way forward when it comes to saying no is to let the volunteer know about your decision promptly and explain why.

Let them know that you appreciate their offer and be as honest as you can about why they aren't suitable for the role. It's important to handle this sensitively. Think of how upsetting it is to be rejected after a job interview and how much upsetting it would be if you were offering to work for no pay.

If possible, suggest another organisation that might be more suitable. You can also refer them to us for support in finding a more suitable role.

If you require more information about Recruiting Safely or if you have any concerns please contact Alison Hill, District Safeguarding Officer:

Call 07483 362 735 or email safeguarding@sheffieldmethodist.org

Volunteer Role Template *(to amend for each role)*

Role Title	<i>E.g. Church Safeguarding Officer</i>
Role Outline	<i>E.g.</i> <i>To work on behalf of the Church Council to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• promote the welfare of children, young people and adults</i> <i>• work to prevent abuse from occurring</i> <i>• seek to protect and respond well to those that have been abused.</i>
Supported by	<i>E.g. the minister</i>

The Methodist Church takes the safety of everyone within the church very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the Church Safeguarding Policy. In particular, Methodist Church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately raise this with their [APPOINTER/manager] or [SAFEGUARDING OFFICER] (you should insert specific names and role titles.)

Safeguarding Training	<i>E.g. this role requires both the Foundation and Advanced modules of the CSS Safeguarding training.</i>
DBS	<i>E.g. this role requires a DBS check under the DDC job role of Church or Circuit Safeguarding Officer (volunteer). This will be renewed every 5 years.</i>

Duration of appointment	<i>E.g. Ongoing but will be formally approved annually.</i>
Times of work	<i>E.g. There are no set times of work</i>
Expenses	<i>E.g. Expenses will be provided but will need prior approval</i>

Accountability	<i>E.g. Church Safeguarding Officers are accountable to the Church Council.</i>
	<i>If you become unable to fulfil the responsibility of *** please contact e.g. the Circuit Superintendent as soon as possible</i>

Show an appreciation of the person's commitment and make a responding commitment to offer support as needed for the person to complete their role in a successful way.

Main tasks <i>(complete if known)</i>	<p>The following tasks will form a core part of the church safeguarding officer's role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of support and advice to the minister and the stewards in fulfilling their roles with regard to safeguarding • ensuring that a suitable, signed church safeguarding policy is displayed at all times in the church on a safeguarding noticeboard, along with names of current safeguarding officers, national helplines and other suitable information. This must be renewed annually. • recording of all safeguarding issues that are reported to the church safeguarding officer, according to Methodist policy and procedures • promotion of appropriate routes for reporting of concerns
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify those who are required to attend safeguarding training and maintain records of attendance. Work with the circuit safeguarding officer and DSO to arrange training • attend training and meetings relating to the role • work in partnership with the lettings officer, stewards and user groups to promote good safeguarding practice on church premises. This will include confirming in writing that hirers of church premises are aware of the church safeguarding policy or are using an appropriate policy of their own. • check that safeguarding is included as an agenda item at all Church Council meetings and report to the Church Council annually. • inform all those with responsibility for recruitment, whether paid or voluntary, of their obligation to follow safer recruitment procedures • advise the circuit safeguarding officer and/or DSO of any issues with compliance with safeguarding training, policy or safer recruitment requirements and respond promptly to any request from them about audit of safeguarding activities.
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This role outline was approved by The Crossing Church Council on 19.01.2026 and will be reviewed annually.