Guidance on Image Use, Publicity and

Internet Safeguarding Best Practice

**Committed to Safeguarding**

The Methodist Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people during their engagement with church activities. Parent and carers need to know that all is in place to ensure that their children are protected, respected, and looked after well.

It’s important for those taking photos or recording videos to be completely up-to-date with safeguarding policies and to be familiar with the following guidance regarding photography and video.

We take great care recording, using and storing images of children and young people while they take part in church activities. The intended use of any images and arrangements for storage will be indicated on the consent form.

We have obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act 2018 and the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Guidance for the Methodist Church to provide this information and to request parental consent for the use of images of the child or young person.

**Website safeguarding guidelines**

Anyone designing a website for a Methodist church, circuit or district will want to ensure that it promotes opportunities for all ages – including children and young people - to get involved in the life of the church. While it is important to reflect the full mix of participation in church worship and other activities, care should be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people. Website builders are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

* Photographs are ‘personal data’ as far a data protection legislation is concerned and must be used responsibly.
* Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs of anyone under 18 on a website.
* Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses and telephone numbers.
* When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures. When a photograph of an individual child or young person is used, names or other personal details should not be used in any caption.
* Ensure that the image files are appropriately named – do not use names in image filenames or Alt tags.
* Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
* Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to children.
* Consider advertising events simply by giving contact details of the adults responsible.
* When posting activity ideas for children or young people ensure they comply with good safeguarding practice.

**Using the internet with children and young people**

There may be occasions when church officers, youth or children's workers wish to demonstrate the internet to children or young people, or encourage them to access information online as part of an activity. When this happens, workers are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

* Ensure that parents or carers are aware of what their children or young people are doing and have given their permission.
* When demonstrations are being given, plan beforehand to ensure that all websites visited have material that is appropriate for the age group taking part.
* Where children and young people are given access to undertake their own searches on the internet, the following search engines have been recommended by the [Department for Education and Skills](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) :
  + [KidsClick](http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick!) web search for kids by librarians
  + [Superkid](http://super-kids.com)
  + [Yahooligans! Web guide for kids](http://yahooligans.com)
  + Your Local Authority may also operate a local search engine facility appropriate for children and young people.
* Where children and young people are being encouraged to undertake subsequent searches on the internet at home, they must only do so with the knowledge/supervision of their parent or carer.
* Warn children and young people about the dangers of giving out personal details on the net.
* Ensure children and young people obtain parental consent if they wish to develop internet friends into face-to-face friendships. Even then, they should always be accompanied on any first meeting.

**Internet guidelines for children and young people - Be Net Smart!**

* Never tell anyone you meet on the internet your home address, your telephone number or your school's name, unless your parent or carer specifically gives you permission.
* Never send anyone your picture, credit card or bank details, or anything else, without first checking with your parent or carer.
* Never give your password to anyone, even a best friend.
* Never arrange to meet anyone in person without first agreeing it with your parent or carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.
* Never hang around in a chat room or in a conference if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, and always report it to your parent or carer.
* Never respond to nasty, suggestive or rude e-mails, app messages or postings.
* If you see something you don't like (eg bad language or distasteful pictures) then move on or click “back”. If you are still concerned, talk to your parent or carer.
* Always remember if someone makes you an offer which seems too good to be true, it probably is.

(Based on guidelines from NCH, one of the most useful sources for the latest information on internet safety for children and young people. www.nch.org.uk)

As technology progresses, so must our vigilance in protecting against its abuse. Mobile phones and the internet provide new and imaginative ways of gaining information and communicating, but while offering a wealth of possibility, the darker side offers those with intent on harming children new ways to abuse them.

Most importantly, “communication and common sense” are the two key elements to these guidelines and the primary aim is to protect the individual and work to ensure they are aware of their rights and empowered to exercise them, while still offering the freedom to families and friends to record important events in their lives and the lives of those close to them.

If you would like a copy of our ‘Use of Photography and Video Policy and Consent Form’ please contact Joel Wilson on 0121 616 1800 or jwilson@birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk