Light and Life

Free Methodist Church

West Cornwall

Safeguarding

Policy

May 2024

Reviewed 23.1.25

Pastor Michael Bretton, Chairman of Trusteees

Next review Jan 2026

Light and Life Free Methodist Church West Cornwall

Registered Charity No. 1147067

Standards can be referenced at www.thirtyoneeight.org

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by 'Thirty-one eight'(www.thirtyoneeight.org) and prepared in consultation with the Trustees of Light and Life Free Methodist Church West Cornwall'.

Section 1 - Safe and Secure (Standard 1)

Page 4 Place of worship / organisation details

Page 5 Policy Statement

Introduction and Background

Page 6 Our commitment

Page 8 Code of Practice

Page 9 Supervision

Page 11 Suitability

Page 12 Filming and Photography

Page 13 Internet Safety and Social Networking

Section 2 – Safe and Secure (Standards 2 and 7)

Page 16 Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Page 17 Understanding abuse and neglect

Signs and indicators of abuse

Page 21 How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse

Page 20 Safeguarding awareness

Page 22 Responding to allegations of abuse

Page 24 Detailed procedures when there is concern about a child

Page 25 Allegations of sexual abuse

Page 26 Allegations of abuse against a worker with adults with care and support needs.

Section 3 - Safe and Secure (Standards 3 and 4)

Page 27 Prevention

Safer Recruitment

Formally employing staff

Page 26 Management of workers – codes of conduct

Section 4 - Safe and Secure (Standards 8 and 9)

Page 28 Pastoral care
Supporting those affected by abuse
Working with offenders

Section 5 - Safe and Secure (Standards 5, 6 and 10)

Page 29 Practice guidelines
Suggestions on how to stay safe when working with children and young people
Page 30 Managing challenging children
Page 31 Ideas for dealing with bad behaviour
Page 32 Working in Partnership

Appendix 1

Page 33 – 36 Leadership safeguarding statement

NB. Children and young people under the age of 18 years of age are referred to as children for the benefit of this document.

SECTION 1. PLACES OF WORSHIP - ORGANISATION DETAILS

Helston Light and Life Free Methodist Church

Unit 6, Water Ma Trout,

Helston. TR13 0LW

email: helstonsafeguarding@lightandlife.co.uk

tel: 01326 564994

Hayle Light and Life Free Methodist Church

The Bridge, 36 Penpol Terrace

Hayle. TR27 4BQ

email: hayle@lightandlife.co.uk

tel: 07597 134932

Falmouth Light and Life Free Methodist Church

Lea Cottage, Hillhead Road,

Falmouth. TR11 5PA

email: falmouth@lightandlife.co.uk

tel: 01326 617240

Public Liability - Ansvar Insurance

Registered Charity No. 1147067

A Member of The Free Methodist Church UK

Section 1. Safe and Secure – Standard 1

Policy Statement

The Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom, recognises its responsibility for the welfare of CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE and ADULTS with care and support needs.

It endeavours to keep them from harm and neglect in their physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual wellbeing, by providing a safe environment.

This policy covers details of the organisation, a statement of intent, and commitment to safeguarding children and adult with special needs.

--/--

Introduction and Background

"Free Methodists openly rebuke anything in law, persons, or institutions which violate the dignity of persons created in the image of God" (Book of Discipline).

To look after children and adults appropriately we need to adopt policies and procedures which will enable us to respond to spiritual needs and legal requirements.

We recognise that nobody can make any assumptions about child or adult abuse.

All leaders are responsible for ensuring that all workers in their ministries are properly approved and that the Safeguarding Policy is followed.

All paid and voluntary workers will work to the following code of practice and policies.

The purpose of this document is to protect you both as worker and leader and the children and/or adults in your care.

OUR COMMITTMENT

As church leaders and trustees, we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults.

We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that *"children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse"*.

They have a right to be protected from *"all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child."*

As church leaders and trustees, we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises, as far as practically possible, meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take, in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- not allow this document to be copied by other organisations.

--/--

CODE OF PRACTICE

When working with children and/or adults with care needs you agree:

1. To respect children as individuals and promote their well-being in every way.

2. To foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness, behaving responsibly in your conduct and use of power.

3. To help maintain the highest standards in all pastoral, counselling, educational, worship and recreational circumstances and that the exploitation of any relationship, for self-gratification, is unacceptable.

4. To take seriously all allegations of abuse, whether from an adult or a child.

5. To cooperate fully with the relevant statutory and voluntary agencies in any cases of alleged child abuse. The church and its related paid and voluntary workers will not conduct formal investigations into abuse, without reference to these appropriate statutory and voluntary agencies.

6. To ensure that all candidates for Youth/Children's work or Adults with care/support needs, are asked to declare in writing whether they have been the subject of criminal or civil proceedings and whether they have caused harm to any of these groups or put them at risk. In the event of past convictions against the above coming to light, individuals will be precluded from working with these groups in our churches.

7. To accept relevant denominational training in accordance with this code of practice and policy. This will be given after careful selection to those likely to have opportunities for contact with these groups.

8. To have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This is required of all paid staff and volunteers in Light and Life. The DBS is a government administered scheme which provides information that could indicate a candidate is unsuitable for working with children or adults with care needs.

   As recommended by the Charity Commission DBS checks will be renewed every three years or statutory online checks, if registered previously.

SUPERVISION

For the protection of children and adults it is essential that there are at ALL times at least two adults with every group. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding coordinator, Assistant Safeguarding coordinator, Heads of Department and all Leaders to oversee and ensure this is implemented.

Unless completely avoidable, the following must be adhered to:-

- Ratio of leaders to children (a requirement for child protection):

    1. Age 8+ a ratio of 1:12
    2. Ages 3 to 8 a ratio of 1:8
    3. Ages 2 to 3 a ratio of 1:4
    4. Ages 0 to 2 a ratio of 1:3

- In all groups at least one leader and one helper, preferably one of each sex. In single sex groups, we recommend that a leader should be of the same sex if possible.

- A leader is normally an adult (a person over 18 years of age),.

- We will consider volunteers who are aged 16/17 years. These volunteers will be recruited to the same standard as those aged 18+.

- A 16/17 year old may not be counted as a leader (for child protection ratio purposes) for groups their own age.

- Leaders and volunteers are those people whose names appear on the Child protection register provided by the Safeguarding coordinator and whose DBS certificate are in date.

- Where there is a need for additional leaders/helpers in groups or at events; Ministry leaders can request that a proposed leader/helper, who has submitted their full application forms, may work in a supervised role, providing:

- There are at least two leaders who are fully approved for Children's work under this policy present in the group.

- That the application process is *aimed to be* completed in a maximum of six weeks from receipt of the application and subsequent approval.

- Supervised means that the additional leaders should be supervised by a full leader at all times.

- The additional leader must not carry out work that would be classified as regulated activity such as toileting or providing transport for young people.

- Leaders do not spend unnecessary time alone with children. If it should be necessary to be alone with a child then make sensible precautions, e.g. advise other leaders and explain why and leave doors open.

- Where confidentiality is important and a child/young person or adult with care needs; is being seen on their own, then ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is about in the building.

- Keep records of individual activities, recording any unusual happenings or concerns, remembering parents/guardians have a right to access all records. NB: 'Thirty-one eight' can be contacted at any time for advice on disclosing recorded information.

- Ensure that the level of personal care, e.g. toileting is appropriate and relates to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have additional needs.

- Baby nappies SHOULD NOT be changed, babies MUST be returned to their parents if they need to be changed.

- Ensure that toilets used by children are not used by other persons at the same time during the session time. If this is necessary, older children may be able to be unescorted if the door is in sight of the group. Younger children will need to be escorted according to age and ability. *This should be considered in the risk assessment of the premises.* Whilst children are not in their respective groups, the parents and guardians are responsible for them.

- Anyone identifying other than biological sex, should be asked to use an Assessable (disabled) toilet that are for male or female use.

- If you invite a child/young person to your home, ensure this is with the knowledge of the team leader/leadership and that a parent/guardian is aware and is in agreement.

Transport and lifts:

- Whenever possible the leader should ensure the parents are made aware, that they intend to give a child a lift. Where it is not possible to speak to the parents the leader should instead ring their next higher authority (i.e. their group leaders or the Safeguarding coordinator).

- Wherever possible, ensure another adult is present when giving lifts in a car or mini-bus.

- In exceptional circumstances, **where this is not practical, a lone child or young person should be asked to sit in the rear of the vehicle.** Children and young people **MUST** wear seat belts, and if necessary be seated in the correct child restraint.

- Children under 135cm or under the age of 12 years (whichever is reached first) must be seated in the correct child restraints, unless the journey is for a short distance for an unexpected necessity, or if two occupied child restraints prevent the fitting of a third. In these cases adult seat belts **MUST** be worn at all times.

- The leader should ensure that the child is safely home. If a young person chooses not to avail himself/herself of the transport when provided by the 'Youth Group', 'Light and Life' will not be responsible for them outside of the 'youth meeting'.

Touch

Touch is an important part of human relationships: for example, it can be necessary to stop a young child from hurting themselves. Touch can also be a natural way of responding to someone in distress.

However, everyone working with children should be sensitive to what is appropriate and what is inappropriate physical contact, both in general terms and in relation to specific individuals. Leaders need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intended, could be misconstrued by others as harmful.

Specifically we give the following guidelines:

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a groups is very different from a hug behind closed doors.

- Touch should be age appropriate and initiated by the child, and not the worker.

- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be construed as sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.

Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others, except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when they need medical attention or are in danger.

Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything which could be misunderstood. Concerns about possible abuse should always be reported.

SUITABILITY OF LEADERS/WORKERS WITHIN THEIR AREAS OF MINISTRY

If it becomes apparent that a leader or a worker is under the influence of alcohol or drugs during their service, they will be asked to withdraw from the group, and advised to seek spiritual guidance from the Pastor or members of the Leadership Team, and not return to service until the Leadership Team deem the person suitable to return.

FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Light and Life Free Methodist Church, West Cornwall, will from time to time wish to take photographs/film footage of church related events and use the images/footage within the church organisation and/or for publicity purposes.

Since the introduction of the GDPR (May 2018), organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people and take care how these images are used.

This does not prohibit taking photographs or filming prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Parents will be given the option to object to their child being photographed and/or filmed while at church events on the enrolment form. If an objection is made then it will be clearly marked against that child's name on the register so that the leaders responsible on the day of the photography/filming will be informed.

- Any film footage or photographs to be used for Church publicity will require specific written consent from a parent or guardian.

- The leaders will use their discretion and verbally request that any individuals DO NOT take photographs or record film footage if in their opinion it is inappropriate or they have information that would suggest the person taking the picture was a risk to a child.

- Anyone taking photos at church events will be requested not to place them on any social media e.g. Facebook, Instagram, X etc.

LIVE STREAMING OF SERVICES – When services are being filmed, notices should be placed, in prominent positions, informing those attending that there is filming in progress. Also to include information of the area that's in view of the camera, and the 'welcome team' to advise parents with children of this area so they can make an informed decision on where to sit. Seats could be made available near the back for late attenders with children.

If the service has any children taking part, this section should be blocked out whilst they are at the front ie camera diverted to something else unless permission has been received from parents or legal guardians for all children involved to be included in live streams to social media platforms.

For this reason, it is expected that Family services should not be broadcasted.

INTERNET SAFETY AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DSCF) advise in 'Safer Working for Adults who work with Children and Young People', that adults should be circumspect in their communication with children to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or a behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

Having appropriate safeguards in place minimises the risk of those intent on abuse from being able to gain access to children and they also protect workers from false accusation.

Guidelines for Leaders in Communicating Electronically:

Generally maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.

- If young people want you to hold their mobile telephone numbers, e-mail addresses or similar, and communicate with them in this way, either a GDPR Parent form for under 13 years or a GDPR Young Persons form for over 13 years, needs to be completed in advance.

- Only make contact with young people for reasons related to the work of the church.

- Only give personal contact details to young people that are within the public domain of the church, including your mobile telephone number.

- Ensure you respond well to young people through the media they have chosen, and assess whether it is the most appropriate media for the nature of the communication. Consider whether it would be better to fix a time to communicate face to face, during or following an activity.

- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal

- Be warm and friendly, but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.

- Be careful how you sign off: consider, for instance, how 'love' and 'xxx' might be perceived and misinterpreted by the young person.

A Safe Church

- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share; don't abbreviate or short-cut your communications

- Make sure that communication would not cause embarrassment if it were seen by the young person's parent or church officials.

- Do not share any personal information with a young person, or request or respond to any personal information from the young person other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.

- Respect the young person's confidentiality unless abuse is suspected or disclosed.

- Recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to a young person in a crisis situation or at risk of harm.

- Store e-mail, MSN and text messages for as long as possible. If a message contains anything which causes concern, print it out and/or retain on file/hard drive, and complete an 'Incident Reporting Form'.

Social Networking Protocols:

If the church decides to set up a social networking account such as Facebook, X, snapchat etc for the purposes of communicating to your group, a separate profile for use as a church youth worker or similar linked to an agreed church e-mail address will be required.

The guiding principle is that church youth leaders/youth workers are able to communicate with young members in their groups and vice versa without other personal information being shared, or access to any personal social media account.

- Our minimum age (13) of users is set at the minimum required by Facebook terms and conditions.

- For further safeguarding of all users we advise that the 'click CEOP' link button is also added to any youth group profile.

- A youth group account should only contain those friends within the group.

- A member of the leadership team will be appointed to regularly review the site to monitor the content for accountability purposes.

- Also see 'Creating safer places online' from 'Thirty-one eight'

SECTION 2

Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue.

A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting.

Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

> *1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
>
> *2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 states:

> *No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here.

SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Who Abuses Children?

Very rarely a stranger.

Often someone who knows the child, e.g. a parent, baby-sitter, sibling, relative, other children, or friend of the family.

The abuser can be either male or female, and not necessary a different gender to the child being abused.

Sometimes someone in authority such as a teacher, youth leader, children's workers or a church worker/leader.

Sometimes paedophiles and others who set out to join organisations (including churches) do so to obtain access to children.

The following behavioural signs may be indications of child abuse, but they should not be taken in isolation. **(It's not our job to search for child abuse.)**

Physical Signs of Abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc, which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cutting/slashing/substance abuse.

Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse:

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Express a persistent desire to leave home.
- Another indicator of possible sexual abuse is an eating disorder.

Indicators of Possible Neglect:

- Failure to meet basic physical needs over a period of time, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical treatment may result in a range of symptoms including:
- Failure to thrive where medical investigation has excluded any medical reason.
- Disturbance of appetite including reluctance to feed, gorging or stealing food.
- Poor skin care, loss of hair or poor condition, cold red hands, poor feet hygiene or inadequate clothing.
- Lack of appropriate supervision (leading to 'accidental' injury).
- Development delay, impaired language skills, poor social skills, apathetic or dejected presentation.
- Persistent failure to seek or to follow any necessary medical advice.
- Poor school attendance or poor academic attainment.

Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes 'clingy'. The child may appear depressed or display aggressive behaviour.
- Nervousness/frozen watchfulness
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.
- Changes of personality, i.e. withdrawn or over the top behaviour.

The above signs **may or may not** be indicators that abuse has taken place, the possibility should be considered, particularly when a combination of signs have been noticed over a period of time.

How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse

Precise guidance is difficult. However, the following will help:

General Points:

- Accept what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else – do not promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened.
- Never push for information, or rush the child.

Helpful Things to Say or Show:

- Show acceptance of what the child says.
- Say things like "I'm glad you have told me"
- "It's not your fault"
- "I will help you"

Avoid Saying:

- "Why haven't you told anyone before?"
- "I can't believe it"
- "Are you sure that this is true?"
- "Why?". "How?", "When?", "Who?", "Where?"

Never make false promises.
Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

Conclusion

Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that you accept what they say.

Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. (refer to your Safeguarding Co-ordinator).

Immediately refer to someone appropriately qualified.

Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of the interview), writing down exactly

- **what the child said**
- **when he/she said it**
- **and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity).**
- **Record dates and times of these events**
- **action taken**
- **when you made the record. Sign it.**
- **be sure to use the language of the child.**
- **Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed up. This may be required in court evidence.**

Safeguarding Awareness

West Cornwall Light & Life is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive this policy to read at the same time as checks are taking place, and undertake safeguarding training every 3 years and a refresher each year, as required by our insurers for both children and adults.

West Cornwall Light & Life will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs will be provided with help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Responding To Allegations Of Abuse

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse and should follow the procedures below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Leader who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Leader or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Designated Safeguarding Leader, then the report should be made to the "Deputy".

- If a pastor is suspected of abusing a child, this should immediately be reported to a member of the Free Methodist Church Office. They can be contacted on 0117 336 5298 or via e-mail at 'office@freemethodist.org.uk'

  If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance **to Thirty-one Eight (CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0303 033 1111**. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- Where the concern is about a child, the Designated Safeguarding Leader should contact Children's Social Services.

- Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirty-One Eight, as above.

  Phone numbers of social service departments -

Children (Multi Agency Referral Unit)	**0300 123 1116**
Adult Care & Support	**0300 123 4131**
Out of hours when offices closed	**0300 123 4131**

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator **may** need to inform/involve others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern. For example the Senior Pastor or Chair of Trustees and The Insurance Company.

- Suspicions must **not** be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place, including date, time, place and signature.

- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirty-one Eight. (See info on previous page).

- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Coordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirty-one Eight, although the Leadership hope, that members of the place of worship will use the procedure in this policy.

- If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Coordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the West Cornwall Light & Life, demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The Role of The Safeguarding Coordinator / Deputy

- to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

- Ensure the withdrawal of the accused person from any contact with children in a church setting until the outcome of the investigation is known.

- Maintain confidentiality at all times. Do not discuss this with any other person without the clear permission of the Pastor. Statements should not be issued to the congregation or to the press.

Detailed Procedures When There Is A Concern About A Child

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Leaders will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or Thirty-one Eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, call 111 informing the doctor/clinician/medical staff, of any suspicions.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirty-one eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

Allegations Of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Leaders will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirty-one Eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police.
  Thirty-one Eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Procedures When There Is A Concern That an Adult Is In Need Of Protection:

This includes but is not limited to suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, the Designated Safeguarding Leaders will:
Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Thirty-one Eight can be contacted for advice.

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, 111 or 999 depending on severity, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Leaders will:

- Contact Thirty-one Eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern
- Refer concerns to Pastor to identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support.

Allegations Of Abuse Against A Person Who Works With Adults With Care And Support Needs

The Care Act places the duty upon **Adult Services** to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

SECTION 3

Prevention

Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post.
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Safeguarding has been discussed at induction.
- Written references have been obtained and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)

FORMALLY EMPLOYING STAFF -

- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- Both voluntary and paid workers have been given this copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and know how to report concerns.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers will have been issued with this policy which includes the 'Code of Practice' for children/young people and adults with care and support needs.

SECTION 4

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship

Working with offenders

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep.

SECTION 5

Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for activities we are involved in.

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO STAY SAFE FOR WORKERS WITH CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Never be alone with a child

2. Never give a lone child a lift in your car, unless absolutely necessary. **We strongly recommend obtaining parental permission.**

3. Always sit a child in the rear of your vehicle, where appropriate using safety car seating.

4. Touch should always be initiated by the child, never by yourself. Keep hands within full view. Ensure all age appropriate physical contact is in full view of everyone.

5. If you are in a room with a child always make sure a door is left open or window free so that other people can see in.

6. Never give children anything to eat without checking allergy information.

7. Never give a child a present without informing the parents you are doing so.

8. Never give a child money for any help they have given you.

9. No pictures to be taken unless
   a. Permission has been given. b. they are taken by a designated person

All of these actions may seem normal and kind, but they can very easily be misunderstood and seem as though a child is being groomed.

HANDLING CHALLENGING CHILDREN

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding and pray for the child.
- Think and ask 'what is the best method for helping and encouraging a particular child?'
- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up.
- Work on relationships.
- Be a good role model and set a good example.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent as a team, in how you deal with a problem.
- NEVER smack or hit a child or handle roughly.
- Correct out of love, NEVER anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you think you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger). Never 'put down' a child.
- Lay down ground rules, e.g. no swearing, racism, bullying (including cyber bulling) or name calling.
- Keep the ground rules simple and clear, and make sure the children understand them.
- Talk to a child who has broken a ground rule, out of hearing, but within sight, of the 'group'. Explain what they have done wrong, encourage remorse. Leave them on a positive note.
- Never reject a child, just the behaviour, encourage the child that you want them, but you are not willing to accept the behaviour.
- Each child is unique, special and individual, and each child needs a different method of being dealt with. We, therefore, need to ask ourselves "why is the child behaving like that?"

Some Practical Ideas for Dealing with Bad Behaviour:

- Change voice tone, but do not shout.
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. (These children are often friends, give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive).
- Have the child sit right in front of you.
- Get a helper to sit next to the child.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take the child aside and talk to them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
- Warn a child, that you will speak to their parents and do so if necessary. (With some non-churched children we need to be wise in this, as speaking to parents may incur their wrath on the child and a ban from attending). This action should be in liaison with your leader.
- If a child's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from a leader.
- Don't be afraid of discipline.
- Warn them, send them outside the room (under supervision), back into the service (i.e. Sunday mornings) or ban them for a week. (Never total ban without reference to your leader and ensure parents are advised in cases of banning).
- Encourage good behaviour.
- Remember each child is individual and unique. We need God's wisdom and love to encourage each one to reach their potential and needs.
- Pray before you meet.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

It is our expectation that any organisation using any of our premises, as part of a letting agreement will have their own policy that meets Thirty-one Eight safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

SIGNED BY THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES AND EACH CHURCHES LEAD PASTOR.

Chair of Trustees

Signed Print

Date

Helston Light and Life Free Methodist Church

Signed Print

Date

Hayle Light and Life Free Methodist Church

Signed Print

Date

Falmouth Light and Life Free Methodist Church

Signed Print

Date

This is a 'living' document and should therefore be reviewed every 12 months.

APPENDIX - 1

Leadership Safeguarding Statement

The Leadership ***'Light & Life Free Methodist Church, West Cornwall',*** recognises the importance of its ministry /work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

We are committed to creating and enabling a healthy culture in order to minimise any coercion and control within our church.

The following statement was agreed by the leadership/organisation on: 28th January, 2019

This place of worship is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of adults who have care and support needs and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults who find themselves victims of forced marriage or modern slavery and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship, unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.

- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe in the necessity of creating a healthy culture in our church where the value of all people is recognised and challenges are responded to appropriately.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/adults with care and support needs.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the place of worship affected by abuse.
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by Thirty-One Eight.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police must be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency's headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult with care and support needs, then speak to one of the Coordinators.

A COPY OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURES IS AVAILABLE FROM THE CHURCH OFFICES.