

Addendum to Current Safeguarding Policy during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Purpose

- This addendum is intended to reinforce current Methodist Church safeguarding procedures during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- For the foreseeable future, the Methodist Church has closed all its church buildings for worship and regular activities and any offering essential social outreach continue to do so within robust Government guidelines.
- However, all children, young people and vulnerable adults are now even more vulnerable than before because there are fewer opportunities for others in their lives to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns and issues.
- Changes to our ways of working, such as contacting by phone and by video calling, may bring new information, and new concern, to light about their home situation.
- Families may also experience new challenges during the pandemic, such as income loss, mental health problems, family conflict and difficulty getting food.
- There is a challenge in maintaining contact with vulnerable individuals whilst observing social distancing guidelines and in ensuring they have someone to talk to if they're worried about anything.

Key principles remain the same:

- The welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults remains paramount.
- If you have any concern follow the Methodist Safeguarding Policy and speak with your Minister Church Safeguarding Officer, Circuit Safeguarding Officer or District Safeguarding Officer.
- Continue to follow Safer Recruitment practices for all roles, some of which may be new or temporary.

Supporting Guidance Available

Online safety

- Online technology is invaluable for enabling children and young people to continue their learning, and everyone to keep in touch with family and friends and feel connected with the outside world.
- However, changes in online behaviour can put anyone at risk of online abuse, and the fraudsters have been finding new ways of exploiting this global emergency at this time.
- Without adhering to guidance, workers and volunteers may unintentionally place themselves at risk

Creating safe virtual communities with children and young people: guidance on how to approach meeting with children and young people, specifically those under 16	https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/being-a-community-when-you-cant-meet/creating-safe-virtual-communities-with-children-and-young-people/
Keeping children safe online	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/
Beware fraud and scams during Covid-19 pandemic fraud	https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/fraud-scams-covid19

Domestic abuse

- During this intense period of social distancing where families are spending more time together, we need to be aware of the heightened risk of domestic abuse and continue to support and respond appropriately.

Advice and guidance for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse
Coronavirus (COVID-19), lockdown and domestic abuse	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/
Get help and advice about domestic abuse	https://www.manchester.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Mental health

- We must be alert to the risk that the mental health of many within our communities may suffer during the pandemic

Children's mental health	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/
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<p>Help and advice for parents and families dealing with mental health problems in everyday life and during the coronavirus pandemic</p>	<p>https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/mental-health-parenting/</p>
<p>Guidance for the public on the mental health and wellbeing aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19)</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19</p>

<p>Coronavirus visiting guidance – Methodist Church Guidance for ministers, lay workers and pastoral visitor coordinators</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  coronavirus-visiting-guidance-200320.pdf </p>
<p>Being safe and transparent online - A guide to Pastoral Contacts for ministers in a virtual world</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  being-transparent-and-safe-online-160420 </p>
<p>Stay safe online - Top Tips for Staying Safe Online</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  Stay safe online for adults - Methodist Ch </p>
<p>Guidance for video conferencing with children and young people – with grateful thanks to our colleagues in Nottingham and Derby District</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  ND District working with children and you </p>
<p>What children are saying to Childline about coronavirus - summary of young people’s key concerns about coronavirus raised in Childline counselling sessions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">  what-children-are-saying-to-childline-about </p>
<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) and keeping children safe from abuse - advice to help spot the</p>	<p>https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/coronavirus-abuse-neglect-vulnerable-children/</p>

signs of abuse and what to do if you're worried about a child	
Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

For all guidance relating to **Methodist activity** during the period please see:
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus/>

For all guidance from the **NSPCC** relating to keeping children safe during the period please see:
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/>

For guidance relating to supporting **Manchester's** most vulnerable people during the period please see:
<https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/500361/coronavirus>

Coronavirus - Supporting you during the Covid-19 outbreak from Cheshire East Council:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx

View the most up-to-date information about the coronavirus from **Derbyshire County Council**
<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/health-protection/disease-control/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19.aspx>