# Torrington Methodist Church

## Children's Activities and Clubs – In-House Safeguarding Policy

**This policy applies to all children's activities and clubs held at Torrington Methodist Church.** It should be read alongside the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy and the Torridge Methodist Circuit Safeguarding Procedures.

### Our Commitment

At Torrington Methodist Church we are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and caring environment where every child is valued, respected and protected. The welfare of every child is our highest priority.

All leaders and volunteers must read this policy and sign to confirm. This policy shall be followed at all times. A copy will be available on site.

## 1. Leadership and Volunteers

- All volunteers shall have an Enhanced DBS with a check of the children's barred list. Where this DBS is for an external organization, the individual will need to be signed up to the DBS update service.
- All volunteers will have completed the appropriate safeguarding checks and Methodist Church training before working with children. Safeguarding training from the Anglican or URC church is also acceptable. A copy certificate must be provided.
- A rota will be prepared before each session.
- **Only those volunteers named on the rota will be permitted to remain in the building during the activity**, unless prior permission has been given by the session leader or there is an emergency.
- There will normally be **four activity leaders**, including:
    - One designated leader responsible for the session.
    - One volunteer stationed at the entrance/door.
    - One volunteer responsible for the kitchen.
    - Additional volunteers supporting the children's activities.

## 2. Supervision

- There must **always be a minimum of two adults present with children** at all times.
- Children must never be left unsupervised.
- Volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with a child.
- If a child needs individual support, it should take place where other adults are present or able to observe.

## 3. Arrival and Registration

- Every child must have a completed consent and registration form before attending.
- Emergency contact details, medical information, allergies and collection arrangements must be recorded.
- Attendance registers will be taken at every session.
- Parents/carers should inform leaders if anyone different will be collecting their child.

## 4. Collection of Children

- Children will only be released to the parent/carer or named adult identified on the consent form.
- If someone different is collecting a child, parents/carers should notify leaders in advance whenever possible.
- Leaders will not allow a child to leave with an unknown adult until appropriate checks have been made.
- Children should not leave the premises without a responsible adult unless written permission has been provided by the parent/carer.

## 5. Toilets

- Children **must not be accompanied into the toilet by volunteers or leaders**, except in exceptional safeguarding or medical circumstances where this is unavoidable.
- If assistance is required, another adult must be informed and the safeguarding procedures followed.
- Younger children should be encouraged to use the toilet independently where possible.
- Leaders should remain outside the toilet area while ensuring the child's safety.

## 6. Kitchen Safety

- One designated adult will supervise the kitchen throughout the session.
- **The kitchen is a designated No Access Area for children.**
- Children must not enter the kitchen unless participating in a supervised activity specifically organised for that purpose and appropriate risk assessments are in place.
- Hot drinks, boiling water and food preparation equipment must be kept safely away from children.

## 7. Access to the Building

- External doors should remain monitored during sessions.
- One volunteer will act as Door Steward, welcoming families and monitoring entry and exit.
- Visitors should report to the session leader before entering activity areas.
- Unauthorised persons should not have access to children's activities.

## 8. Health and Safety

- A qualified first aider (or designated first aid volunteer) should be present whenever possible.
- A stocked first aid kit will be available.
- Any accident or injury must be recorded in the Accident Book and parents/carers informed when collecting their child.
- Serious incidents must be reported to the Circuit Safeguarding Officer and, where appropriate, to the Church Council.

## 9. Behaviour

We aim to create an atmosphere of kindness, respect and inclusion.

Children are expected to:

- Show respect to one another and to leaders.
- Listen to instructions.
- Treat church property and equipment carefully.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour.

Bullying, aggressive behaviour or discriminatory language will not be tolerated and will be addressed promptly and sensitively.

## 10. Photography and Social Media

- Photographs or videos of children will only be taken where parental permission has been given.
- Images will only be used in accordance with the permissions recorded on the consent form.
- Volunteers should not use personal mobile phones to photograph children.

## 11. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If a child discloses abuse or a safeguarding concern arises:

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Do not promise confidentiality.

- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Record what has been said as accurately as possible.
- Report the concern immediately to the Church or Circuit Safeguarding Officer.
- If a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, emergency services should be contacted without delay.

## 12. Fire and Emergency Procedures

- Volunteers should know the fire evacuation procedures before each session.
- Registers should be taken to the assembly point during an evacuation.
- Children remain under the supervision of leaders until collected by parents/carers.

## 13. Ratios

The church aims to provide sufficient adult supervision appropriate to the age and number of children attending.

As a minimum:

- At least **two adults** must always be present.
- Sessions will normally operate with **four volunteers**, including a Door Steward and Kitchen Volunteer.
- Additional volunteers should be recruited when attendance numbers increase.

## 14. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Church Council and updated whenever safeguarding guidance from the Methodist Church changes.

---

**Church:** Torrington Methodist Church

**Approved by:** __Deacon Debbie Marsh_____

**Date:** _____

**Review Date:** ____Annually_____

I confirm that I have read the Safeguarding Policy for working with children

| Name | Signature |
| --- | --- |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| | |