



The Methodist Church in Sheffield

... growing followers of Jesus

Recruitment and Selection Policy & Guidance

for

Handsworth Woodhouse Methodist Church

To be read alongside:

Safer Recruitment Policy, Procedures and Guidance (January 2024 Edition) produced by the Methodist Church. This can be found on the MCIB by following this [link](#).

Adopted by the Church Council on 17 February 2026

To be reviewed annually: Date of next review: Feb 2027

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, it has not been so; and the broken trust has left them physically and/or psychologically harmed. This Safer Recruitment Policy makes clear our Church's commitment to establishing a welcoming, worshipping and serving community that is safe for all.

This policy sets out the recruitment and selection procedures needed to identify and deter anyone who is 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.

Even the most robust policies and procedures cannot eliminate every risk. That is why safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We must make it as difficult as possible for abusers to gain access to children, young people and vulnerable adults. For this reason once an individual is appointed, whether paid or unpaid, effective oversight arrangements must be in place to monitor and respond to any concerns.

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 must have their own safeguarding policy, which includes a commitment to implementing safer recruitment practices. Part of the role of safeguarding officers, is to act on behalf of each of those bodies, promoting and supporting safe recruitment.

If Handsworth Woodhouse Methodist Church intends to employ someone in a paid role, then then we agree to follow the guidance in the Connexional Recruitment Policy. In the Sheffield Circuit always consult the District Lay Employment Secretary for advice.

Handsworth Woodhouse Methodist Church commits to following the '7 Steps to Safer Recruitment', when recruiting both volunteers and lay employees, ensuring that recruitment decisions are made with care and particular reference to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Handsworth Woodhouse Methodist Church will ensure that it has a **Church Safeguarding policy**, which is reviewed annually and includes a commitment to Safer Recruitment.

The 7 Steps to Safer Recruitment

These steps refer to **voluntary posts**. As additional steps are required for paid posts it is essential that the District Lay Employment Secretary is consulted.

Step 1	Role Description Create a Role Description. There are several templates on the Circuit website . See additional guidance.
Step 2	Information Pack Put together an information pack. As a minimum the pack should include the new volunteer application form , church safeguarding policy and a role outline. See additional guidance. Volunteer Application Form The new volunteer application form, fits all volunteer roles. The form can be found here , and on the Methodist Church in Britain website. All sections of the form must be completed, whether or not the role meets the criteria for a DBS check. The form incorporates the Safeguarding Declaration form and a Privacy Notice. If unsure ask the church or circuit safeguarding officer whether a role requires a DBS check.
Step 3	Advertise Advertise the role in a manner appropriate to the vacancy. See additional guidance.
Step 4	Shortlisting Scrutinise each application carefully and fairly with reference to the criteria for the role before carrying out interviews or discussions with candidates. Explain to unsuccessful candidates why they weren't chosen on this occasion.
Step 5	Interview Candidates. For a volunteer post an informal discussion is usually more appropriate. Use a list of questions to make sure you gain all the information you need to make the right decision about each candidate. See notes for guidance.
Step 6	Select a Candidate Select the preferred candidate based upon their suitability for the role. Contact both the successful and unsuccessful candidates. See additional guidance.
Step 7	Checks Carry out appropriate checks as required. Remember that references are important for both volunteer and paid roles.

Additional Guidance

Step 1 – Role Description

Volunteer Role Descriptions should outline the tasks involved, and indicate approximately how long each task would take. Setting limits helps prevent volunteers being asked to do too much, or being given extra tasks at a later date. Specify who will supervise the volunteer and how they will be supported. Agree on things like mileage expenses. **It is important to include any safeguarding training that is required and if a DBS check is needed.**

A note on unconscious bias

Unconscious bias occurs when 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 an outline for an established but vacant role, 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 age, education and qualifications.

Step 2 – Information Pack

Your church safeguarding officer should be able to advise you on any other forms you may need, including Key Holder Declaration Form D and the Lone Working Policy.

Step 3 – Advertising

Volunteer roles should be advertised in a way appropriate to the vacancy. This could be on the church noticeboard, via a church or circuit bulletin, online or notices at a service. Ensure that everyone has a fair opportunity to come forward and knows who to speak to if they are interested.

Step 4 – Shortlisting

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

The Methodist Church commits to equality of opportunity when developing, co-ordinating and supporting volunteering. Although equality legislation does not impose statutory obligations, we recognise a moral obligation to promote fairness and equality valuing diverse backgrounds.

Step 5 – Interview Candidates

A temptation is to simply accept a volunteer simply because they have come forwards and a role desperately needs filling. It is equally important that candidates know exactly what the role entails so they can be sure it is right for them, and it's ok to say NO if asked to take on additional tasks. An honest conversation is needed to manage expectations and identify potential issues. Having a conversation before starting a role can avoid frustration and bad feelings in the future.

Imagine your church is seeking new Service Stewards. Someone seemingly perfect comes forwards and is quickly nominated and approved. As Senior Steward you notice after several months that the new person never offers to cover funerals, and other stewards complain that they do more than their fair share. You learn that the new Steward cares for a grandchild 5 days a week and is only available at weekends. Exploring this issue prior to appointment could have avoided conflict.

Step 6 – Select a Candidate

Every year thousands of people volunteer. Almost all are keen to give up their time and efforts simply to help others. However, just because most volunteers act selflessly doesn't mean that they don't need to be screened.

Lack of care in appointment can cause dissatisfaction and disappointment for both the volunteer and the church. In a very small number of cases, it could lead to serious problems.

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

Step 7 – Appropriate Checks

If the role requires a DBS check this must be completed before starting the role. For roles that don't require a DBS check, an identity check should be done. There are a number of people around the Circuit who are able to facilitate DBS checks. If you are unsure who to ask, please contact the circuit safeguarding officer. Remember that references are required for volunteer and paid roles.

Successful first contact with volunteers

Once an advert is placed, you'll hopefully begin receiving responses. How you respond is essential.

From the volunteer's point of view, they're offering you a gift – their time for nothing. If your response is slow, unenthusiastic or unwelcoming you may seem ungrateful.

Top tips for responding to volunteer queries

- Respond quickly to any expression of interest
- The person responding to volunteers needs to be well informed, approachable, and able to explain the next steps.
- Answer volunteer's questions fully so that they are well informed of their suitability for a particular role. It may be best to do this in person or over the telephone so that volunteers 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 screening is important.

Disclosure & Barring Check (DBS)

Once the successful candidate has been selected they need to complete any outstanding paperwork in their Information pack. For some roles this means obtaining a DBS check. The Confidential Declaration in part B of the application form provides the applicant with the opportunity to declare any relevant issues prior to a criminal record check. It gives the applicant a chance to discuss any matters of significance before starting the DBS process, and may help to reduce embarrassment if issues arise which could affect the likelihood of their acceptance for a particular role. On occasion, when applicants realise the full extent of the DBS checks, they may decide to withdraw their application. In the interests of all it is helpful to have a full and transparent discussion about any potential concerns prior to the DBS application being submitted.

The district safeguarding officer should be notified at the earliest opportunity if anything which would affect their suitability for a role should be revealed on the confidential declaration section of the Application Form.