

Safeguarding in Lincolnshire District

September 1st 2021

District Safeguarding Policy in relation to photography and use of videos and social media

Introduction.

Lincolnshire Methodist District (the District) welcomes children, young people and adults into the life of the church and all its related activities and events. These include worship, special events, celebrations and anything that affirms the mission and ministry of the church.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect everyone who takes part in anything connected to the church, specifically those where photographs and videos may be taken;
- set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to photographs/videos being taken during our events and activities;
- ensure that the District operates in line with our values and within the law when creating, using and sharing images of people we have photographed or used in videos, especially children.

This policy statement applies to all everyone in the District and has been approved by the District Council on.....

Policy framework

This policy has been drawn up in line with the requirements of the Safeguarding Policy, procedure and guidance of the Methodist Church 2019. It also takes account of national and local guidance.

This policy should be read alongside “Policy into Practice”, the guidance produced by the District to offer practical advice about how to implement and make it relevant in the local setting contained at the end of this Policy.

The District believes that:

- it is everyone’s right to be protected from harm in whatever way possible;
- the rights of every individual to privacy and respect should be upheld, especially in not making assumptions about what is best for them or what they would wish for;
- any information about an individual, even in the form of photographs and videos, is for them to determine especially in relation to access to it and the ways it is communicated to others;
- photographs and videos can benefit and give joy to all, especially if they are felt important to share or be communicated to others.
- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation

This policy affirms that:

- the welfare of everyone taking part in our activities is paramount;
- the District has a Duty of Care to protect everyone;

- everyone taking part, especially children and their parents/carers, have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation;
- in relation to children, consent is only meaningful when the children and their parents/carers understand the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images;
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images therefore advice will be sought if there is any doubt about possible harm which is likely caused.

We will seek to keep everyone safe by:

- always asking for consent before taking any photographs or videos;
- changing the names of children or adults whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them);
- never publishing personal information about individuals, especially children;
- making everyone understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information);
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately;
- using images that positively reflect people's involvement in the activity.

The expanding use and availability of social media methods to do this means the District will be committed to and vigilant in doing everything it can to be sensitive to the safeguarding issues relating to this.

It is especially important that this policy, its principles and practices, take account of the use of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Messenger, Snapchat and other methods of communication and sharing, especially for young people. These are often positive ways in which young people, and others, communicate, and can be effective tools for pastoral support and witness so issues of consent and purpose for sharing images is especially important.

Different Reasons for Photography/Video Recording

We recognise that there may be different reasons for taking photographs or video recordings:

1. The church or groups within the church may wish to take photographs for display within the church;
2. The church or groups within the church may wish to take photographs or video recordings for use on the church website or promotional material;
3. Outside agencies – press photographers, wedding photographers, etc - may wish to take photographs;
4. Parents/grandparents may wish to take photographs for their personal use. This may include images of children other than their own.

We should have guidelines for each of these situations.

Specific safeguarding issues.

Everyone in the District will be mindful that there will be situations and circumstances that, for some, make the taking, displaying and distributing of photographs and/or naming individuals in them, particularly sensitive and could make them vulnerable.

These could include:

- individuals who have fled from harm in their home situation and do not wish to be identified in local situations;
- children who may be looked after by the Local Authority and whose situation is delicate and should be protected;
- children who have been adopted or have had their names changed;
- adults who are subject to monitoring and support arrangements but whose offending behaviour and/or personal details are not known publicly;
- anyone who by being identified in any way could be subject to unwanted attention or intrusion in their lives.

It is especially important to recognise that not everyone will have capacity to give consent to have their photos, images or information being shared. In these circumstances everything should be done to not only establish

that there is capacity or that there are others who may be able to assist in decisions about seeking consent. It may be for family members to give consent in these circumstances. This is particularly important given that for some their physical health or well-being may not be something they wish to be captured or communicated in any photographs or videos.

Review of the Policy

This Policy will be reviewed each year through the District Council and updated or amended as appropriate considering emerging new advice or guidance.

District photography and use of videos and social media – Practice Guidance

The District Policy identifies 4 reasons for photography within church

5. The church or groups within the church may wish to take photographs for display within the church;
6. The church or groups within the church may wish to take photographs or video recordings for use on the church website or promotional material;
7. Outside agencies – press photographers, wedding photographers, etc - may wish to take photographs;
8. Parents/grandparents may wish to take photographs for their personal use. This may include images of children other than their own.

1 and 2 – The church or groups within the church for use internally (noticeboards or digital displays in service) or externally (website or promotional material)

- Toddler Groups or Messy Church or Holiday Clubs – groups which have a defined membership - should ask parents to complete a form to include information about how photographs will be used. Appendix A gives an example of such a form.
- The signing in sheet should also include a statement on it that photographs may be taken in line with the completed forms. Appendix B gives an example of such a form.
- If anyone from the church is taking photographs of an event members of the group or parents should be informed before the event and given an opportunity to refuse photographs either before or after the event. Appendix C gives an example of what could be said.
- If images of children are being used in published materials we should change the names of children whenever possible (and only using first names if we need to identify them).
- **We recommend strongly that each church should have its own camera and not use a private device.**
- If images are used at home in the creation of, for example, a digital display the images should not be transferred onto a hard drive.

3. – Outside Agencies

If an external photographer is used for one of our events, we will seek to keep people safe by:

- having a role outline for that photographer, even if it is a member or friend of the activity or related to someone using that activity, which will include a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour;
- ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times;

- informing verbally and/or in any literature, including notice/service sheets that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring people have given consent to images which feature them, especially children;
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access;
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event;
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography to the District Safeguarding Officer without delay.

Photography and/or filming for wider use

If people such as local journalists, professional or students wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, they should seek permission in advance.

They should provide, in advance:

- the name and address of the person using the camera
- the scope of their use of photography or videos;
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for;
- a signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

The Church will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for photographs/films to be taken. We will seek consent from anyone, especially from the children who are the intended subjects of the images and their parents and inform the photographer of anyone who does not give consent.

If anyone is concerned that someone unknown to them is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, we will ask them to leave and inform the District Safeguarding Officer that this was necessary.

4. – Parents/Grandparents etc

When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, churches should publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of the photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- asking people to gain permission from children, their parents and carers before sharing photographs and videos that include them;
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share;
- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

Appendix D gives a sample statement that a church could make.

Storing images

Photographs and videos should be stored securely, in accordance with safeguarding policy and data protection law. Hard copies of images will be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access.

Images will not be deleted or destroyed for years.

Images of children will never be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

Appendix A – example of form for groups to use

Name of Church/Group

Photography/Image Permission Form.

We believe that sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation.

We ask you to complete the form below.

I give permission for you to use photographs/videos of my child:
(please tick the boxes that apply)

To use internally – noticeboards, digital presentations in church, etc

To use externally – websites, Facebook, leaflets etc

To keep these photos/videos indefinitely for future displays

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Our commitment to you:

- We will always announce when we are taking photographs at an event.
- We will only use church photography equipment.
- We will change the names of children whenever possible (and only use first names if we need to identify them).
- We will store digital images securely.

Parent/guardian signature _____ Date _____

Parent/guardian name _____

Child's name _____

Contact telephone number _____

If you have any concerns about this please talk to

Name of Church/Group

Register of Attendance on _____

We believe that sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation.

We may be taking photographs/videos at this event.

Our commitment to you:

- We will only use church photography equipment.
- We will change the names of children whenever possible (and only use first names if we need to identify them).
- We will store digital images securely.

If you have any concerns about this please talk to

Name	

Appendix C – example of an announcement at an event when photographs are being taken.

We would like to tell you that we will be taking photos today.

The reason we are taking the photos is

Our commitment to you:

- We will only use our church camera.
- We will change the names of children whenever possible (and only use first names if we need to identify them).
- We will store digital images securely.

If you have any concerns about this please talk to either now or afterwards.

Appendix D – example of an announcement at an event when parents/carers may wish to take photographs.

We realise that many of you may wish to take photos and videos of your children during this event.

We ask for your help in the following ways:

Please do not take photos during the event. We will give you a chance for photos at the end.

or

You are welcome to take photos during the event but please do not disturb either the children or others.

These photos are for your personal use. If you share images on social media then you should only show images of your child. Please crop or blur other children.

Please check the privacy settings of your social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images you share

If you have any concerns about this please talk to either now or afterwards.