

# Proposed Senior Leadership Safeguarding Training

## Pre-course preparation

### Existing documents:

Preparing the Ground from AM2023) *Participants should already have had these and will be advised*  
AMT handbook ) *to order from Methodist Publishing if they can't find them*  
Theology of Safeguarding report and 'God Welcomes All' study guide

### New documents

Covering summary document, welcome to the course + explaining use of additional materials

1. PCR – Apology + 10 Themes (especially Theme 10)
2. Summary of the key themes/ learning from high profile cases involving District Chairs/ Superintendents – To be provided by Tim Carter, Director of Safeguarding
3. Link to Peter Ball video [Senior Leadership: BBC Documentary \(cofeportal.org\)](https://www.cofeportal.org)  
Include questions, such as: Do you see yourself in any part of this situation? How did PB groom other leaders?

## In outline programme below:

Red text = Activity    Blue text = Video

### Unit 1

#### Introduction

Opening prayer – needs to be positive! Request to Revd John Hellyer

While we are together – Ground rules, format of the session etc.

Confidentiality - Especially in terms of small world of Methodism, often richest learning comes from discussing experiences but be aware

Stress the need to look after themselves – many ministers are also survivors of abuse

#### Setting the Scene

Why do we need another training module?

PCR Theme 10

*There has been, and remains, insufficient understanding of the significance of safeguarding concerns about those who hold leadership roles in the Methodist Church*

#### Putting leadership into context

*You are a senior leader, even if you never intended to become one!*

Learning from safeguarding issues, relating to:

- high profile individuals within the life of the church (summary) – revisiting from Pre-course Preparation
- Safeguarding Audits (summary)

#### Group discussion - Who's in your group?

If everyone knows each other, share one aspect of safeguarding that has changed since you've been in your current role

**Impact of abuse** on ministers themselves, their families and churches. The damage to the reputation of the church

#### Video

Talking heads video on all these aspects. Voice overs against a silhouette of an anonymised person

## Unit 2

### Creating a safer space for all

Revisit some of Foundation Module - 5 groups – emphasising 5<sup>th</sup> group (*Those working in the church staff and volunteers*)

'Ministry is a costly calling for the whole family' – always living in the public domain, itineracy issues

Include the impact that powerful families within congregations can have on presbyters – grooming and influencing others, e.g. the entire Church Council looks towards one person to make a decision

**Case example activity - C of E material – Handout 1, Vulnerability of ministers**

### Videos

- [New video of Helen Cameron](#)
- [New Nicola Price-Tebbutt – focussing on power of Senior Leaders](#)
- [A survivor perspective – this training is really important because....](#)

### Theology of Safeguarding

Explore some of the content of: GOD WELCOMES ALL - How faith informs safeguarding (Session 3 Power)

**Spiritual abuse** – definition (*Oakley, 2018*)

- What it is
- How power goes hand in hand with other types of abuse
- What people in positions of power say, even simple things, can have a devastating effect

**Video** [The impact of ordination on your role as a safeguarding leader – conversation between 2 Senior Leaders](#)

Facilitated conversation, with open questions to consider:

- Issues of itineracy, long-standing relationships with colleagues, but roles have changed over the years
- Exclusive old **boys** network
- Understanding your role in setting a positive safeguarding culture
- Need to be **positive** role models
- Those coming to ministry later in life, with a wealth of useful leadership experience, may only become senior ministers for a short time, or not at all
- What skills, including from other settings, do you bring to the role?
- What is your perception of power?

## Unit 3

### Management and Leadership

Values and attitudes

Impact of PCR 10 on you as a leader: recognition of your own potential points of power, unconscious bias, own/others and general e.g. around Victoria Climbié, adultification

Safer recruitment

Responsibility for oversight of safe (and of unsafe) recruitment, role modelling

Continued awareness necessary, even if not actively involved, to model good practice for others

Management and support - oversight of safeguarding staff, including DSOs (may change)

Requirement to provide support to others e.g. Supers to Circuit Safeguarding Officers (especially paid employees)

Transfer of safeguarding records by presbyters on re-stationing

Role of supervision, District Safeguarding Groups, leading by example e.g. risk assessments for District events.

What may drive unsafe oversight?

Consider processes versus relationships

Boundary drift

Avoiding being a 'lone ranger'

**Activity** Self-evaluation of your role in providing good leadership in safeguarding  
**SWOT or SOAR** using only **Strengths/Weaknesses** or **Strengths/Opportunities** initially  
*(feeds into Jenga in next Unit)*

#### **Unit 4 Promoting safer cultures**

**'The key to good safeguarding is culture and the key to a positive culture is leadership'**

##### **New video**

Marcus Erooga with new questions around defining a change in culture – based on questions to District Chairs from the Connexional Safeguarding audit

Your role as leader; setting the tone

Ask questions: if you are new to the role – What did you find when you turned over a stone?

Or if established - What is working/what is not? and the robustness of processes

##### **Aspects of a positive safeguarding culture (C of E activity)**

Jenga - elements of a positive culture are written on giant Jenga blocks (made of foam)

- Ensure collaborative not competitive
- Avoid one person feeling responsible for collapse
- May have the right blocks but in the wrong places
- The removal of the block that leads to collapse isn't the primary cause

Get the group to add a few ideas themselves

To illustrate that no single issue creates a good culture

Safeguarding should be on every District/Circuit/Church Council agenda, safeguarding noticeboards

Reporting issues

Grooming - Finkelhor and in the church context

More emphasis on those close colleagues/acquaintances – the vulnerabilities of senior leaders– with an emphasis on grooming close colleagues

Need to recognise and challenge poor practice wherever we see it.

##### **Video**

**Interactive case study: talking heads "This is me..."**

Refer back to the Peter Ball video – Did you see yourself in any part of that situation? How did PB groom other leaders?

**'Parts' case study – (C of E)** we may each have one piece of information, but combined the form a much clearer picture them. Episodes from a minister's career where concerns were raised, but appropriate actions were not taken.

## Unit 5

### Responding to concerns

Reminder of PCR 10 – See Unit 1 Reassurance, pastoral response and action

We can't change what happened, but we can change how we respond

**£20 note exercise (What do you do if you find a £20 note on the floor of a bus?)**

Listening, responding, reporting, recording

- Listening is different for Senior Leaders – includes noticing and having a strategic view and responding in line with Methodist policy
- Responding - What to do in the “now” moment (More than just contacting your DSO)
- Emphasise the role of supervision in highlighting issues
- Not going it alone
- Receiving reports of serious incidents - What needs to be clarified and how?
- Receiving information that has been shared before, but no-one in the church has ever acted upon

**What is “truth”? C of E activity - how do we discern truth when it comes from different perspectives; an awareness of potential bias**

Decision making

**Inbox exercise – managing priorities**

Defensible decision making, deciding to do nothing is still a decision,

Use of language

Where do you take it?

Who will listen/act – **is it you?**

Need for persistence with statutory agencies, social care cannot use availability of resources as a reason not to offer required support

### Quote from Desmond Tutu

‘If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.’

### Reflection

Appropriate use of supervision: as supervisee and supervisor

## Unit 6

### Putting it into practice

Reminder of PCR 5: *People in the Church are still not responding well to serious situations*

Avoiding getting into dangerous situations

### Complex case study:

The role of leadership in setting culture within a Circuit which includes a dysfunctional ‘Project’  
The buck stops with you as an incoming Leader, making difficult decisions, potentially closing down activities. What is already known but has been ignored?

To consider impacts from the perspectives of

- person experiencing the abuse
- person acting on the concern
- defensible decision making
- wider church community

Need to follow practice guidance

### **Question Park**

Will require sufficient time: likely to be well used, need to follow up queries, may be disclosures

### **Action log**

In light of today's learning, complete the self-analysis Opportunities & Threats

### **Feedback**

Actions – ask

1. What short-term actions are you going to take?
2. What long-term actions are you going to take?

Follow up in 3 months, to identify the impact of the learning/ change in practice/ degree of confidence

Closing prayer